Strategies in increasing women's participation in commodity value chain development: *Experiences from IPMS*

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Abstract

Gender roles and relationships play determining roles in the production and marketing of agricultural commodities. However, the introduction of new technologies and practices, through improved service provision and market oriented growth often either disregards the gender consequences or many benefits bypass women including business development services such as training and credit. In some cases, due to commercialization women are unable to find their power in or right to control over women's commodities they had before. This has implications not only for equity, but also may be detrimental to the long-term sustainability of commercialization. Considering this Improving Productivity and Market Success (IPMS[3]) project employed different strategies and approaches across its Pilot Learning Woredas to reach out many women in commodity development as possible. Therefore this paper is presented the different strategies and approaches employed to reach out women in commodity development through increasing women accesses to technologies, resources and; providing the required skill and knowledge to women.

Key words: Gender, commodity development, women and IPMS

1. Background

Gender roles and relationships play determining roles in the production and marketing of agricultural commodities. However, the introduction of new technologies and practices, through improved service provision and market oriented growth often either disregards the gender consequences or many benefits bypass women including business development services such as training and credit. In some cases, due to commercialization women are unable to find their power in or right to control over women's commodities they had before. This has implications not only for equity, but also may be detrimental to the long-term sustainability of commercialization.

Improving Productivity and Market Success (IPMS) project realized this and did the gender assessment on priority commodities as the first step of moving forward to understand the gender relationship in terms of their roles, responsibilities, access to resources, information, knowledge and their control power over resources and services.

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This study is helping the project to see the opportunities and challenges existed in the system to increase women participation.

The gender analysis of crop and livestock commodities, technologies and services conducted across 10 districts in Ethiopia by IPMS project of Ethiopian farmers' revealed that there is a clear difference in accessing production resources and in controlling the benefit from the sale of agricultural products. Essentially who supposed to control the income from the sale of the produces is determined by the type of commodities and the scale of production. Generally men are the key players in crop and livestock production, and are also the principal beneficiaries in terms of control over the income generated from the sale of those commodities. This dominance of men may be a reflection of the fact that men are recognised as the household head and, as a consequence, they are entitled to the most important resources like land. However there are some deviations from this general trend in which women and men share both the workloads and the benefits and women dominate both the workloads and the control of the benefits; like poultry.

Based on the specific findings of commodities in the context of gender in the PLWS, through action research a number of approaches and strategies have been employed in the ten districts to promote gender equality in commodity development through widening up women's opportunities to increase their access to resources, information, knowledge and technologies. As a result many women are benefited from various commodity value chain developments.

Therefore this paper is presented the different strategies and approaches employed to reach out women in commodity development through increasing women accesses to technologies, resources and; providing the required skill and knowledge to women.

2. Methods and Process

Following the assessments of commodity value chain development Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) has been employed at the initial stage of the project to perform gender analysis on specific commodity bases. Gender roles and responsibilities on the production and marketing of those specific commodities, gender differential of access to technologies, information and their decision making power and control over the benefits from those specific commodities have been explored. Exhaustive gender disaggregated information on commodity based have been collected using gender analysis toolkit for crop and livestock production, technologies and service provision developed by IPMS (Clare and Ranjitha, 2007). In order to capture women's ideas and views separate group discussions with men and women community members have been also made.

The findings, on which the specific commodity findings in gender perspective, were shared among stakeholders through many events. Eventually this helped the partners to look for the opportunities that increase women participation in commodity value chain development and planned to overcome the challenges too.

The monitoring and evaluation feedbacks was used as a main tool to assess which approaches and operational measures are increased women's participation in commodity value chain development. In addition the annual review meeting was used as experience sharing tools among PLWs. Finally individual case studies have been made on selected commodities

3. Approaches used to increase women's participation in commodity value chain development

3.1 Production technologies for commodities which women hold more stake in

Traditionally women engaged in producing and marketing of some agricultural commodities such as poultry and dairy production. Usually they produce these commodities in traditional ways and at small scale level. Production or introduction of improved technologies on those commodities had a greater contribution in increasing women's productivity and their engagement in marketing of those commodities and eventually contributed to increasing the productivity and market success of those commodities. However strategic thinking is required and measures should be taken not left out women in the process of commercialization.

Correspondingly IPMS deliberately introduced and demonstrated a number of technologies for women dominated enterprise such as poultry, dairy and fruit. Apart from introduction and demonstration, the project intentionally ensured a reasonable proportion of women are targeted and benefited from the introduction and demonstration of the technologies and innovations on those commodities.

Poultry

The baseline survey revealed that poultry is a women-dominated commodity in Atsbi, Fogera, Ada'a and Goma where they are responsible for all activities except slaughtering. Where as it is a shared commodity between men and women in Alaba and Bure. In all cases women have play a greater role in the production of poultry and chicken are reared for market where more than 60% of the produce is sold (Lemlem et al, 2010). Women also control the income from the sales of eggs and chicken in all cases except Bure and Alaba where the produces are shared.

