

# Gender and Value Chain Development





**Evaluation Study**  
**Gender and Value Chain Development**  
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The views expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark. Errors and omissions are the responsibility of the authors

## **Abbreviations**

CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
DEReC	DAC Evaluation Resource Centre
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FLO	FairTrade Labelling Organization
GATE	Greater Access to Trade Expansion Project
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
ILO	International Labour Organisation
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
WEMAN	Women's Empowerment Mainstreaming and Networking

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**Annex 1 Table of evaluations and assessments discussed**

The remaining annexes can be downloaded from [www.evaluation.dk](http://www.evaluation.dk) (studies, 2010)

**Annex 2: Terms of Reference**

**Annex 3: List of organizations**

**Annex 4: Relevant case studies and other material**

**Annex 5: The long list**

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## 1. Introduction

Value chains have become a key concept in international discussions on development, in particular in relation to the effects of globalization on employment and poverty reduction in the South. Together with the increased attention to private sector development, the concept features prominently in the follow up to the recommendations of the Africa Commission established in 2007 by the previous Danish Prime Minister. At the same time, gender equality<sup>1</sup> and women's empowerment also feature high on the development policy agenda in Denmark. Ensuring that gender issues are taken into consideration in value chain-related interventions is vital for facilitating the development of inclusive value chains that benefit both women and men.

However, knowledge among practitioners and policy makers on the gender aspects of value chain interventions is still limited. To start filling this void, the Evaluation Department of DANIDA has commissioned this report. The overall purpose of this study is to examine which gender issues are important when and where in value chains – based on findings of existing evaluations complemented by other relevant studies. The focus in this report is on development interventions that explicitly or implicitly employ a value chain approach (see definition below). Coverage will not be limited to interventions targeting only women, but will also include evaluations and lessons learned from more generic value chain interventions insofar as they address (or reflect upon) gender issues. While acknowledging that men are sometimes disadvantaged in, or excluded from value chains, this study focuses on issues related to the impact of value chain interventions on women. This is because women are more disadvantaged than men in the context of value chain operations.

Section 2 of the study discusses and defines the concepts of 'value chain intervention' and 'gender'. Section 3 outlines the methodology employed in identifying relevant literature as

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<sup>1</sup> Gender equality/ inequality is used consistently throughout this report even though the term gender equity (inequity) would be more appropriate in several contexts (gender equity implies that men and women are different and therefore should not be treated as if they were not). The terms gender equality/ inequality are used to remain consistent with the wording employed in other DANIDA documents and strategies.

well as the analytical strategy used for examining the selected material. Section 4 presents a synthesis of experiences gathered in relation to gender outcomes of value chain interventions – based on findings of evaluations complemented by other relevant studies. Section 5 provides lessons learned and final conclusions.

## 2. Value chain interventions and gender

The value chain as a *concept* describes the full range of activities that firms, farms and workers do to bring a product from its conception to its end use and beyond. This includes activities such as design, production, marketing, distribution and support to the final consumer. The activities that comprise a value chain can be contained within a single firm or divided among different firms. Value chain activities can produce goods or services, and can be contained within a single geographical location or spread over wider areas.

Value chain *analysis* has emerged since the early 1990s as a novel methodological tool for understanding the dynamics of economic globalization and international trade. The approach focuses on ‘vertical’ relationships between buyers and suppliers and the movement of a good or service from producer to consumer. As an analytical tool, value chain analysis has become a key approach in both research and policy fields, with an increasing number of bilateral and multilateral aid organizations adopting it to guide several of their development interventions.

A wide range of donor-led activities are now labelled ‘value chain *interventions*’ or ‘value chain development’ initiatives. This has led to some confusion on what constitutes a value chain intervention and what does not. In this report, value chain interventions are distinguished from more general programmes aimed at stimulating economic growth, developing the private sector, and/or increasing the commercialization of economic activities. What we call value chain interventions may indeed feed into any of these broader activities, but are essentially focused on improving or forging vertical linkages along value chains (in production, processing and trade functions) with the view of improving the terms of participation of selected target groups. Such interventions may be targeted at domestic, regional or international value chains.



The selection criteria used in this report are not based on whether the interventions themselves are framed within a 'value chain language'. There will be interventions that call themselves 'private sector development projects' but which we consider value chain interventions, while other so called 'value chain projects' are aimed merely at providing extension services, generic skills development, improving organizational capacities etc. Value chain interventions included are therefore those which explicitly or implicitly aim at:

- creating new value chains;
- forging or strengthening new links within a value chain;
- increasing the capabilities of target groups to improve the terms of value chain participation;
- minimizing the possible negative impacts of value chain operations on non-participants and/or adjacent communities.

In this report, gender is conceptualised as the socially constructed difference between women and men (Kabeer, 1999). Thus gender is about how society gives meaning to differences in femininity and masculinity, and the power relations and dynamics that come about as a result of this (Laven et al., 2009). At the same time, this study focuses on issues related to the impact of value chain interventions specifically on women. This is because women are more disadvantaged than men in the context of value chain operations. However, as many scholars have pointed out, understanding the position of women in value chains and promoting women empowerment is an issue also affecting (and affected by) men, and therefore, it is necessary to remain attentive to the local context, including the diverse notions of masculinity that might both challenge or support gender empowerment (Wyrod, 2008; Parpart, et al., 2002). Furthermore, gender analysis should be concerned with intra-household conflicts over labour and income by linking broader cultural and societal processes. Thus, understanding women's position in a value chain, how changes in a value chain might affect gender inequality, and the main constraints for women in terms of gaining from value chain participation, requires one to place gender in the context of intra-household bargaining and of broader social processes dimensions (Wyrod, 2008; Parpart et al., 2002; Laven et al., 2009).

Gender is approached in markedly different ways in value chain analyses and interventions, depending on how gender equality and ‘empowerment’ are conceptualized. Empowerment can be defined as ‘a process by which those who have been denied the ability to make strategic life choices acquire the ability to do so’ (Kabeer, 1999: 437). In relation to women and value chains, empowerment is about changing *gender* relations in order to enhance *women’s* ability to shape their lives (Laven et al., 2009). Thus, from an empowerment perspective, differences in how women and men are involved in (and benefit from) value chains are not by definition a problem, because differences in preferences have to be distinguished from denials of choice.

This study covers interventions positioned along the whole ‘empowerment continuum’:

- On the ‘lighter’ end of the continuum, value chain interventions seek increased awareness (and monitoring) of the way they may have different impacts on men and women.
- Beyond generic gender awareness, some interventions seek to increase the gains of female actors in the chain or at least to ensure that no harm is produced.
- At the other end of the continuum are interventions that address gender inequality at the level of the household, in institutions and in value chain governance, or that attempt to help women to achieve a better functional position along a value chain (see for example the approach employed by members of the Agri-ProFocus network).<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Agri-ProFocus is a network on gender and agricultural value chains consisting of ICCO, Oxfam Novib, HIVOS, SNV, Cordaid, KIT, Solidaridad and CIDIN.

## 3. Methodology

### 3.1 Establishing the long list

From a preliminary search of existing empirical evidence it became clear that only a limited number of evaluations of value chain interventions and gender exist. It was therefore decided to supplement such evaluations with the literature reporting practical experiences and lessons learned in the field. In order to conduct a systematic review of the available evidence, the following selection criteria were employed in the search:

- The literature had to assess donor-financed interventions that explicitly or implicitly employed a value chain approach (as defined above).
- The literature had to assess either gender-specific value chain interventions or generic value chain interventions insofar as they addressed gender issues.

In establishing the long list of relevant literature, on the basis of the criteria explained above, evaluation websites and databases<sup>3</sup> were searched for relevant evaluations. Overview reports such as ‘Enhancing women’s Access to Markets: an Overview of Donor Programs and Best Practices’ (Gammage et al., 2005)<sup>4</sup> were also examined to identify which donor organizations were employing a value chain approach. Then, a range of organizations were approached directly in order to obtain relevant evaluations and reports (see Annex 3).

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<sup>3</sup> These include the inter-agency database on developing value chains, linkages and service markets - [http://www.value-chains.org/dyn/bds/bdssearch.home?p\\_lang=en](http://www.value-chains.org/dyn/bds/bdssearch.home?p_lang=en); the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) ([www.uneval.org](http://www.uneval.org)); the AidCO website (evaluations by the Evaluation Services of the 25 EU Member States and the European Commission of their external/development cooperation actions) - [http://ec.europa.eu/comm/dg/aidco/ms\\_ec\\_evaluations\\_inventory/evaluationslist.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/comm/dg/aidco/ms_ec_evaluations_inventory/evaluationslist.cfm); and the DAC Evaluation Resource Centre (DEReC) which contains development evaluation reports published by the 30 bilateral and multilateral network members - [http://www.oecd.org/pages/0,2966,en\\_35038640\\_35039563\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1,00.html](http://www.oecd.org/pages/0,2966,en_35038640_35039563_1_1_1_1_1,00.html)

<sup>4</sup> Other reports include: ‘Donor approaches to supporting pro-poor value chains’ (Altenburg 2007); ‘Gender in Agriculture Sourcebook’ (World Bank, Food and Agriculture Organization, and International Fund for Agricultural Development 2009); Donor Interventions in Value Chain Development (Daniel Roudner, 2007).

Additionally, personal contacts as well as established networks such as ‘The gender and value chains learning network’<sup>5</sup> proved useful in identifying relevant evaluations as well as grey literature reflecting practical experiences. A more traditional academic literature review was also conducted in order to identify articles that analyze the impact of value chain interventions as well as value chain manuals and studies relating to issues of gender and value chains.

The long list presented in Annex 5 illustrates the growing interest in gender issues in relation to value chains, but also the fact that such interest is relatively recent, and hence the number of ‘classic’ project evaluations is small compared to the number of existing guidance manuals and the literature on practical experiences and lessons learned.

### **3.2 The identified literature**

The literature that was identified in the long list can be grouped in four main categories - all of which are relevant for the purpose of this study.

#### *Background literature*

The long list includes research on value chain that has an explicit gender dimension as well as literature reviews, background reports and overview reports on donor approaches. It also includes literature discussing different approaches to women empowerment and gender equality.

#### *Value chain toolboxes/manuals*

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<sup>5</sup> The network is managed by Agri-pro focus (includes an eldis specifically on gender in value chains) <http://genderinvaluechains.com>. Other networks of relevance includes WEMAN (Women's Empowerment Mainstreaming And Networking - for gender justice in economic development) [www.wemanglobal.org](http://www.wemanglobal.org), the ‘KIT Information Portal Value Chains for Development’ managed by the Royal Tropical Institute <http://portals.kit.nl/smartsite.shtml?id=12505>; and Siyanda which is an on-line database of gender and development materials <http://www.siyanda.org/>

During the last decade, a range of value chain guides and manuals have emerged, aimed at assisting practitioners in developing and implementing pro-poor value chain interventions. Within the last few years, manuals focusing specifically on gender and value chains have also been produced – illustrating the growing interest in this particular area.

*Evaluations/impact assessments*

This category includes different types of assessments, including assessments of project interventions, assessments of larger programmes, meta-evaluations as well as peer-reviewed impact assessments. Some assessments thus include several value chains.

*Experiences and lessons learned*

This category includes project reports as well as reports describing experiences with ongoing or completed interventions.

**Table 3.1 – Entries in the long list**

<b>Categories of literature</b>	<b>Long list (Number of entries)</b>	<b>Filtering criteria</b>	<b>Short list (Number of entries)</b>
1) Background literature	27	Literature of relevance to gender and value chains	10
2) Value chain toolboxes/manuals	20	Value chain manuals which have a specific gender focus	7
3) Evaluations/impact assessments	43	All evaluations which qualify as: (1) 'value chain-related'; <sup>6</sup> and (2) having a gender dimension.	19
4) Experiences and lessons learned	48	Only material on ongoing or completed interventions which provide detailed information about both intervention processes and outcomes	25

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<sup>6</sup> Interventions which have an explicit vertical dimension.

