Women and Agriculture:

Closing the gender gap for development

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Message

- Agricultural and rural economies are under-performing because of gender inequalities
- Closing the gender gap in agriculture makes good economic sense (productivity, food security, economic and social gains)
- We need to address multiple constraints simultaneously to empower rural women
- We know what to do. It is time to do it!
Meet Valiben of Gujarat, India

Female employment rates vary by region but are always lower than men’s

Note: The ILO, KILM data covers only a subset of the countries in each region. Definitions of adult labour force differ by country, but usually refer to the population aged 15 and above. Employed includes self-employed, employed, employers as well as contributing family members. There is no distinction between formal sector employment and informal sector employment.
Female share of the agricultural labour force

Source: FAOSTAT. Note: The agricultural labour force includes people who are working or looking for work in formal or informal jobs and in paid or unpaid employment in agriculture. That includes self-employed women as well as women working on family farms. It does not include domestic chores such as fetching water and firewood, preparing food and caring for children and other family members.

Women are more likely to be employed in agriculture than men

Source: ILO, Key Indicators of the Labour Market (KILM, 6th Edition). Share of employed population by sector and gender. Note: The ILO KILM data covers only a subset of the countries in each region. Definitions of adult labour force differ by country, but usually refers to the population aged 15 and above. Employed includes self-employed, employed, employers as well as contributing family members. There is no distinction between formal sector employment and informal sector employment.
Women are less likely to participate in rural wage employment than men.

But are more likely to be in part-time work.
or seasonal employment

Panama
Nicaragua
Guatemala
Ecuador
Viet Nam
Tajikistan
Nepal
Indonesia
Bangladesh
Malawi

Source: FAO RIGA database

and more likely to hold low-wage jobs*

Panama
Nicaragua
Guatemala
Ecuador
Viet Nam
Tajikistan
Nepal
Indonesia
Bangladesh
Nigeria
Malawi
Ghana

Source: FAO RIGA database

*Low-wage jobs are defined as those that pay less than the median agricultural wage
Women control less land

Average farm size (ha)

Male-headed households
Female-headed households

and produce less per unit of land...

Gap between yields on male- and female-controlled plots in Burkina Faso
...because they use fewer inputs (e.g. fertilizer)

- Bolivia
- Ecuador
- Guatemala
- Nicaragua
- Panama
- Bangladesh
- Nepal
- Pakistan
- Tajikistan
- Viet Nam
- Ghana
- Madagascar
- Malawi
- Nigeria

Percentage of households using fertilizers

- Male-headed households
- Female-headed households

This is also true for coffee
As in contract farming, women coffee farmers are often disadvantaged

- Outgrower companies prefer men
- Men usually control the contracts, while women provide much of the family labour
- Evidence of benefits to women from contract farming is mixed

But women dominate employment in many of the high-value agro-industries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Commodity</th>
<th>Year of survey</th>
<th>No. employees in ag-industry</th>
<th>Share of female workers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cameroon</td>
<td>Banana</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Côte d’Ivoire</td>
<td>Banana and pineapple</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>35,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>Flowers</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>40,000 – 70,000</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senegal</td>
<td>French beans</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>12,000</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cherry tomatoes</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uganda</td>
<td>Flowers</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>3,300</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zambia</td>
<td>Vegetables</td>
<td>2002/3</td>
<td>7,500</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Flowers</td>
<td>2002/3</td>
<td>2,500</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>Deciduous fruit</td>
<td>1994</td>
<td>283,000</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>Vegetables</td>
<td>1990s</td>
<td>950,000</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>Flowers</td>
<td>mid-90s</td>
<td>75,000</td>
<td>60-80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>Fruits</td>
<td>1990s</td>
<td>300,000</td>
<td>ca 46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Republic</td>
<td>Fruits, veg., flow.,</td>
<td>1989-90</td>
<td>16,955</td>
<td>ca 41%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: For Africa: Maertens and Swinnen (2009), based on several sources. For South America: Deere (2005), based on several sources.
Lower levels of gender inequality are correlated with higher average cereal yields in developing countries.

The State of Food and Agriculture 2010-11

Female-headed households are hit harder by high food prices.

The State of Food and Agriculture 2010-11
Economic and social gains from closing the gender gap

- **Productivity gains**
  - 20 to 30 percent on women's farms
  - 2.5 to 4 percent at national level

- **Food security gains**
  - 12 to 17 percent reduction in the number of hungry
  - 100 to 150 million people lifted out of hunger

- **Broader economic and social gains**
  - Better health, nutrition and education outcomes for children
  - Builds human capital, which promotes economic growth

Greater gender equality in the coffee value chain can

- Increase production and productivity
- Speed up the adoption of innovations
- Raise household incomes
- Ensure significant improvements to child health, nutrition, education
- Enhance the potential of value chain development as an agent of sustainable social change
What FAO is doing to close the gender gap in agriculture

Eradicate hunger
Sustainable; supply goods and services from agriculture, forestry and fisheries
Reduce rural poverty
Build inclusive efficient food and agricultural systems
Increase resilience of livelihoods to threats and crisis

Gender equality & Good governance

Building a world free from hunger

UN specialized agency
191 members (Ministries of Agriculture, Fisheries, Forestry, Land and Natural Resources)
128 country, 13 sub-regional and 5 regional offices
Partners: UN, farmer, fisher, forest worker organizations
Gender focus

- Close the gender gap in access to resources (land, tech)
- Empower rural populations economically, socially, politically
- Strengthen rural institutions and voice
- Assess trends
- Knowledge/stats
- Instruments
- Policy
- Capacity/tech.
- Communication
- Innovation
- Partnerships

A world free from hunger founded on inclusiveness and equality for women and men

Warehouse receipt system
Western & Southern Africa, India

- Collateral guarantee
- Micro-finance institution

In Niger:
- 33% increase in stock value (in 4-6 months of storage)
- New incomes from off-season cultivation activities
- 18% of food stocks used for the lean season
What Valiben did

Organizing (social capital)
Building capacities and rights (human)

- literacy and numeracy training
- legal awareness
- sensitization of men and families about the benefits to them of enabling women to meet, earn, and lead
- nutrition

Building natural assets (land, livestock)
Accessing financial services (savings, credit and insurance)

Building physical assets and accessing technologies
and equipment and tools (library)

Accessing markets
Adding value and increasing employment

Accessing information and services
What you can do

In the coffee sector:

- Gender value chain analysis
- Women focused vertical and horizontal linkages
- Women’s bargaining power
- Women centred value chains
- Cooperatives and self help groups
- Enhance women’s ownership of assets
- Improve data
Ensure

- Gender is earmarked in budgets
- Agricultural investments are gender smart
- Targets for women’s participation are established
- Gender equality is monitored in multilateral and bilateral aid programmes – take the lead

Expand access to resources, services, assets

Mobilize resources and invest

Political will, responsive policies

Organize, participate, lead

With the support of men

Education, extension, skills, information

Rural and urban

OVERCOME BUNDLED CONSTRAINTS TOGETHER
Thank you

We know it needs to be done.
We know what to do.
It is now time to do it!