

Norway's Bilateral Agricultural Support - what's in it for women?



Lessons Learned based on findings from an evaluation of Norway's Bilateral Agricultural Support to Food Security

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Norway's Bilateral Agricultural Support to Food Security 2005-2011 was reviewed in 2012-2013. A total of 25 projects/ programmes were reviewed under the global evaluation, 20 country-level projects and five regional/global programmes. The purpose of this document is to identify lessons learned regarding women's rights and gender issues in order to achieve more gender equality in Norwegian-funded agricultural programmes. The paper is intended for Norad, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), Embassies, and implementing partners.

Findings from the reviewed programmes:

1. The strong focus on rights and gender in the Norwegian Plan of Action for Agriculture in Norwegian Development Policy from 2004, defined as women's rights and participation in agricultural development, was not well reflected in the reviewed programmes. The programmes generally applied a needs-based approach rather than a rights-based approach, and none of the reviewed programmes aimed at securing women's rights. Gender was not integrated systematically and consistently. Several projects addressed gender to a certain extent at e.g. activity or indicator level. However, there was no project which systematically included all the required elements when addressing gender: gender analysis, gender design (mainstreaming/ gender component), gender addressed at results/ specific objective level, gender

activities and gender-disaggregated data.

2. Very few project proposals included an analysis of gender relations. When a gender analysis was available, it commonly referred to a general gender imbalance, but there was no specific analysis of gender roles in the targeted areas. In most cases the gender analysis seemed to be based on a general assumption of women's unequal access to resources, rather than a solid knowledge of gender relations in the specific context.
3. Concerning the project design, many programmes referred to gender at a very general level. They gave the impression of an "add on", which did not receive much attention (if any) when the project was designed. An example is aiming at equitable participation without providing specific information on how this should be operationalized. Some programmes (e.g. Lake Chilwa, Malawi) referred to gender mainstreaming (or gender sensitivity) in the project proposals. However, this was most often planned to be handled during implementation rather than included as part of the project design. If gender is not addressed in the project design, there is a risk that the project will unintentionally jeopardize the interests of women. For example, the programme might promote crops and/or livestock which only men have the right to own, and thus the programme will not benefit women. Or the project will promote women's participation in different project

activities. Yet it will not give women increased control, but simply add to their work load.

4. With few exceptions, the reviewed programmes did not distinguish between women in male-headed and female-headed households, even though their conditions, roles and rights are quite different. Programmes commonly referred to female-headed households, as these are often considered particularly vulnerable, but they generally treated male-headed households as a nuclear entity. This is despite the fact that households in many parts of the world (e.g. East Africa) consist of different economic spheres for men and women, with gender-specific rights such as ownership of different crops and types of livestock.
5. The reviewed programmes varied slightly with regard to how much gender was addressed in the project design. Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) programmes implemented livelihood projects performed better in this respect. Gender issues were also addressed to a very limited extent in environmental/climate change programmes (e.g. REDD in Tanzania and Lake Chilwa Climate Change Programme in Malawi). Overall, it seems that there was limited, if any, recognition of the importance of gender in relation to environment/climate change during the period under study. The only exception was CA programmes (e.g. CAP I, Zambia).

The new food security strategy launched in 2012: "Food Security in a Climate Perspective" strongly promotes gender in relation to climate change. One of its core elements is climate-adapted agriculture (climate-smart agriculture) for small-holders in Africa as poor small-holders are particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate changes. With regard to gender, the strategy argues for better gender equity as

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Recommendations

1. Continue training for all staff in gender analysis and in how to design programmes for effective gender mainstreaming.
2. When designing/approving a project, Norway as a donor and the implementing partners should ensure the following:
 - agricultural project proposals should include an analysis of women's role in agriculture: including:

- Women's access and right to (control over) productive assets (land, livestock, family labour, etc.) in national and customary law; Women's access to agricultural inputs and services;
 - Intra-household gender relations (division of labour, right of ownership and decision-making). The analysis should distinguish between women in male-headed and female-headed households. In a few specific cases, gender might not be relevant; if so, that should be explained and discussed in the proposal.² Based on the gender analysis, measures and goals which enhance women's right and access to and control over resources should be integrated in the project design (gender components/ mainstreaming). Relevant measures might for instance be: advocacy for women's right to land or other resources, promotion of crops or animals which women have the right to own, enhancing women's access to agro-inputs and services, including credit; ensuring that women participate equally in training, etc. (provided this will give women extra benefits and not just add to their workload).
3. M&E systems for a project should be developed to collect gender-disaggregated data based on gender-disaggregated indicators. The M&E systems should also distinguish between women in male-headed and female-headed households.
 4. Based on the results framework all projects should report on the integration of gender (gender components/ gender mainstreaming) as part of the reporting system (annual reports, final reports, etc.).