### 3.3 Reflexions on the literature found and strategy for the creation of the short list

In developing a strategy for the creation of the short list, the following observations and adjustments were made:

- There is an expanding number of methodological ‘toolboxes’ for gendered value chain analysis providing ‘how to’ guidance for researchers (e.g. Rubin et al., 2009; Flores and Lindo, 2006; Mayoux and Mackie, 2008; Riisgaard et al., 2008).
- There is a paucity of robust evaluations of the gender impact of generic value chain interventions. Even though there is a growing number of evaluations on the efficiency of interventions designed specifically to improve gender-related outcomes in value chains, it is still a small pool of literature.
- Although focus was on examining the formal evaluations that are available, experiences and lessons learned (including best practice examples as well as unsuccessful examples) were also utilized, as well as methodological manuals for gendered value chain analysis and interventions (these are often based on the practical experiences gathered through interventions and seek to both synthesise best practice and at the same time inform and guide future practice) – both additional categories provided very useful insights.
- Since a relative scarcity of evaluation-based empirical evidence existed, this report is inclusive in relation to sectors, groups of actors as well as geographical location. It is obvious from the long list that most of the literature relates to agro-food value chains, but examples from other sectors also do exist (see Annex 6 for an overview of sector and geographical focus of the available evaluations and ‘lessons learned’ literature).
- The original intention was to include only material that was deemed methodologically sound. However due to paucity of material it was not plausible to employ this selection criteria. Instead, the evaluation methods employed are discussed in the tables included in Annex 1. The varying quality of the evaluations however is not perceived to pose a problem since the aim of this report is not to

assess impacts as such but rather to synthesise knowledge about which gender issues are important to address in relation to value chain development projects.

As a result, the short list for in-depth analysis (see Annex 7; summary in Table 3.1) consisted of all four categories included in the long list but filtered through the criteria listed in Table 3.1.

### **3.4 Analytical strategy for the short list**

Once a short list was established (see Annex 7), the background literature and the value chain toolboxes and manuals (category 1 and 2 materials as in Tables 3.1) were first examined to highlight the main gender issues related to value chain interventions.

Following this analysis, an analytical strategy was developed which led to an examination of evaluations and ‘experiences and lessons learned’ (categories 3 and 4) for the purpose of highlighting:

1. the gender objective of the intervention (and if there is any);
2. the kind of value chain upgrading strategy employed;
3. the gender outcomes of the intervention;
4. the level of gender mainstreaming in the diagnostic phase of the intervention, in monitoring/evaluation and among the organizations involved.

#### *3.4.1 Gender objective*

A first analytical lens was used in view of assessing:

- a) Whether the value chain intervention examined was ‘generic’ or targeted to women
- b) Whether the value chain intervention was seeking to:
  - a. to include more women in the chain;
  - b. improve the terms of inclusion of existing female actors in the chain or at least to ensure that no harm is produced;

- c. addressing gender inequality at the level of the household, institutions/organisations and value chain governance;
- d. helping women to achieve a better functional position in the value chain.

Identifying how value chain interventions relate to gender enabled a discussion of the differing underlying assumptions about gender equality which underpin such interventions. Examining these assumptions was important because they determine what constitutes a desired change and how a desired change is envisaged to come about (i.e. methods employed) and the indicators used to measure impact. Achieving increasing income for women, instigating changes in decision-making processes at the household level, or securing equality of opportunity and free choice are very different processes with different implications for women and for gender relations.

#### 3.4.2 *Upgrading strategy*

A second analytical lens was used in view of highlighting whether the interventions used ‘upgrading’ strategies as a guiding concept. If so, the kind of upgrading strategy sought and how it impacted on gender was examined. The concept of upgrading is used in value chain analysis to identify the possibilities for actors to ‘move up the value chain’, either by shifting to more rewarding positions in the chain, or by making products that have more value-added invested in them and/or that can provide better returns to producers. Analytical focus was placed in particular on the advantages and difficulties of upgrading through forging or improving:

- a) horizontal coordination (the types, systems and levels of cooperation between the same type of value chain actors – e.g. in women’s groups, cooperatives, mixed gender groups, etc); and/or
- b) vertical coordination (the links between actors in different value chain positions – e.g. between individual women or a women’s group with their buyers or providers of services).

When the material allowed, the different nature of upgrading trajectories (if any) was also examined:

- *product* upgrading: moving into more sophisticated products with increased unit



value (e.g. products complying with buyer requirements for higher quality, certification, food safety standards, traceability, packaging, etc);

- *process* upgrading: achieving a more efficient transformation of inputs into outputs through the reorganization of productive activities (e.g. applying new processing technology, delivering on schedule, reducing wastage, etc.);
- *functional* upgrading: acquiring new functions (or abandoning old ones) that increase the skill content of activities (e.g. in addition to production activities, carrying out grading, primary processing, bulking and storage, transporting; or engaging in the provision of services, input or finance);
- *inter-sectoral* (or inter-chain) upgrading: applying competences acquired in one function of a chain and using them in a different sector/chain (e.g. applying a new production, processing or logistics system from one value chain to start or improve activities in another).

### 3.4.3 Gender outcomes

A third analytical lens related to the gender outcomes of the interventions and covered both generic value chain interventions and interventions targeted at women. When possible, such outcomes were examined at the levels of:

- a) individual women and women groups;
- b) household;
- c) value chain;
- d) social, economic and political environment.

A particular focus here was on possible explanatory factors for why some interventions are more (or less) successful than others. Furthermore, when possible, connections were drawn between underlying gender assumptions of the interventions (when known) and their outcomes.

#### *3.4.4 Gender mainstreaming*

A final lens adopted in the analysis was one seeking to identify gender mainstreaming issues in value chain interventions, highlighting at least three aspects:

- a) gender mainstreaming in the diagnostic/project design phase of a value chain intervention (including the use of participatory methods);
- b) gender mainstreaming in monitoring and evaluation; and
- c) gender mainstreaming within the organizations involved in the intervention.

It should be noted that by employing these analytical strategies on the selected evaluations, several large knowledge gaps became evident. In relation to gender objectives, none of the experiences evaluated related to addressing gender inequality at the level of institutions or value chain governance. Furthermore, only very few included elements for helping women to achieve a better functional position in the value chain. In relation to upgrading trajectories, none of the examined interventions related specifically to functional upgrading or inter-sectoral (or inter-chain) upgrading. In relation to the gender outcomes of the interventions, none of the experiences evaluated related to forging changes in the broader economic or political environment. These knowledge gaps are further elaborated in Annex 9.

## **4 What do we know about the gender outcomes of value chain interventions?**

The evidence stemming from the identified short list is presented below in four different sub-sections referring to:

- (1) Gender outcomes of value chain interventions focused on complying with sustainability standards;
- (2) Gender outcomes of generic value chain interventions;
- (3) Gender outcomes of value chain interventions that target only women; and
- (4) Gender mainstreaming in value chain projects.

It should be noted that the relative abundance of evaluations of value chain interventions focused on compliance with standards and the technical specificities of such interventions called for a separate discussion from other ‘generic’ value chain interventions. In each sub-section, narrative summaries of relevant evaluation findings are presented. The summaries are supported by tables (placed in Annex 1) that explain: (1) the main objective(s) of the interventions/evaluations and the evaluation methods employed; (2) the upgrading strategies employed in the intervention; and (3) the reported gender outcomes. This is followed in each section by a discussion of lessons learnt from the evaluations, complemented by lessons arising from other relevant material and case studies (these are presented in more detailed form in Annex 4).

### **4.1 Gender outcomes of value chain interventions focused on complying with sustainability standards**

Six evaluations were identified that seek to measure and evaluate gender-segregated effects on smallholders in a variety of value chains where participation is defined by certification

under one or another ‘sustainability standard’, such as Organic, Fairtrade, UTZ or Rainforest Alliance<sup>7</sup>. None of these standards are specifically targeted at women, although Fairtrade does require that special attention is given to the participation of female members in Fairtrade-registered cooperatives.<sup>8</sup> Thus, in relation to intervention objectives, these interventions do not relate specifically to gender although they might include clauses on non discrimination in relation to scheme participation. It is the evaluations, not the interventions, which have a specific gender focus. The evaluations presented here measure gender-differentiated impacts at the levels of the household (both in relation to decision making and workload), and in relation to access to services (including training), producer organizations and markets. The overall upgrading strategy employed in the donor interventions that are covered here is to facilitate smallholder participation in new ‘sustainable’ value chains. This will often include training, establishment of internal control systems and producer groups, financial support to third party certification, and marketing. Thus, the support comprises a range of value chain strategies including product and process upgrading and improved coordination of value chain actors both horizontally and vertically.

#### *4.1.1 Fairtrade certified banana and coffee producers in Peru, Costa Rica and Ghana*

An evaluation of Fairtrade certified banana and coffee producers in Peru, Costa Rica and Ghana (Ruben et al., 2008) measures (among other issues) the effect of Fairtrade certification on household decision making and finds mostly negative results. The contribution of women to household income seems to decline, whereas the role of the male household head in key decision domains becomes reinforced. The authors suggest that since gender dynamics are not considered in the Fairtrade certification process, it often reinforces existing inequities within households. Although this might be the case, the differences they report are not statistically significant and furthermore the Fairtrade household analysed tend to be located in poorer areas which might explain the differences.

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<sup>7</sup> The certification initiatives evaluated have involved some form of donor support in relation to meeting certification requirements and therefore can be considered ‘value chain interventions’.

<sup>8</sup> The fairtrade standard, under ‘social development’, includes a progress requirement stating that ‘the organisation is expected to show how it directly supports members from disadvantaged or minority groups to participate actively in the organisation, e.g. by assuming organisational responsibilities [...] Special attention should be given to the participation of female members’ (§1.4.2.1) *Generic Fairtrade Standards for Small Producers’ Organisations* January 2009.

What can be learnt from the analysis is that no positive correlation was found between participation in a Fairtrade scheme and positive changes in women's participation in household decision making. As the authors of the evaluation also note, attitudinal changes (changes in household decision making) seem to require better linkages between the production/organisation level (addressed via certification) and the household level.

#### *4.1.2 Fairtrade and organic certified cotton producers in West Africa*

A study by Basset (2009) reports findings from case studies of Fairtrade and organic certified cotton producers in West Africa. In West Africa, women are typically excluded from conventional cotton growing because of discrimination by extension agents and men, and by high production costs. The author finds that Fairtrade cotton can increase women's incomes and autonomy and promote greater gender equality. This is mainly due to the fact that Fairtrade cooperatives are perceived to be more transparent and democratic than non-Fairtrade and hence women experience less discrimination. However, the evidence cited seems to also show the opposite. Men are attracted by the greater returns of the Fairtrade or organic crop and may use their wives' names to apply for certification. Limited access to land also limits women's participation. Given the lack of information about the methods employed in this study it is not possible to judge the quality of its results. With that limitation in mind, the study seems to indicate that Fairtrade organizational norms to some degree counteract the discrimination experienced by women.

#### *4.1.3 Fairtrade and organic certified coffee producers in Guatemala and Mexico*

A study by Lyon et al. (2009), based on a combination of ethnographic, archival, and survey data, provides more detailed analysis of both method and findings. This study assesses the relation between 'sustainable' market participation and gender equality. It finds that Fairtrade organizational norms combined with organic procedural norms bring significant impacts in three areas. Firstly, organizational norms required by FLO encourage women to participate in village and regional organizations. Through improved access to organizations (although mostly at lower hierarchical levels) women have greater access to network benefits. The organic requirement of internal control systems require that records be kept of meeting attendance and annual capacity-building workshop participation for

each farm operator. Attendance is required from all farm operators, and as a consequence female farmers are less easily excluded from organizational activities. Secondly, legal requirements of organic certification lead to increased registration of land to women. Requirements of receipt verification, on-farm inspections and farmer accreditation require farmer presence, and hence have the effect of requiring absent (migrant) husbands to cede farm operator registration to women household members. Thirdly, women enjoy increased access to cash. The combination of higher Fairtrade–organic coffee prices and receipt audits provides women with direct access to higher union coffee prices. This effect is particularly evident in communities where women otherwise would sell locally at exploitative prices. As noted by the authors of the evaluation, some impacts are largely unintended – e.g. organic procedural forms. They also note that requirements that work to women’s benefit may also create barriers to participation, excluding women with high family labour obligations or without sufficient formal education.

The authors also note how the change from conventional to Fairtrade–organic production methods has altered the gender balance in coffee work. On the one hand, significantly higher quality requirements tend to increase women’s labour burdens since women typically perform key quality-producing steps such as washing, drying, and selection. On the other hand, Fairtrade– organic cooperatives may gain access to technical support and credit support, allowing them to purchase mechanized wet mill equipment that can dramatically reduce women’s labour.

#### *4.1.4 Organic certified pineapple and coffee producers in Uganda*

A gendered impact assessment of organic certified pineapple and coffee producers in Uganda (Bolwig and Odeke, 2007) also touches open changes in women’s workload as a consequence of certification. The study, based on a household survey (with control group) and focus group interviews, discusses how organic conversion affects men and women differently in respect of changes in the costs and benefits of farming. The study finds that organic conversion has significantly increased women’s labour effort in coffee production, while the effect on male labour has been weaker. While men enjoy almost exclusive control of income from organic farming, it is women who carry out most of the additional farming and processing work needed to meet organic certification and stricter quality and farm

management requirements of the organic exporter. According to the authors, it is very likely that women's increased effort in coffee farming in recent years has occurred at the expense of their own income-generating activities. Hence, while men over the last five years have enjoyed an increase in the income they control (from coffee), women appear to have experienced the opposite. The skewed gender distribution of the costs and benefits associated with certification was much more pronounced among coffee farmers. According to the authors, this seemed to be the result of differences in gender relations, in land availability and farm size, and in market conditions: 1) gender relations seemed generally more equal among pineapple farmers thus giving women better access to pineapple incomes and men less command over women's labour for the purpose of pineapple growing; 2) pineapple farmers earned very high incomes (in local comparative terms), due to larger farm size, high yields, and favourable market conditions, and this allowed them to hire more labour thereby relaxing the demand on women's labour.

#### *4.1.5 Organic certified smallholder farming in Latin America*

A thematic impact evaluation was conducted for IFAD of organic certified smallholders farming different crops in Latin America (IFAD, 2003). Although assessing gender differentiated impacts was not the main purpose of the evaluation, it does find that the transition period - the first two or three years after farmers start to produce organically - is more difficult for female farmers. This is due to the fact that female farmers more often have little family labour available and therefore find it more difficult to cover the extra labour demands brought on by the need to carry out soil conservation measures (while paying for certification costs without yet being able to obtain certification). At the same time, the study also finds that organic production has increased the hiring of labour during harvesting, because, in most cases, yields have been higher. Because the highest demand for women's labour for crops like coffee, cacao and vegetables is during harvesting, the authors conclude that women wage workers have benefited the most from organic production. The study, however, does not discuss the conditions under which the women work or gender differences in remuneration. What can be highlighted from this study is that the increased workload caused by certification requirements is particularly challenging for female farmers.

#### 4.1.6 *Tea and coffee smallholder certification to UTZ, Rainforest Alliance and Fairtrade in Uganda, Kenya and Ethiopia*

A study comparing small scale producers' perceptions of the impacts of certification to Fairtrade, UTZ Certified and Rainforest Alliance standards (Riisgaard et al., 2009) shows positive impacts for women across all three standards – with differences as to what had improved. The Fairtrade certified case studies show improved female representation and participation in farmer organisations. One of the UTZ case studies also showed improvements in this area. The other UTZ case study, while less positive in this respect, reported impacts from training on empowerment. Finally the Rainforest Alliance certified group attributed improvements for women to increased interaction among female farmers. These differences are largely consistent with variations between the three standards in their coverage of gender issues.<sup>9</sup> When assessing these positive gender impacts, it should be noted that the findings are based on changes perceived by a non-randomly selected group of participants. Nevertheless, the results points at both direct and indirect gender benefits from participation in sustainability schemes.

#### 4.1.7 *Discussion*

On the basis of the evaluations discussed above, several key gender-specific issues can be identified in relation to participation in certification schemes which are not targeted specifically at women.

*Generic value chain interventions focused on compliance with standards can have positive outcomes for participating women*

Even though the standards are not targeted specifically at women, the value chain upgrading strategies implemented in order to comply with standard requirements still address areas where women are often particularly disadvantaged, such as access to training,

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<sup>9</sup> Fairtrade is the only standard that requires special attention to active participation of female members in the farmer organisation (§1.4.2.1). In the UTZ standard, gender is mentioned under the requirements for non discrimination of workers where it also states that “certificate holder / members do not engage in [...] access to training [...] on the basis of gender [...]“ (§10.F.7). In the Rainforest Alliance standard, gender is mentioned only under the requirements for non discrimination in respect of workers (§ 5.2.) and in the selection of producers for group certification (§ 2.1.7.). *Generic Fairtrade Standards for Small Producers' Organisations* January 2009, *Sustainable Agriculture Standard, Sustainable Agriculture Network* April 2009, *UTZ CERTIFIED Good Inside Code of Conduct for Coffee* January 2009.



producer organizations and markets. This seems to support the notion that generic value chain interventions (emphasizing product and process upgrading as well as forging/strengthening horizontal and vertical linkages) can have positive effects for participating women if they (even unintentionally) address gendered constraints.

Due to procedural norms, participation seems to lead to less discrimination of women in terms of access to training and organizations (although women are mostly found at lower hierarchical levels). Also, certification in some cases seems to remedy the unfavourable terms that women face when selling to local merchants because certification brings improvements in terms of accessing markets and market information.<sup>10</sup> And finally, again due to procedural norms, participation can lead to more women being registered as farm operators.

*There is no automatic correlation between participation in value chain interventions and positive changes in household decision making*

The evidence here is mixed but seems to support the notion that no positive connection can be identified between participation in a standard scheme (and the related upgrading strategies) and changes in household decision making. Conversely, participation seems to increase the workload particularly of women – due to demands for product and process upgrading. For example, change from conventional to Fairtrade–organic production methods seems to increase the workload particularly of women. This might occur at the expense of women’s own income-generating activities. Also, the transition to organic production might be more difficult for female headed households due to the extra labour demands brought on by the need to carry out soil conservation measures. Nevertheless, one evaluation reports that women perceive to be better off as a result of scheme participation, including at the household level.

*A mixed picture*

Overall, the evaluations point to positive effects for women in terms of access to training, producer organizations and markets. At the same time, they suggest that there is room for

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<sup>10</sup> In conventional markets, women often sell a portion of household produce independently of men and at a substantially lower price as a consequence of limitations on their mobility (e.g., inability to travel to sites where they will receive higher prices) and discrimination. With improved access to commercialization channels, certification is likely to have a positive effect in this regard (Lyon et al. 2009).

improvements in relation to intra-household relations and to decision-making within producer organizations (this issue will be discussed in more detail in the following sections).

#### *A more gendered focus?*

Although value chain interventions focused on compliance with sustainability-standards seem to have provided several benefits for women, more could be done to specifically target women. The experience of the Café Femenino Label (see Box 1) and an investigation of gender equality and UTZ certification in a cocoa value chain (see Box 2) provide some suggestions.

#### ***Box 1. The Café Femenino label***

An innovative approach to ‘sustainable’ value chains, although not yet systematically evaluated, is the development of women’s brands, such as the ‘Café Femenino’ label - an organically grown coffee. The approach originates from Peru but by 2008 this programme was active in 8 countries: Peru, Brazil, Bolivia, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Mexico and Colombia (Oxfam Novib, 2009). The scope of the operation was to create a brand that would give higher value to coffee produced by women through ‘specialty coffee’ certifications, organic farming and Fairtrade marketing channels (IFAD/Manikowska, 2007). In Peru, Café Femenino was created to enable female coffee producers control their share of benefits from coffee growing. By creating a ‘women’s only space’ within an existing mixed gender producer organisation, women have generated their own micro company (trademark for women).

According to the World Bank (2009), the example from Peru illustrates the added value that an explicit gender focus can bring. Aside from increasing female participation in the coffee cooperatives and improving their technical capacity, the program has helped to strengthen women’s self-esteem and leadership capacity. Thus, more women are part of the boards in mixed gender organizations and are also working as extension and administrative workers. The interest by women in managing the organization has also sharply increased - a fact that has been accompanied by a change in the attitude of men, who now apparently accept and facilitate women’s participation.

*Source:* Agriterro (2009) and IFAD/Manikowska (2007) in the World Bank (2009).

#### ***Box 2. How to improve gender equality in the cocoa value chain via certification and producer support***

A joint publication by UTZ certified and Solidaridad (in cooperation with Oxfam Novib) investigates how to improve gender equality in the cocoa value chain via certification and producer support. Based on case studies, workshops and a gender-analysis of the UTZ code, a range of recommendations emerge. The study focus is on the UTZ code and the cocoa sector. However, the UTZ code in many aspects overlap with other sustainability standards and the gender specific constraints identified for female cocoa farmers (e.g. limited access to cooperative membership and decision making bodies, to cocoa markets, to training and information, to land, to credit) can be found in most other agricultural sectors. Thus, the recommendations listed are deemed useful also in relation to other sustainability standards.

The recommendations include the following:

- Participation in certified value chains, especially those entailing higher quality demands, can increase the demand for pre- and post-harvest labour, which in large part is conducted by women. Close monitoring of these effects can help certification programmes identify and address problems at an early stage.
- Addressing gender specific barriers such as lack of information, lack of access to resources, and lack of training can help ensure equal opportunities for participation. This will sometimes entail adjusting organizational structures.
- Many of these issues could be addressed when (and if) producers receive donor support in relation to conversion to certified production. Cooperation with local gender experts and NGOs is important, as is the use of female trainers and tailored training programmes.
- Support might also focus on creating accessible credit schemes, informing about women's rights, especially land rights, and importantly, include an awareness raising module on gender in the farmer training programme for male farmers.

*Source:* Solidaridad and UTZ (2009).

## **4.2 Gender outcomes of generic value chain interventions**

Six evaluations were identified that seek to measure and evaluate gender-segregated effects of generic value chain interventions. These are interventions that are not focused on standards compliance and that do not specifically target women as their main objective. At the same time they all have one or another gender component. Such a component varies from simply (but explicitly) assuming that women will automatically benefit from a generic intervention, to mentioning that women should participate, to setting targets for empowerment effects. The upgrading strategies employed in the donor interventions discussed here mainly include producer training in order to facilitate product and process upgrading, and to a lesser degree support to producer groups and marketing (to improve horizontal and vertical linkages).

### *4.2.1 Upgrading of the fisheries sector in Vietnam*

An evaluation covering several ADB-financed projects uses a project case study approach, and one of the projects implicitly employs a value chain approach – the Vietnam Fisheries Infrastructure Improvement Project (Asian Development Bank, 2001). The project's overall objective is to promote modernization and greater efficiency in the marine fisheries sector. It includes upgrading of 10 fishing ports; the establishment of environmental

monitoring units and loans to selected private sector investors to establish ice plants and cold storage facilities at the ports. The project was ongoing during the evaluation mission with nine of the 10 ports still incomplete. Nevertheless the evaluation provides some useful insights.

While the project design recognized gender specialization in specific areas of marine fisheries, it nevertheless assumed that parts of the project like the loans component and upgrading of port facilities would benefit women without any special interventions – simply by providing a better working environment and increased income. It anticipated that the project would ‘uplift the status and living conditions of women in fisher folk households. This will be achieved through reduction of hardship in fish transporting, increased supply of freshwater and ice, increased earnings and improvements in living conditions and health’ (Asian Development Bank, 2001). A domestic research institute had carried out a preparatory socioeconomic study which included gender aggregated data (it attempted to assess the percentage of women employed in capture fisheries). The study however focused on capture fisheries, rather than onshore fisheries activities in marketing and processing in which women are mostly involved.

The evaluation concludes that the project design did not accurately capture women's roles in the fisheries sector. Although the ports provide a wholesale fish marketing area, which helps some female fish buyers and ice sellers in general, the benefits of the project will accrue to larger boat owners and to large fish-processing businesses. The latter employ mainly female labour, and working conditions in many of these operations need improvement. More importantly, according to the evaluation, modernization of the ports is likely to reduce labour demand and remove the small economic niches in fish marketing and processing currently occupied by poor women. Furthermore, the loans component does not recognise the serious impediment of women in obtaining loans because women in most cases are unable to offer collateral.

This evaluation provides a very useful example of the importance of building a project design on a gendered value chain analysis. Because the project design did not accurately capture women's roles in the fisheries sector, it not only failed to impact positively on women, but even has unintended negative impacts.

#### 4.2.2 *Aquaculture production in Bangladesh*

An evaluation of two DANIDA-supported interventions aimed at pro-poor involvement in aquaculture production in Bangladesh shows increased intra-household interaction and mobility among those women who participated in the interventions compared to a control-group of non-participating women (DANIDA, 2009). Selection of female extension trainers appears to have been an important vehicle for attracting the large number of female participants to the training sessions and contributing to their empowerment by acting as role models. According to focus group discussions conducted with participants, the extension trainers faced many barriers and challenges at the beginning of the interventions due to discrimination. However, gradually they won more respect and gained higher status within their communities.

According to the evaluation, the main impact of participation on women's empowerment resulted from an increase in consciousness and self-confidence and from practical changes related to participation, such as attending meetings and receiving credit, rather than from the application of technical skills and knowledge gained from training, or from increased credit control within the household. The evaluation concludes that these changes were not due to the actual application of technical training (women participated equally), but to restrictive gender roles that prevented most of the women from actually using their training. Men appeared to be in control of both pond activities and financial decisions within the households. On this basis, the evaluation concluded that increasing the empowerment of women is a long-term process: 'It may start with training/education of women together with some specific kind of economic empowerment, like access to credit. However, real changes in intra-HH [household] power and responsibilities cannot be expected to take place in the short term' (DANIDA, 2009). According to the evaluation, the project experience shows that gradual increases in the mobility of women and their involvement in decision-making processes are necessary first steps in this process.

The project aimed at including more women in the value chain and at empowering these women. The evaluation reveals that even though participation by women in training and credit schemes was successful, this did not alter inequitable gender relations at the

household level where men retained control of both pond activities and financial decisions. Nevertheless, participating women reported increased mobility and intra-household interaction.

#### *4.2.3 Pigs, pond aquaculture, and tile-making value chains in Cambodia*

The impacts of a USAID funded project seeking to strengthen the production and marketing of pigs, pond aquaculture, and tile-making are reported in Miller and Amato (2007). The authors of the evaluation report what they call ‘a gender-reverse bias’, with female-run businesses benefiting disproportionately. The evaluation team finds that the fact that women are less mobile and more disadvantaged means that they benefit more from participation in generic training compared with men. Although this might be the experience in this particular intervention, it would certainly have been interesting to learn more about how the participating women were able to overcome their mobility constraints and whether they were able to implement the skills obtained during training equally to male participants.

#### *4.2.4 Upgrading the coffee and domestic livestock sectors in Nicaragua.*

A SIDA-funded project in Nicaragua included support to organizational processes such as strengthening cooperatives, support product upgrading, support to introduce products in national and international markets and product diversification in order to reduce dependency on coffee and livestock. An evaluation of the project (Fajardo et al., 2006) mentions that women were not included in training on product upgrading. The diversification component of the project is the only one specifically targeted at women and its objective is to increase gender equality and women’s access to resources by introducing vegetable growing both for commercial and household use. According to the evaluation such component has had very positive results in increasing gender equality and improving the access of women to new resources. However, the program has also increased women’s workload.

#### 4.2.5 *A Farm Forestry Support Project in Pakistan*

A country evaluation of gender mainstreaming in SDC-funded projects in Pakistan includes a Farm Forestry Support Project aimed at micro enterprise promotion targeting particularly women entrepreneurs (Stuart and Rahat, 2008). It operates in three geographical areas – two of which are highly resistant to women’s participation in economic activities. Women in rural areas in Pakistan generally have very limited access to resources or decision-making power and mobility for women is in general extremely restricted. In spite of these constraints, the evaluation found that the project had successfully reached out to women, and made a significant contribution to their socio-economic development.

The reason for this success was a radical shift in project-design and strategies during the third phase of the project. During the implementation of phases I and II, the project staff had found it very difficult to contact the female farmers whom they rarely saw. An external review (Veer et al., 2004) recommended that the project focused more on gender. In 2004, the project designed a range of new gender strategies, including:

- identifying women through local clusters, NGOs and village focal points; asking male entrepreneurs registered with the programme to encourage the women in their households to participate in the programme;
- educating women master trainers at village level to train the nursery entrepreneurs and provide technical support on a timely basis; these were married, older women, who had a ‘sound’ reputation and had access to women at the household level;
- introducing nursery development as an income earning proposition for home-based women;
- increasing the income earning potential for women associated with the project by introducing farm forestry enterprises such as manufacturing of wooden decoration pieces, kana products, and honeybee keeping;
- recruiting twice as many female staff as male staff in conservative areas both as a backup (in case one leaves) and as a form of mutual support; introducing gender sensitive operational guidelines, and introducing concepts of gender sensitive budgeting; and

- establishing gender sensitivity as a criteria for choosing project partners, and developing local partners' capacity in gender mainstreaming.

According to the evaluation team, these new strategies have enabled the projects to successfully reach out to women, and resulted in a significant contribution to their socio-economic development. Unfortunately, no details about method or findings are recorded.

#### *4.2.6 Export anthurium flower production in Sri Lanka*

This is an ILO-funded project promoting flower production for export in Sri Lanka and part of the ILO Enter-growth programme. One of the reasons for intervening in the anthurium flower sector was that it includes both small-scale female and male farmers. The project focus is not specifically on women but 70 per cent of the participating entrepreneurs are women. The intervention consisted of a value chain analysis (both local and global) and follow-up activities generated by the value chain exercise. The results of the value chain exercise reported in Barlow et al. (2009) did not include any gender-based constraints and the resulting activities were focused on producers as such - targeting constraints in relation to marketing and distribution, production and sourcing.

According to a mid-term evaluation (Smeets, 2007), initial impacts included improved market linkages, improved skills, product quality and prices. No gender specific impacts are recorded but since the majority of the entrepreneurs are women, the assumption is that women have benefited. The evaluation study also looks for improvement in the field of women empowerment (decision making power and community participation). It concludes that there is 'potential' for such improvements to occur. This potential is mainly related to 'having' an anthurium business and being a member of a business association, not to the changes that have taken place in the business as a result of the project activities.

In this project, gender considerations were a factor in the choice of sector to intervene in, but neither the value chain analysis nor the activities resulting from it relate to gender-based constraints. It is having a flower business as such that may lead to empowerment in this case, and by increasing the number of growers the project hopes to empower future female growers.



#### 4.2.7 Discussion

The evaluations discussed here provide very different but nonetheless valuable insights in relation to generic value chain interventions. In most of these interventions, the aim is not to specifically target women. The interventions do include gender issues, but these are limited to mentioning that women should participate and to assuming that if women participate, they will automatically benefit (see studies 4.2.1. and 4.2.3). In two cases where the interventions are carried out in 'gender conservative' areas, they have (successfully) designed specific strategies to secure female participation (4.2.2 and 4.2.5). Three key issues were identified in the evaluations examined in this section:

##### *The role of training*

Use of female trainers seems successful in facilitating increased participation of women in training activities. However, increased participation of individual women in training activities does not necessarily lead to changes in household decision making nor are participating women necessarily able to apply the knowledge acquired through participation (particularly in male-dominated societies). Also, one evaluation shows that women were not trained in relation to the main objective of the intervention (product upgrading) but only in more traditional female led-activities.

##### *Targeting women specifically or not?*

Two of the evaluations analyzed here suggest that assuming that women will automatically gain from generic value chain interventions can have serious consequences. In this section, observations about the impacts on women of generic interventions relate particularly to training with the aim of accomplishing product and process upgrading. One evaluation however suggests that because women are often starting from a relatively more disadvantaged position with regard to business knowledge and skills, generic technical assistance can benefit participating women more than men.

Relevant to this discussion are the experiences from a three-year IDRC-funded project which commissioned seven research teams to implement value chain research and interventions while taking into account the effects that the application of upgrading

strategies have on poverty, environment and gender issues (Coles and Mitchell, 2009). Six of the seven teams performed generic upgrading of actors or the enabling environment in value chain nodes where women in the target group were particularly active or numerous. Coles and Mitchell (2009) argue that generic upgrading of processes, products, functions and value chains themselves (non-gendered strategies) can be strategically applied to actors in nodes where there are particular gender issues to leverage positive outcomes. For example, upgrading strategies applied to parts of the chain where women are numerous can enhance their terms of participation (see example in Box 3).<sup>11</sup>

***Box 3. How a generic intervention can address gender constraints***

One of the IDRC funded action case studies is concerned with the frozen *Pangasius* catfish value chain from Vietnam. This value chain is dominated by micro and small scale fingerling and out-grower farmers (mainly men) in rural districts of the Mekong Delta. The value chain analysis conducted previous to the intervention states that large numbers of women are employed in processing factories, around 10% of the labour force of grow-out farms is women and around 90% of fish traders (for domestic consumption) are women.

The value chain intervention aimed at stimulating process and product upgrading, strengthening horizontal and vertical coordination (farmers' groups and contracting) and chain upgrading (diversification of stocking for local markets) by micro-farmers. Intra-household baseline studies indicate that women have significant control of the household income and expenditure budgets among the target group and that therefore they will benefit from any general uplift in incomes resulting from successful upgrading of grow-out farmers. Less volatile exports of catfish will increase reliability of work in the processing factories. However, the interventions employed in this case did not seek to change gender relationships (see Annex 4 for a more detailed explanation of the project).

*Source:* Coles and Mitchell (2009).

This argument is actually in line with the experiences from the evaluations discussed above if one keeps in mind that the seven IDRC funded projects (Coles and Mitchell, 2009) were all based on a thorough and gendered value chain analysis prior to project design and implementation. As illustrated by the intervention evaluated in section 4.2.1, if such a pre-project gendered value chain analysis is not performed, then a generic intervention risks not only failing to impact positively on women but even to have unintended negative

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<sup>11</sup> Coles and Mitchell (2009) draw a similar conclusion in relation to addressing the enabling environment. For more details see Annex 3. The authors recommend the use of a generic (non-gendered) approach to act on sectors and nodes of value chains in which women are participating significantly. They furthermore argue that where women have control of household budgets (for example in parts of South-East Asia) they will benefit from any generic improvement in incomes and other impacts. Conversely gender-specific interventions are seen as most appropriate in situations where women do not have control over household income and decisions and do not necessarily benefit from generic approaches (Coles and Mitchell, 2009).

impacts. Furthermore, as illustrated by some of the other interventions discussed in this section (4.2.2 and 4.2.5), generic interventions are not sufficient to secure value chain participation by women when working in conservative areas. Additionally, it should be kept in mind that equal participation in training on upgrading does not necessarily mean equal ability to apply the knowledge acquired (4.2.2) nor, as illustrated in Box 4, should gender equality be confused with participation.

***Box 4. Confusing gender equality with participation?***

The Batana oil project in Honduras included organizing a new value chain and developing new horizontal and vertical linkages. The gendered analysis performed by ICCO has formed the basis for ongoing work with MOPAW on the development of a stronger institutional base for gender equality and application in the field.

The ICCO analysis found that, in the value chain project, gender equality was mainly understood as female participation. As the majority of Batana producers are women, female participation scores high in the project. Thus, the gender component consisted of including women as participants. Even though the project had benefitted female participants in terms of increased income, serious gender gaps were identified in the analysis (such as lack of representation in decision making bodies, and lack of identity cards necessary for financial and other formal procedures; see Annex 4 for a more detailed explanation of the project).

*Source: ICCO (2009).*

*Product and process upgrading*

According to Manfre and Sebstad (2010) there are many gender specific constraints which make it difficult for women to make investments in product and process upgrading. These include some of the issues which have already been discussed, such as women being more risk adverse than men (due to their household responsibilities and the fact that they have less resources or alternative options to count on, such as access to land or finance).

Women often have limited access to information, inputs, and training. Furthermore, women's limited income stream (and household expenditure responsibilities) often makes it difficult to accumulate lump sums needed for investment. Additionally, as will be discussed in section 4.3, women's ability to engage in or develop value chain relationships (either horizontal or vertical) supportive of upgrading is in many societies limited due to women's limited mobility and prevalent social norms.

### **4.3 Gender outcomes of value chain interventions that target only women**

Seven evaluations were identified that seek to measure and evaluate the outcome of value chain interventions that target only women. Four of the evaluations examine interventions seeking to establish so called 'women-centred value chains'. One evaluation compares individual versus group approaches to implementing new technology. Another looks at interventions facilitating the creation of women-only producer groups, and a third at interventions supporting female entrepreneurs. The objectives and upgrading strategies of the various interventions vary, yet most are focused on enhancing women's positions in the value chain via forging or improving horizontal and especially vertical linkages.

#### *4.3.1 Handicraft development programme in Pakistan*

A country evaluation of gender mainstreaming in SDC-funded projects in Pakistan includes a project which uses a value chain approach (Stuart and Rahat, 2008). The project is a handicraft development programme, where village women embroiderers were organized and supported. A business unit was also established as a secondary production/stitching unit that would design the products, stitch, finish, and market them. Later phases of the programme focused on identifying and training selected women to earn an income through the development of new handicraft items. The project's activities included the creation of market-oriented products, the development of processes and procedures for raw material purchase, inventory management, delivery and collection of embroidery pieces, payments and delivery of products to outlets and marketing of the products under the brand name 'Thread-Net Hunza'. Thus, this programme sought to create new value chains with female participation at all levels.

The evaluation found that the project had changed women's and men's consciousness about possible roles and increased women's access to, and control over, resources. Unfortunately, details about interviews conducted and findings are not available. It would also have been interesting and useful if the evaluation had included information about challenges met and how such constraints were overcome. Nevertheless, according to the evaluation, the long-term project provided an excellent opportunity to assess gender-

specific impacts – even in the absence of baseline data. The evaluation reported positive change. Despite the highly conservative social norms, women had successfully entered the market place and participated in value chains at all levels.

#### *4.3.2 Women embroiders in Pakistan*

An internal impact assessment has been conducted of a UNIDO/CIDA funded program aimed at linking low-income, isolated Pakistani women embroiders to markets. The assessment notes that apart from increased business skills, product quality and income women also report increased contributions to household decision-making, self-confidence and mobility (USAID, 2007). The program was designed specifically to meet the constraints faced by women in Pakistan, particularly the fact that many rural embroiderers are unable to leave their community or meet directly with men. The programme developed a network of female intermediaries that linked the female embroiderers to markets. The program also provided an embedded package of services that helped them meet the demand from contemporary markets while linking intermediaries to design services and to urban garment makers.

This project seeks to improve the terms of women's inclusion in a local value chain by forging new (both horizontal and vertical) links within the value chain and to have women occupy new positions in it. According to the assessment, almost all women reported increased contributions to household decision-making, control over their income, greater respect from their husbands and in-laws and enhanced feelings of self-confidence. Furthermore, changes in the roles that women filled in society were also noted due to the training of female community sales agents (who were originally rural embroiderers), local sales agents and buying house operators. These experienced much greater mobility in their own communities and for travelling to urban centres to participate in exhibitions and to negotiate with buyers. Another result of participation in the program was that women had more freedom to meet in groups than previously. This included training sessions, work groups, exhibitions, buying and selling sessions, peer meetings etc.

The assessment unfortunately does not provide information on the methodology employed or on whether the changes in the roles and functions performed by women (both in the

households and in the value chain) had caused any negative effects. The assessment only notes that in general, men seemed supportive of women's accomplishments. An important lesson to learn from this particular evaluation is that the project is designed specifically to overcome gender specific constraints regarding lack of mobility, lack of access to markets and lack of integration in a local value chain. The constraints are overcome by establishing female intermediaries which link the village women to markets.

#### *4.3.3 Community-managed maize procurement in India*

This project, implemented in India, addressed the lack of market linkages and resulting unfavourable bargaining position of poor, particularly female, maize producers towards local traders. To eliminate the unfair practices of local traders and enhance smallholders' bargaining power, village procurement centres, owned and operated by women's self-help group members and their institutions, were developed. The village procurement centre addresses the lack of credit, quality control, product aggregation, and market linkage under a single umbrella.

An evaluation conducted after the project had been operational for one year found that the intervention had increased the participation, leadership, and technical skills of women in the rural market. Through these groups, women were managing village enterprises, an activity that required them to take on duties that were previously in the men's domain – e.g. negotiating with traders and representatives of the private and public sectors. The procurement centres benefited not only members of the self-help groups but also members of the village as a whole. Thus, owing to the benefits of their services, participating women have garnered support from village elders and leaders. Unfortunately, the study does not mention whether the new roles occupied by women had caused any problems. Another factor of concern is that the views expressed seem to be limited to those of the members of the procurement committees. Nevertheless, it seems that the project by forging new links has managed to improve the terms of women's inclusion in a local value chain and successfully linking otherwise isolated women to markets (Subrahmanyam, 2006).

#### *4.3.4 Organizing Afghan women to generate income from poultry*

A USAID/FAO-funded project organizing Afghan women to generate income from poultry was assessed after 2 years of project implementation (it was a 3 year project) (Fattori, n.d.). The project was carried out by female trainers. It included intensive training of at least 25,000 village women, the provision of improved breeds of chickens, vaccinations, sustainable development of input supplies, and the establishment of marketing networks for poultry products.

The project developed an innovative organizational structure that enabled village women to receive poultry training, production inputs, and market access on a sustainable basis. The structure was a network of women that linked village producers, through district Poultry Producer Groups, to the provincial centre where there was a technical resource base that supplied inputs and market opportunities. Thus the project included product and process upgrading as well as improvements in horizontal and vertical linkages.

After two years, the project had trained 21,364 women in poultry management and organized 850 producer groups. According to the assessment, training and organizational development had led to an increase in household income for the over 15,000 female producers with hens producing eggs. According to the assessment, the project results demonstrate that village women can: be trained in fundamental poultry husbandry techniques; organize into an effective network that links poultry producers to urban markets; establish economic incentives for team leaders to facilitate market access and input supply; and generate income and provide high quality food nutrients to village women on a sustainable basis.

#### *4.3.5 The intra-household impact of the implementation of modern agricultural technology*

This evaluation sheds light on the impact of approaches targeting individual versus groups of women (see Naved, 2000). It compares the intra-household impact of the implementation of modern agricultural technology across three different programmes in Bangladesh (one of which is the DANIDA funded aquaculture project examined in section 4.2.2).

This evaluation which is qualitative and very detailed (based on triangulation of methods) specifically looks at intra-household impact of transfer of modern agricultural technology from a gender perspective. The study examines three programs through which production of commercial polyculture fish and commercial vegetables have been promoted through provision of NGO credit and training programs directed at women.<sup>12</sup> It investigates whether income has increased as a result of the implementation of new technology, and if so, who controls the additional income. Furthermore, the study compares outcomes between individual and group approaches across the three programs under discussion.

The vegetable growing programme targeted individual women. Underlying socio-cultural norms meant that vegetable cultivation had to be performed on very small homestead plots, limiting outputs and income. The small increases in income that occurred were not retained by women because men controlled the land and its output (however, female nutrition improved as a result of consumption of the new vegetables).

In fish farming, ownership of ponds was transferred to individual women in Mymensing (the DANIDA funded project) and to groups of women in Jessore. In Jessore, groups of poor women actively participate in the production of fish, effectively involving men at different stages (e.g. as workers and to collect money) but without losing control over the project. Here the negotiation takes place at a higher level than the household. Individual men although involved in collecting money from buyers, must negotiate with groups of women who are backed by an organization. Thus, men do not have direct access to the income. According to the evaluation, an important dimension of fish production by groups of women is that it challenges the traditional gender division of labour and workspace. Involvement of women in production outside home initially met with negative reactions from the community, but when the project proved successful in bringing a financial return, women's position within households and communities was strengthened. According to the

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<sup>12</sup>The three programmes were targeted at: (1) commercial vegetable production in Sauria (training individual women); (2) aquaculture production in household-owned ponds in Mymensingh (training individual women); and (3) aquaculture production in group-managed ponds in Jessore.



evaluation team, the success of the Jessore project is largely due to the group approach in project implementation.<sup>13</sup>

According to the evaluation team, in male-dominated societies where women have extremely limited access to internal or external support networks, targeting programs to women as individuals without providing an alternative source of support is bound to fail in its gender goals. This is evident from the aquaculture program that targets individual women. Intra-household dynamics were disregarded in the design of this particular program and, as a result, women are minimally involved, and the project is fully controlled by men. At times women were found to provide labour input to the project without directly gaining any benefits. Although this program was reported to bring a sizeable income, this had no positive implications for women.

The evaluation concludes that greater care is needed to ensure that development interventions do not lead to increased male control of female labour and earnings. If men control production, as it becomes more commercialized, there is a danger that women will have even less control over the proceeds from adopting the new technology. The intervention evaluated here illustrates how increased participation in production activities by women does not necessarily imply increased gains for the participating women. It illustrates the value of implementing specific strategies to ensure that participation also leads to gains – as in this case where the horizontal organisation ensured that negotiations over incomes took place at a higher level than the household because of men having to negotiate with groups of women who were backed by an organization.

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<sup>13</sup> In this project, program interventions are carried out through groups of women organized by an NGO. In Bangladesh, pond ownership is usually associated with higher socioeconomic status. Moreover, women do not own important assets like land or ponds. The NGO therefore, arranges for interested members to gain leases to ponds that need excavation. Every four months, fish are sold. When the women decide to sell fish, they ask their husbands to inform the fishermen. The fishermen come to the ponds and the price is first settled. The fishermen catch the fish, weigh them, and pay 50 percent of the agreed upon price. The balance is paid after the fish are sold in the market. The husbands collect the balance from the fishermen and hand it over either to the cashier or the leader of the group. From the total sales, an amount equivalent to the cost of production is deposited in the bank, with the remainder divided equally among group members.

#### *4.3.6 Women entrepreneurship development in the food processing sector in Tanzania*

A UNIDO funded project in Tanzania (UNIDO, 1999) aimed at providing new methodologies and tools to women entrepreneurs to improve quality and marketing management in the food, spices and aromatic sector. A midway evaluation concludes that the project objectives have been only partially achieved. Although women entrepreneurs have been trained and 70% of them have succeeded in starting their own business, these women tended to be middle class and not among the poorer groups as originally intended. Furthermore, many of the businesses as well as the association formed to provide bulk purchasing and marketing were not yet deemed sustainable and were in need of further assistance.

Several of the problems identified by the evaluation are gender specific (e.g. lack of capital to purchase equipment and raw material, aversion to the risk of borrowing and problems in making the transition from the informal sector to the formal sector).<sup>14</sup> Nevertheless, neither project nor evaluation seem to reflect on gender specific problems and solutions. The project serves as an example of an intervention that was thought to be aimed at women, but was not gender sensitive. Neither project nor evaluation were based on a gendered analysis.

#### *4.3.7 Small tea grower project in India*

An evaluation reports on the impacts of a Traidcraft funded project in India (Johnson, 2009). The purpose of the project was to 'to empower small tea growers and tea workers to realize fairer terms of trade in the tea industry' via process upgrading and strengthening of horizontal linkages. The project did not have gender equality amongst producers as an objective, but it did support a women's only organization. According to the evaluation, an important issue that affects participation of women in the tea growing societies is the absence of land titles in their names. As a result, women have not been able to obtain membership or assume leadership roles in producer organisations.

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<sup>14</sup> The evaluation recommends that women work in teams to pool their efforts and resources in marketing, accessing credit, bulk purchasing, sharing information and networking.

One of the few exceptions to this is the case of the women's groups in Idukki in Kerala facilitated by the project. Here, 27 out of 32 members of the producer society had land titles in their own names and hence could obtain registration with the Tea Board.

According to the evaluation it had taken tremendous efforts from two local women, to organise the women and form the society. With very few women owning land, they had to gather members spread over a large area, by-passing village boundaries. Unfortunately, details about the experiences with the women's organization are not presented. It seems logical how forming a women's organization might address the lack of women in leadership roles. However, it is less clear how it addresses the inability of obtaining land titles in their names.

#### *4.3.8 Discussion*

The evaluations discussed in this section provide valuable insights in relation to value chain interventions where women are exclusively targeted. The key issues identified are the following:

##### *Reaching women in conservative areas*

As observed in the previous section, reaching women in conservative areas requires specific gender strategies which seek to counter the gender based constraints identified. When such strategies are implemented it is possible to alter perception of what women can and cannot do in relation to markets.

##### *Women-centred value chains*

A cross cutting gender constraint, even in interventions that focus on women alone is lack of mobility and thus lack of access to markets and integration in value chains. The evaluations provide several examples of successful interventions designed specifically to overcome such gender specific constraints by forging new horizontal and particularly vertical linkages.

##### *Women as individuals, intermediaries and in groups*

Increased participation in production activities by women does not necessarily mean increased gains for the participating women (particularly in male-dominated societies). In

contexts where social norms limit women's ability as individuals to interact with men, women face additional constraints to value chain participation, which most often requires interactions between women and men.

In several of the projects discussed in this section, this constraint has been successfully overcome with the use of female intermediaries. Another strategy is to create horizontal links (a women-only organization or group) which ensure that negotiations over contract terms with buyers and over household incomes take place in the context of collective backing for women when negotiating with men.

#### *Lack of mobility*

This is a central constraint mentioned in all evaluations. The main way in which it is addressed is to 'bring the value chain to the village' (i.e. by developing a vertical link in the value chain). In these cases, otherwise isolated village women are linked to value chains via new networks and intermediaries (see also Box 5).

A related issue is how lack of mobility often implies that access to markets is limited to local traders with whom women are in an unfavourable bargaining position. As a result, women producers may lose the gains arising from market linkages, because the sale to the final buyer is generally made by male intermediaries, either middlemen or male household members. Village procurement centres, operated by women's self-help groups, can be successful in linking otherwise isolated women and in achieving more favourable terms of market engagement.

#### ***Box 5. The virgin coconut oil value chain in Samoa***

A virgin coconut oil project in Samoa aimed at developing the organic virgin oil by working with extended village families most often led by women. With the project, women have become responsible for bringing income earning opportunities to their families while at the same time having the opportunity to be involved in an income-generating activity that does not imply leaving their villages (see Annex 4 for a more detailed explanation of the project).

*Source:* Carr (2004).

### *Vertical linkages*

Forging vertical linkages is the key strategy employed when attempting to create 'women centred value chains'. Such strategies have proven very effective in overcoming constraints to female participation in value chains related to restrictions on mobility, limited bargaining power and social norms. They have also enabled women to take on new roles in value chains as trainers, middlemen and leaders (see also Box 6).

#### ***Box 6. A local milk value chain in India***

The project has successfully brought together 2500 women running a small milk supply chain in India. The project has not only led to a 40 percent increase in the return obtained by the milk producers, but has also involved women in milk marketing and high volume daily transactions. Before the project, milk production was limited to home consumption and local selling but now since women receive a better price for their milk, the production of milk has been stimulated. In the process, women have acquired new identities as producers, leaders, presidents, promoters, cooperators and social activists above their given identities (see Annex 4 for a more detailed explanation of the project).

*Source: Agriterra/IIMF (2009).*

### *Horizontal linkages*

Organizing women in self-help or producers groups is an ingredient in all the examples discussed in this section (see also Box 7). It is sometimes carried out by itself, but most often it is combined with forging vertical linkages. As highlighted by Manfre and Sebstad (2009), women often have stronger horizontal relationships than vertical relationships compared with men. This places them in a good position in value chains where horizontal cooperation among smallholder producers or other functional groups of value chain actors is important for meeting end-market demand. This might entail cooperation around purchasing inputs, accessing information on markets and on technologies, or shared marketing of products. Projects may facilitate the establishment of new horizontal relationships between women. Participation in such single-sex groups is often socially accepted and within such groups, women are able to voice their needs and opinions, and develop leadership skills and confidence.

***Box 7. Gender and non-timber forest products***

Carr and Hartl (2008) examine the constraints and opportunities faced by women producers in the informal non-timber forest products sector by reviewing interventions (particularly IFAD interventions) to help women producers increase their incomes while retaining access to and control of the natural resource base. According to this study, organizing indigenous women producers has formed the basis for the success of most initiatives and interventions in the non-timber forest products sector. Effective horizontal organizing has been instrumental in bringing about gains for women. According to the review, when rural women form their own organizations, not only are they better able to access credit, technology, training and markets, but they also increase their bargaining power within the value chain (see Annex 4 for a more detailed explanation of the project).

*Source:* Carr and Hartl (2008).

*Women-only groups or mixed groups?*

As noted above, there are many benefits arising from forms of horizontal linking based on women-only groups. Mixed groups, as noted by Manfre and Sebstad (2009), can pose challenges for women in terms of meeting membership criteria, which can be further compounded by social norms and perceptions that limit their effective participation. Fostering trust within these groups and ensuring that these groups meet women's needs poses extra challenges. Yet, these groups can provide women with access to valuable resources, such as networks and information, which they as individuals or in all-women groups may not access.

Coles and Mitchell (2009) argue that women-only groups may not be the best solution for all development problems. The exclusion of men from producers groups can create resentment and anger leading to acts of sabotage. It can also lead to additional transaction and input costs for the group because women may be reliant upon a small number of male actors for inputs. Coles and Mitchell recommend that in each instance policy makers and practitioners should understand what specific issue they are trying to address in group formation, and that using existing, sometimes informal, groups and networks can be more successful than initiating them from scratch.

## 4.4 Gender mainstreaming in value chain projects

In this section, evaluations that deal with gender mainstreaming issues in value chain interventions are examined. The importance of including gender mainstreaming at all stages and levels of value chain interventions has been highlighted by many authors. For instance, Mayoux and Mackie (2009) emphasize the necessity of including gender mainstreaming from initial design, analysis, action learning and implementation all the way through evaluation. Baluku et al. (2009) also highlight the importance of participatory methods in such processes.

Given that there are only two evaluations of value chain interventions that focus on this aspect, the following discussion will heavily incorporate material from value chain manuals and the 'lessons learned' literature and will highlight three aspects of gender mainstreaming:

1. gender mainstreaming within the organizations involved in the intervention;
2. gender mainstreaming in the diagnostic/project design phase of a value chain intervention; and
3. gender mainstreaming in monitoring and evaluation.

### 4.4.1 *The USAID Greater Access to Trade Expansion Project*

USAID's Greater Access to Trade Expansion (GATE) project, worked with seven USAID Missions to integrate the needs of the poor, particularly women, into their trade and economic growth activities. The GATE project employed a distinct value chain approach and in each country it identified key constraints, best practices and knowledge gaps and provided gender training for USAID Mission staff and implementing partners. Building on gender and value chain analysis, GATE identified practical policies and programs to expand trade opportunities and to help women overcome barriers to economic participation and generate greater income.

In the evaluation, a key measure of success is the impact GATE has had on USAID economic growth trade programs in the seven countries. As a result of GATE's assistance,

more than half of participating Missions have successfully integrated gender in their economic growth programming. Three of the countries evaluated however showed minimal results. Here, USAID Missions were committed at the start, but a change in Mission staff, a change in funding priorities, or a new program approach harmed the GATE program. In the other four countries, USAID Mission staff confirmed the value of GATE assistance. The three country programs visited by the assessment team showed significant changes in terms of integrating gender issues, and it appears that gender considerations will have an important role in their future programs (Liebersohn and Ropic, 2009).

On the basis of the findings the evaluation draws a number of lessons:

- 1) USAID staff responds when senior management makes it clear that an issue is important and management intends to monitor performance. GATE found that gender was given this type of support in some USAID Missions but not in others.
  
- 2) The GATE approach of addressing gender through the more all-encompassing pro-poor approach, holds greater appeal to trade economists. By using quantitative, pro-poor economic analysis, GATE effectively used the language of economics to reach out to Mission economists, especially those sceptical of gender issues.

#### *4.4.2 SNV Nepal country programme evaluation*

An external evaluation of the SNV Nepal country programme includes an analysis of gender equality mainstreaming in relation to the 'markets for the poor' (MAP) programme. Gender equality in MAP was found to be addressed more at the level of beneficiary group than within the structures of the organisations. The evaluation therefore recommends that partners are influenced to make gender equality considerations mandatory and to develop gendered budgets. Thus, even though attempts to address gender equality were visible, serious gaps were identified. The evaluation relates these directly to a need for enhancing the gender capacity of project personnel and partners (Thorntom et al., 2007).



#### 4.4.3 Discussion

The lessons drawn from the two evaluations presented above illustrate the need to provide gender specific support in terms of human resource training, management commitment and monitoring of gender performance. Unfortunately scepticism towards gender issues is also common among development personnel. Yet, the USAID evaluation suggests that addressing gender through more all-encompassing pro-poor approach holds greater appeal to trade economists. What is also identified is the importance of ensuring gender commitments in local partner organizations. In the following discussion, a wider set of existing materials is drawn from to examine questions of gender mainstreaming in organizations, project design and project monitoring/evaluation.

##### *Gender mainstreaming in organizations*

The material reviewed for this study suggests that gendered outcomes are more likely to be achieved when gender mainstreaming permeates (and gender specialists are employed in) the organizations involved in value chain interventions. This applies to both donors and partner organizations.

Dulón (2009) argues that when considering working with local partners and other organizations in the gender arena, it is important to consider to which degree the organization is embedding a gender approach. Dulón suggests to assess this at four levels: (1) the degree to which the institutional philosophy and strategic institutional framework incorporate a gender approach; (2) whether the organization is able to adjust strategic objectives, indicators as well as policies; (3) whether and how a gender approach is operationalised; and (4) the extent to which the organization trains personnel in gender and development issues. We would argue that the same approach could be used by a local partner/organization to decide whether to collaborate with a donor on a value chain intervention.

Furthermore, the World Bank (2009) argues that gender mainstreaming is more successful when implemented from the very start of a project, when a gender specialist is part of the project design team, and when gender mainstreaming objectives are made explicit in establishing contracts with local partners. This point is clearly illustrated by the case study

of the tomato and cucumber value chains in Tajikistan (see Annex 4 for more details), where the impact of the intervention clearly differed according to what approach was taken by local NGOs. The gender-mainstreamed NGO set up more female-headed groups and also managed to get land certificates for many of the female farmers; the other NGO did pay some attention to gender, but did not seek to go much beyond increasing participation numbers.

*Gender mainstreaming in the diagnostic/project design phase of a value chain intervention*

The importance of including gender mainstreaming in the diagnostic/project design phase of a value chain intervention has been widely recognized in the existing literature. Several authors and organisations also advocate the use of participatory project planning and implementation (see Box 8). Several manuals have highlighted the need of using gender accurate information and gender equitable planning, which mainstream equality of opportunity and identify supportive strategies needed to enable women to realize these opportunities (see, for instance, Mayoux and Mackie, 2009; International Trade Center and UNCTAD/WTO, 2007).

***Box 8. Participatory value chain analysis: The case of action learning for gender justice in the Uganda coffee value chain***

The GALS (Gender Action Learning System) is employed by Oxfam Novib to challenge and change gender inequalities in households and communities. The methodology was used in the Uganda coffee value chain in two producer organizations. Differently from the conventional gender value chain analysis and planning, this methodology assumes that women's empowerment and gender equality can be seen as a win-win situation for both women and men. In order to do so, the methodology uses a community-led process in which women and men together develop their visions of a common future by highlighting the present constraints that prevent them from achieving it.

The use of this methodology was aimed at increasing women's participation and representation in producer organizations. Initial experience of using GALS for addressing gender inequalities as part of development of the coffee value chain has been positive and more than 500 men have developed plans to change their behaviour in relation to issues such as alcoholism, adultery, violence and sharing household work. Those trained then spread their knowledge to 5-10 others in their households and communities. Many trainers are from the communities themselves - with minimal external facilitation beyond establishing the methodology. The idea is that women and men using GALS can analyse, develop and implement their own strategies for addressing gender inequalities and value chain upgrading without waiting for external experts. According to the authors, it is frequently assumed that men will oppose gender equality and change since men often appropriate women's income and businesses. However, early experience with GALS seems to contradict this assumption.

*Sources:* L. Mayoux (2009)

A gendered diagnostic analysis increases the probability of carrying out a successful gender value chain intervention. The experience of the *Nike Foundation 'Value Girls' Project* (Felton, 2009), for example, shows that a diagnostic girl-centred value chain analysis uncovered significant participation barriers specific to girls, which were great enough to require a revision of the original program objectives. The program shifted its focus away from introducing new girls into these value chains towards strengthening the capacity, negotiation skills and bargaining power of girls already working in these chains (for more details see Annex 4).

#### *The importance of gendered value chain monitoring and evaluations*

The importance of gender mainstreaming does not stop at the diagnostic phase, however; it spans over the whole cycle of a project, including monitoring and evaluation. Rubin et al., (2009) provide practical suggestions on how to: develop gender sensitive indicators; use indicators which measure movement in positions instead of 'counting bodies'; and measure changes in levels of gender inequality by using, for example, the 'percentage change in proportion of women's membership' instead of the 'number of women who joined the producer association'. In a similar vein, Dulón (2009) emphasizes the necessity of including the context in which the condition of women is improved and the temporal dynamics, e.g. if gender gaps have become smaller and to which extent empowerment processes have occurred.

Several manuals emphasise the need to identify gender outcomes at various levels. Mayoux and Mackie (2009) argue that gender equality indicators should be developed through a *participatory process* (participants might identify and prioritize different indicators). Such indicators should cover: individual, household, community and national/macro levels. Indicators should also be combined with more general indicators of household poverty, enterprise growth and institutional sustainability. At the same time Brambilla (2001), who has provided a tool to integrate gender into existing monitoring and evaluation systems, highlights some of the limitations of using these indicators, such as the difficulty of including dynamic information and the lack of participation in their design.

A different approach is suggested in AgriPro-Focus (2009), where a Logical Framework Approach is used to monitor indicators at four levels: inputs into the programme (e.g.

budget monitoring by considering the percentage of the budget dedicated to gender); outputs generated (e.g. training organized, research done and female networks established); outputs of the partners involved (e.g. changes in female membership and leadership); and impact at target group level (e.g. monitoring gender impacts at household level).

Finally, a World Bank (2009) manual asserts the need of monitoring key gender issues periodically throughout the implementation process to help ensure that all gender-responsive action is being properly integrated into the projects and that gender is considered in all project stages. Thus, monitoring should not only be done at the completion of the project but rather several times during the first few years of the project and whenever the project extends to new geographic areas which might have different social and cultural characteristics.

## 5. Conclusions and lessons learned

This study set out to examine which gender issues are important in relation to value chain interventions – based primarily on findings of existing evaluations. This final section summarizes the main conceptual and substantial issues arising from the study while bearing in mind that these are based on a limited number of existing evaluations of varying quality. Furthermore, the difficulties inherent in transferring lessons from one value chain to another should also be kept in mind. Nevertheless, this study does allow for a variety of lessons learned which should be taken into account when designing future value chain interventions.

Overall, this study suggests two broad gender lessons for the design of future value chain interventions:

- The first lesson is that value chain interventions should always be accompanied by a gendered, not only a general, value chain analysis.
- The second lesson is that a gendered value chain analysis can be useful not only in designing value chain interventions (such as selecting the right value chain, the right target group, and the right node of the chain) but also in guiding their implementation and in informing monitoring and evaluation systems.

Below some (but not all) of the more specific lessons learned from the review of the various evaluations and other studies are summarized. A more elaborate discussion of findings and lessons learned for each of the four categories of value chain interventions covered by the study can be found in Chapter 4 at the end of each sub-chapter.

## **Gender and generic value chain interventions**

Generic value chain interventions can have positive effects for participating women. But this is more likely to happen when they take into consideration gendered constraints that apply to upgrading, value chain participation and distribution of value (both along the value chain and within households). For example, value chain interventions emphasizing product and process upgrading as well as forging/strengthening horizontal and vertical linkages, can be strategically applied in parts of the chain where women play important roles. But in order to secure positive impacts and avoid unintended negative consequences, a gendered value chain analysis is needed as part of project design and implementation. Assuming that women will automatically gain from generic value chain interventions can have unintended negative consequences. Furthermore, these interventions are not sufficient in themselves to secure value chain participation and meaningful welfare outcomes for women when working in ‘gender conservative’ areas. Finally, the gender impact of generic value chain interventions is likely to be mainly limited to improving the terms of inclusion of existing value chain participants, rather than promoting the participation of more women in the chain.

- *Generic value chain interventions can (in specific circumstances) have positive effects for participating women; but in order to secure positive impacts and avoid unintended negative consequences, a gendered value chain analysis is required as part of project design and implementation.*

## **Value chain interventions that target only women**

Lack of mobility, lack of access to assets and markets, and lack of linkages to other value chain actors are often major gender-based constraints that can be addressed by value chain interventions that target only women. Lack of mobility and lack of access to markets can be solved by ‘bringing the value chain to the village’, for example by developing a network of women that link village producers to a provincial centre that supplies inputs and market opportunities. However, even women-only focused interventions require specific gender strategies that seek to counter the special constraints of operating in ‘gender conservative’ areas. Gender constraints related to conservative social norms can be successfully

overcome by employing female intermediaries who face fewer restrictions on their mobility. In the cases examined for this report, interventions focused on women were more likely to go beyond fostering the inclusion of new women in a value chain, to also improve their terms of inclusion, facilitate the taking on of new roles in value chains by women and, in a few cases, secure female control over intermediation, processing and sale of products.

- *Women's lack of mobility, lack of access to assets and markets, and lack of linkages to other value chain actors are major gender-based constraints. Forging women-focused vertical and horizontal linkages for upgrading are particularly effective strategies for addressing such constraints.*
- *Specific gender measures are needed for operating in 'gender conservative' areas.*

## **Gender equality and value chain participation**

Many value chain interventions still limit their gender objective (and outcome assessment) to increasing the number of women who are involved in the value chain (or who participate in training activities). But an increasing number of women participating in value chain-related activities does not necessarily entail that those participating improve their terms of participation and therefore their gains (particularly in male-dominated societies). No automatic positive connection can be identified between participation in value chain-related training and changes in household decision-making. Specific strategies are needed to ensure that women participation leads to gains - for example, that negotiations over contracts with buyers and intra-household distribution of income take place at the collective, rather than individual, level.

- *Specific measures are required to ensure that women participation leads to gains, not just to increased number of women participants. Development of better bargaining power both in relation to other value chain actors (e.g. buyers, input suppliers) but also in relation to intra-household gender dynamics (e.g. negotiations over distribution of income) can help improve gains.*

## **Gender and product and process upgrading**

Women face many gender specific constraints which make it difficult for them to invest in (or simply to apply) product and process upgrading. In the cases examined for this report, identified constraints include women being more risk-adverse and having limited access to information, inputs, and training. Additionally, women's ability to engage in or develop value chain relationships (either horizontal or vertical) supportive of upgrading processes is often limited due to women's limited mobility and social norms.

- *Women face many gender specific constraints which makes it difficult for them to make investments in (or simply to apply) product and process upgrading.*

## **Gender, vertical linkages and upgrading**

Upgrading in various forms is often facilitated by forging new vertical linkages, especially when attempting to create 'women-centred value chains'. Such strategies have been very effective in overcoming constraints to female participation in value chains related to restrictions on mobility, limited bargaining power, prohibitive social norms and access to market information. They have also enabled women to take on new roles in value chains as trainers, middlemen and leaders.

- *Value chain interventions focused on forging new vertical linkages or on creating 'women-centred value chains' can be effective in overcoming constraints to female participation related to prohibitive social norms, restrictions on mobility, limited bargaining power and access to market information.*

## **Gender, horizontal linkages and upgrading**

Upgrading through fostering horizontal linkages (between women in the same functional position in a value chain) is commonly used as a strategy on its own, but also in connection to the creation of vertical linkages in women-centred value chains. Fostering horizontal linkages in the form of organizing women in self-help or producer groups can entail cooperation not only in relation to shared marketing but also around purchasing inputs and accessing information and technologies. Sustainability standards-related value chain



interventions often improve women's access to producer organizations (and related benefits) but this does not equate to improving their power in decision-making within these organizations. Value chain interventions aimed at forming mixed groups or organizations can pose challenges for women in terms of meeting membership criteria, which can be further compounded by social norms and perceptions that limit their effective participation. Ensuring that these groups meet women's needs is also an important challenge. At the same time, mixed groups can provide women with access to valuable resources, such as shared marketing, purchasing inputs, credit, and information, that they as individuals or even in all-women groups may not be able to access. Participation in women-only groups is often more socially accepted. Within such groups, women are better able to voice their needs and opinions, and develop leadership skills. But women only groups may not be the best solution for all value chain interventions. The exclusion of men from producer groups can for example create resentment leading to acts of sabotage.

- *Promoting forms of cooperation among women in self-help or producers groups or promoting access to mixed-gender producer groups can be effective in facilitating upgrading in various forms.*
- *Facilitating women participation in mixed-gender groups and organizations can be important when such groups control access to important resources.*
- *Gendered value chain analyses are important to help identify possible sources of conflict in connection with both mixed-gender and women-only group formation.*

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## Annex 1: Table of evaluations and assessments discussed in chapter 4

**Table 4.1. Evaluations of gender outcomes of value chain interventions focused on compliance with sustainability standards**

Value chain, location and intervention	Intervention objective/evaluation objective and method	Upgrading strategies employed	Gender outcomes/ comments
4.1.1 Fairtrade certified banana and coffee producers in Peru, Costa Rica and Ghana (Ruben et al., 2008)	No specific gender objective apart from the Fairtrade requirement on participation in producer organisations. The evaluation includes effects on household decision making and analyses a random sample of certified producers with control groups	Certification involves process and product upgrading as well as vertical coordination	The contribution of females to household income seems to decline, whereas the role of the male household head in key decision domains became reinforced. The authors suggest that the dynamics within households engaged in Fairtrade are more male dominated than those within non-Fairtrade households. The Fairtrade households in the sample tend to be located in poorer areas (where women have less access to resources and education and have lower social status). In addition, the differences reported are not statistically significant. <sup>15</sup>
4.1.2 Fairtrade and organic certified cotton producers in West Africa (Bassett, 2009)	No specific gender objective apart from the Fairtrade requirement on participation in producer organisations. The article investigates Fairtrade programmes in Mali and Burkina Faso. It includes a small section on the perceptions of women. The method employed is interviews but no details are given about number, selection process, interview method or content.	Product and process upgrading, vertical coordination – introduction of organic and Fairtrade cotton cultivation and marketing.	The author states that “Fairtrade cotton can increase women’s incomes and autonomy and promote greater gender equity”. This is mainly due to the fact that Fairtrade cooperatives are perceived to be more transparent and democratic than non-Fairtrade and hence women experience less discrimination. However, the evidence cited seems to also show the opposite. Namely, that men are attracted by the greater returns of the Fairtrade or organic crop and may use their wives’ names to apply for certification. The limited access to land also limits women’s participation.
4.1.3 Fairtrade and organic certified coffee producers in Guatemala and Mexico (Lyon et al., 2009)	No specific gender objective apart from the Fairtrade requirement on participation in producer organisations. The research reported makes use of ethnographic, archival, and survey data. This study assesses the relation between Fairtrade-organic market participation and gender equity.	Organic and Fairtrade certification. Access to new value chain strands. Product, and process upgrading and strengthened producer organisations	Organizational norms required by FLO encourage women to participate in village and regional organizations. Legal requirements of organic certification lead to increased registration of land to women. Finally, increased Fairtrade-organic prices and required payment procedures ensure women’s access to significantly higher coffee income. As noted by the authors, Some impacts are largely unintended – e.g. organic procedural forms. They also note that requirements which work to women’s benefit may also create barriers to participation, excluding women with high family labour obligations or without sufficient formal education.

<sup>15</sup> This criticism is noted in Coles and Mitchell 2009.



Value chain, location and intervention	Intervention objective/evaluation objective and method	Upgrading strategies employed	Gender outcomes/ comments
4.1.4. Organic certified pineapple and coffee producers in Uganda (Bolwig and Odeke, 2007)	There are no specific gender objectives in organic standards. The paper examines the effects on household food security of certified organic export production through a gendered analysis. It also discusses how organic conversion affects men and women differently in respect of changes in the costs and benefits of farming. A total of 172 organic and 159 conventional farmers were interviewed in a formal household survey and nine focus group interviews were conducted with the organic farmers, separately for men and women.	Organic production was in both cases organised on a contract farming-type basis in the form of training, establishment of the internal control system, financial support to third party organic certification, and marketing.	Organic conversion has significantly increased women's labour effort in coffee production. The effect on male labour has been weaker. According to the authors, it is very likely that women's increased effort in coffee farming has occurred at the expense of their own income generating activities. Hence, while men have enjoyed an increase in the income they control (from coffee), women appear to have experienced the opposite.
4.1.5. Organic certified smallholder farming of coffee, banana, cacao, vegetables, sugar cane and honey located in Argentina, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala and Mexico. (IFAD, 2003)	There are no specific gender objectives in organic standards. The thematic evaluation looks amongst other things on the impact on women. The study analyzed seven cases of smallholder organic farming including document review and 238 interviews however selection criteria for informants is not described.	Three of the cases consisted of farmer organizations supported by IFAD projects in various ways to achieve certification to organic standards.	The first two or three years after farmers start to produce organically – are the most difficult period for women farmers. This is because women farmers more often have little family labour available and therefore find it more difficult to cover the extra labour demands brought on by the need to carry out soil conservation measures (while paying for certification costs without yet being able to obtain certification). On the other hand, the study also finds that organic production has increased the hiring of labour during harvests, because, in most cases, the yields have been higher. Because the highest demand for women's labour for crops like coffee, cacao and vegetables is during the harvest, the authors conclude that women wage workers have benefited the most from organic production.
4.1.6. Tea and coffee smallholder certification to UTZ, Rainforest Alliance and Fairtrade in Uganda, Kenya and Ethiopia (Krisgaard et al., 2009)	No specific gender objective apart from the Fairtrade requirement on participation in producer organisations. The study compared the perceived impacts of certification to Fairtrade, UTZ Certified and Rainforest Alliance standards, in relation to several areas one of which where gender relations. The main research method was qualitative, based on semi-structured gender segregated focus group discussions with scheme participants which were selected in cooperation with the schemes (thus non-randomly).	The study covered six different schemes (cooperatives and contract farming schemes) which had received different kinds of external support amongst others from SIDA. Assistance included training, establishment of internal control systems, financial support to third party organic certification and marketing.	The results show positive impacts for women across all three standards although with differences as to what had improved. The Fairtrade certified case studies show improved female representation and participation in farmer organisations. One of the UTZ case studies also showed improvements in this area. The other UTZ case study, while less positive in this respect, reported impacts from training on empowerment. Finally the Rainforest Alliance certified group attributed improvements for women to increased interaction between female farmers.

**Table 4.2. Evaluations of gender outcomes of generic value chain interventions**

Value chain, location and intervention	Intervention objective/evaluation objective and method	Upgrading strategies employed	Gender outcomes/ comments
4.2.1. Upgrading of the fisheries sector in Vietnam (Asian Development Bank, 2001)	The project is targeted at both men and women but include some specific provisions to promote women's participation. The evaluation is external and use qualitative and participatory methods.	The project includes upgrading of 10 fishing ports; the establishment of environmental monitoring units and provision of loans to selected private sector borrowers to establish ice plants and cold storage facilities at the ports.	Some improvement in working conditions at the port was noticed. Modernization however is likely to reduce labour demand and remove the small economic niches in fish marketing and processing currently occupied by poor women. Furthermore women were unable to offer collateral for the loans offered. Because the project design did not accurately capture women's roles in the fisheries sector, as a result the project not only fails to impact positively on women but also has negative impacts
4.2.2. Pro-poor aquaculture production in Bangladesh (Danida, 2009)	The intervention is aimed at both men and women but has specific targets for female participation and empowerment. The evaluation measure participant women's roles and decision-making, mobility and credit control compared with control groups. The evaluation looks at two similar interventions which nevertheless are implemented 10 years apart in different localities, one aiming at individuals, the other aimed at households.	The interventions supported pro-poor involvement in aquaculture production and included; group formation among pond operators; sustainable aquaculture practices and production (training, technical advice, and awareness raising); establishment of credit delivery services; support to service providers (fish seed traders, harvesters, and net makers).	Have led to increased intra-household interaction and mobility among those women who participated in the interventions compared to the group of non-participating women. The selection of female extension trainers appears to have been important. Impacts were due mostly to increases in consciousness and self-confidence and practical changes from participation not due to the actual application of technical training, as despite equal participation levels as beneficiaries, restrictive gender roles prevented most of the women from using their training.
4.2.3. Pigs, pond aquaculture, and tile-making value chains in Cambodia (Miller and Amato, 2007)	The project focuses on both men and women but specifically mentions participation of women. The evaluation of gendered impact of the interventions is part of a more general impact analysis.	The project is strengthening all elements, except retail sales, of the production/marketing chain for pigs, pond aquaculture, and tile-making in four provinces.	All elements of the respective value chains appear to have benefited. The evaluation team observe a gender reverse bias, with woman-run businesses disproportionately benefiting: "Project records indicate that some 24% of interest group participants are women. We believe this greatly understates their proportion as beneficiaries. Because they are less able to travel to meetings and more likely to communicate among themselves, they derive benefit disproportionate to their recorded participation numbers. Moreover, interviews with women project participants suggest that, because they were starting from a relatively more disadvantaged position with regard to business knowledge and skills, project facilitated TA (technical assistance) was all the more valuable." Apparently, the evaluation team finds that the fact that women are less mobile and more disadvantaged means that they benefit more from the same training as compared with men.

Value chain, location and intervention	Intervention objective/ evaluation objective and method	Upgrading strategies employed	Gender outcomes/ comments
<p>42.4. Upgrading the coffee and domestic animals sector in Nicaragua. “Apoyo de Asdi al Desarrollo de la agricultura en Nicaragua” (Trujardo et al., 2005)</p>	<p>The project focuses on both women and men within the coffee and domestic animals sector in Nicaragua. The ‘<i>Economía de patio</i>’ program component is the only one specifically targeted at women and its objective is to increase gender equity and women’s access to resources by introducing vegetable growing both for commercial and household use. The evaluation measure general impacts including gender impacts. The method employed consisted of a workshop, group interviews, field visits and use of questionnaires. There are no details about selection process or numbers of interviewees.</p>	<p>In both coffee and livestock farming the upgrading strategies have been the following:  - support to organizational processes  - process upgrading  - Support to the producers to introduce products in the national and international markets.  - Product diversification to other products in order to reduce dependency on coffee and livestock (the ‘Economía de patio’ component).</p>	<p>In general, coffee producers have increased their productivity and quality. Gender is not mentioned in relation to these impacts. In the ‘Economía de Patio’ component women have developed new abilities in the management of land, have incorporated new products in their diet as well as generated additional incomes by selling vegetables. In general, the component of Economía de patio has had very positive results in increasing gender equity and improving the access of women to new resources. However, the program has also increased women’s workload. Women were not included in training on product upgrading. The reason for this according to the evaluation is not justified by the project.</p>
<p>42.5. Farm Forestry in Pakistan (funded by SDC) (Stuart and Rahat, 2008). The evaluation is supported by an earlier external review of the Farm Forestry Support Project (Veer, et al., 2004).</p>	<p>Country evaluation of gender mainstreaming in 6 projects one of which employs a value chain approach (the Farm Forestry Support Project). The evaluation is based on interviews and visits but the method is not described in detail.</p>	<p>Product and process upgrading, creation of horizontal and vertical linkages</p>	<p>The farm forestry project was found to have successfully reached out to women, and made a significant contribution to their socio-economic development. The success of the farm forestry project in relation to gender outcomes was due to the design of new gender specific strategies as a result of an external midway evaluation.</p>
<p>42.6. Export anthurium flower production in Sri Lanka - an ILO funded project (Barlow, 2009)</p>	<p>The project does not focus specifically on women but 70% of participant entrepreneurs are women. The ILO Enter-growth programmes (of which this project is part) in general supports approaches that are likely to benefit women and address gender imbalances. The external research reported evaluates the ongoing intervention. Gender impacts form a minor part but are mentioned in relation to ‘intangible poverty indicators’. The research is based on interviews including with non participant growers.</p>	<p>The intervention consisted of three parts: a) an analysis of opportunities and weaknesses in the local economy, and b) an analysis of the market requirements in the global value chain, and c) the follow-up activities to implement the proposals generated by the value chain development exercise. These interventions were focused on three main functions within the value chain: marketing and distribution, production and sourcing</p>	<p>Initial impacts experienced by more than 50% of interviewees included improved market linkages, improved skills, product quality and prices. No gender specific impacts were recorded so far but the study finds ‘potential’ for improvement in the field of ‘women empowerment’ (decision making power and community participation). It is concluded that this potential is mainly related to ‘having’ an anthurium business and being a member of a business association, not by the changes that have taken place in the business as a result of the project ‘interventions’. This means that the various planned future interventions to increase the number of growers may especially empower (female) growers. The value chain analysis and the resulting interventions do not mention or address gender specific constraints. The evaluation only relates to gender as part of what is named ‘intangible poverty indicators’</p>

**Table 4.3. Evaluations of gender outcomes of value chain interventions that target only women**

<b>Value chain, location and intervention</b>	<b>Intervention objective/evaluation objective and method</b>	<b>Upgrading strategies employed</b>	<b>Gender outcomes/ comments</b>
4.3.1. Handicraft production in Pakistan (funded by SDC) (Stuart and Rahat, 2008).	Country evaluation of gender mainstreaming in 6 projects one of which employs a value chain approach (the Karakorum Handicrafts Development Programme). The evaluation is based on interviews and visits but the method is not described in detail.	Product and process upgrading, creation of value chains, coordination, creation of linkages.	The evaluation found that the handicraft project had changed women's and men's consciousness about possible roles and increased women's access to, and control over, resources.
4.3.2. Women embroiders in Pakistan (USAID, 2007)	The intervention focus is entirely on women. The impact analysis is internal and details quantitative and qualitative impacts including changes in gender roles and decision making. The methodology used is not explained.	The program is developing a network of women intermediaries that link isolated embroiders to local value chains and provide an embedded package of services that help them meet the demand from contemporary local markets. The program also links the intermediaries to design services and to urban garment makers	Incomes had more than tripled on average. Women reported increased contributions to household decision making, increased self confidence and increased mobility. Changes in women's roles in society were noted due to training of women intermediaries The assessment does not provide information on methodology employed nor on whether the changes in the roles and functions performed by women (both in the households and in the value chain) had caused any negative effects. The assessment only notes that in general, men seemed supportive of women's accomplishments.
4.3.3. Community-managed maize procurement in India (Subrahmanyam et al., 2006)	The maize component target women specifically and is part of a larger government programme covering several products. The study evaluates general impacts of the first year of the maize component based on survey material and focus groups. The findings of relevance to this report stems mainly from 6 focus group discussions and a structured questionnaire administered to the Village Procurement Committees.	Localizing the value chain, bringing the market to the village level, and providing a "one-stop shop". Creating an institutional mechanism for aggregation. Increasing transparency in transactions.	The study found that the intervention had increased the participation, leadership, and technical skills of women. Through the groups, women were taking on duties in the value chain that were previously in the men's domain e.g. negotiating with traders. The procurement centres also benefit the village as a whole and thus, participating women have garnered support from village elders and leaders. The study does not mention whether the new role of women has caused any problems. It does not state who participated in the focus groups. It seems that information about experiences is only obtained at the level of the Village Procurement Committee.
4.3.4. Organizing Afghan Women to Generate Income from Poultry -USAID/FAO. (Fattori, n.d)	The project which is aimed at women only, was assessed after 2 (out of 3) years of implementation. The method employed for the assessment is not discussed in detail but includes both quantitative and qualitative results including a survey of 534 village women. The evaluation does not discuss gender equality impacts but only measure success in terms of knowledge, production, capabilities and market access.	Product and process upgrading. Horizontal (district Poultry Producer Groups) and vertical linkages (provincial centre which offers input supplies and marketing)	21,364 women trained in poultry husbandry techniques, and organized into a network that links poultry producers to urban markets. Increased income and improved food quality.

Value chain, location and intervention	Intervention objective/ evaluation	Upgrading strategies employed	Gender outcomes/ comments
4.3.5. Vegetable and Fish production in Bangladesh (Naved, 2000)	The study compares the intra-household impact of the implementation of modern agricultural technology across three different programmes one of which is the DANIDA funded project mentioned in section 2.4. Techniques used for data collection included key informant interviews, focus group discussion, case studies, trend analyses, impact flow, observation, historical profile, social maps, resource maps, Venn diagrams, and mobility maps. The study investigates whether income has been increased from implementation of new technology, and if so, who controls the additional income. Furthermore, the study compares outcomes between individual and group approaches.	The evaluation looks at project components which are related to implementation of new technologies and thus product upgrading.	Using a trend analysis Naved argues that horizontal coordination has led to negotiations being held at a higher level than the household where women are backed by an organisation and men do not have direct access to the income. The success of the fish-farming initiative was determined by women's ability to retain control of the pond leases, fish-farming and income due to the group structure.
4.3.6 Women Entrepreneurship Development in the Food Processing Sector in Tanzania (UNIDO, 1999)	The project is targeted at women only. The external midway evaluation evaluates whether the project is meeting its objectives and planned outputs. The method employed is interviews with trainers and participants. The women interviewed were selected by the project team. Numbers and method is unknown.	New methodologies, tools and techniques have been introduced in solar drying of dried fruits, vegetables and spices and the production of essential oils. Marketing has been introduced into the training	New technologies have been introduced. Women entrepreneurs have been trained and 70% have succeeded in starting their own business. These women however tended to be middle class not grass-root as intended. An association formed to provide bulk purchasing and marketing was not yet deemed sustainable. Neither project nor evaluation seem to think of gender specific problems or solutions
4.3.7 Small tea grower project in India – Tradecraft (Johnson, 2009)	The purpose of the project was to 'empower small tea growers and tea workers to realise fairer terms of trade in the tea industry'. The Project did not directly address the issue of gender equality but the external evaluation does include gender equity effects.	Process upgrading, strengthening of horizontal linkages	According to the evaluation, an important issue that affects participation of women in the tea growing societies is the absence of land documents in their names. As a result of this condition, women have not been able to obtain membership or assume leadership roles in producer organisations. Noteworthy in this relation is the case of the women's groups in Idukki in Kerala facilitated by the project. 27 out of 32 members of the Society had land rights in their own names and hence could obtain registration with the Tea Board. Two women from the village organised the women and formed the society. With very few women owning land, they had to gather members spread over a large area, by-passing village boundaries.

**Table 4.4. Evaluations of gender mainstreaming in value chain interventions**

Intervention	Intervention objective/evaluation objective and method	Upgrading strategies employed	Outcomes Comments
<p>4.4.1. Assessment of the Greater Access to Trade Expansion (GATE) Project, (Lieberson and Ropic, 2009)</p>	<p>The objective of the intervention was to successfully integrate gender in the USAID Mission's Economic Growth programming. The evaluation looks at how the GATE approach has been disseminated amongst 7 USAID country missions. The method used entails document reviews, interviews and visits to three missions.</p>	<p>GATE provided training and technical assistance to USAID Missions to identify gender-based constraints in trade activities. GATE developed value chain analyses of gender-differentiated trade opportunities and assisted with new approaches and interventions to remove gender-based impediments.</p>	<p>GATE was deemed successful in 4 out of 7 countries. Important lessons learned includes            1) USAID staff responds when senior management makes it clear that an issue is important and management intends to monitor performance.            2) The GATE approach of addressing gender through the more all-encompassing pro-poor approach holds greater appeal to trade economists.</p>
<p>4.4.2. SNV Nepal country programme evaluation (Thomtom et al., 2007)</p>	<p>Part of the external evaluation of the SNV Nepal country programme looks at gender equality mainstreaming in relation to the 'markets for the poor' (MAP) programme particularly the cardamom component. The evaluation is based mainly on documents and a few visits and interviews</p>	<p>Introduction of new technology, improved product quality, improved market linkages</p>	<p>Gender equality in MAP was found to be addressed more at the level of beneficiary groups than within the structures of the organisations. The evaluation recommends that partners are influenced to make gender equity considerations mandatory and to develop gendered budgets. Thus even though attempts to address gender equality were visible, serious gaps were identified as well as a need to enhance the gender capacity of project personnel and partners.</p> <p>At the general level of SNV Nepal, it was found that even though SNV has made an explicit commitment to ensure programme and policies are engendered, translation of gender in practice areas was found to depend on the level of comprehension and skills in responsible staff. Overall expertise was found to be limited to the dedicated gender and social inclusion advisers. Skill and understanding amongst other staff was found to be somewhat limited and the social inclusion and gender expertise was not drawn on effectively.</p>

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