However chicken are reared in traditional way which means women kept less productive chicken in poor management system where the chicken are let free around homestead to scavenge their own feed. This eventually limits women to have reasonable income from the poultry enterprise. In response to this the project has identified improving the production technologies of poultry as a way out to advance the productivity of the poultry and raise the income of women. Introduction of productive egg laying chicken, improved poultry management, vaccination, rearing a day old chicken are among poultry technologies introduced to women in the pilot learning woredas of the project (Table 1).

Table 1: Women who utilized of various technologies on poultry production development

New practices	% of respondents							
	Atsbi		Bure		Dale		All	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
• A day old chicken	-	-	-	-	36	100	38	38
• Improved poultry management	26	96	36	100	-	-	97	98
• Vaccination	-	-	12	33	36	100	48	49
• 3 months old chicken	-	-	11	31	-	-	12	12
Total	27	100	36	100	36	100	99	

Source: IPMS household survey for gender outcome, 2010

Dairy

Dairy is another marketable commodity where women have close engagement in the production and marketing of products. It is the women who sale milk and butter and control the income from dairy products. However, the community keeps the indigenous breed that produces very low milk in open grazing systems. This preference for local dairy breeds could also be because of very limited awareness about improved breeds and their availability. The introduction of crossbred or improved dairy breed by the project and supplementary feed potentially increased women income and the productivity of the dairy sector. The crossbred cows produce up to 8lt milk per day, the remaining PAs crossbred cows productivity give above 8lt milk per day. The crossbred cow's milk productivity varies within and across the PAs (Anteneh, 2008)

Feed also another key intervention in improving the productivity of dairy in rural area. In rural area dairy means butter production where women have full control on the processing of butter and the in come from the sale of butter. Considering these IPMS targeted women in its dairy intervention and women are benefited from the introduction of improved breed, supplementary feed, improved production management of dairy and market linkage.

Table 2: Gender Role in dairy management and technology adoption, in Ada

Ada	Cross breed ownership			How sold milk and Decide on income			Adoption of Improved Dairy			Use of Improved Forage seed		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T

Number	98	48	146	96	47	143	128	90	218	197	92	289
% of female		32			33			41			46	

Source: smallholder dairy innovative intervention in central Ethiopian highland, Ada'a

3.2 Technologies and commodities requiring lower amounts of resources

Technologies and commodities that requiring lower amount of resources such as land and capital are the other potential area where women can be targeted easily and benefited from the production and marketing of the produces. As it is mentioned in the first section of this paper women have no or limited control power over the important agricultural resources such as land and farm tools. Particularly women in male headed households have limited access and control over land. It is their husbands who administer the land and decide how to use it and what to produce on it. The majority of marketable commodities such as producing cash grains and vegetables required relatively larger size of land and will be practically impossible and long way to engage women from male headed household for such kind of agricultural commodities; while it is relatively easy to target women from female headed households who have better access to and control power over their land holdings than women in MHH.

In order to increase women's engagements in producing and marketing of agricultural commodities it is important to focus on commodities which don't require large size of land and can be done at the backyards. The experience of IPMS revealed that targeting women for fruit and poultry production and marketing which can be done at the backyard in small size of land found to be handy and manageable to women to be successful and effective in benefiting from market oriented agricultural development. Considering these IPMS has been introduced improved fruit seedling production for market and also targeted women in Goma, Dale and Bure which can be produced a hundreds of seedlings in a plot of land at the backyard.

Fruits

Though there are slight site specific differences among PLWs, fruit tree production including papaya, mango, avocado and banana is a shared activity in Atsbi, Alamata and Goma while in Dale and Bure men do most of the work. In all case women have a considerable contribution to the production of fruit. Fruit is usually produced for market. There is a gender difference in selling and controlling the income from the sale of fruit depending on the volume of the production and mode of marketing. If the production is at small scale women tend to sell and control the income. While it gets commercialized the merchants tend to buy it from the farm get and men tend to take over the marketing activities from women.

Women in Alamata and Ada targeted for fruit production and provided with improved variety (high yielding and short maturing cultivars of papaya, Avocado and Mango. Similarly women in Goma, Bure and Dale targeted for fruit seedling production and they are trained with their fellow farmers to produce improved fruit seedling through grafting on their backyard (Table 3).

Table 3: Women who utilized of various technologies on fruit development

New practices	% of respondents									
	Alamata		Metema		Dale		Goma		All	
	n	%	n	%	n	%			n	%
• Introduction of new varieties	16	84	26	100	6	100	3	100	51	94
• Seedling raising	3	16	18	69	6	100	3	100	30	53
• Grafting	-	-	-	-	6	100	3	100	9	12
• How to grow banana	-	-	17	65	5	83	-	-	22	43
Total	19	100	26	100	6	100	3	100	54	100

Source: IPMS household survey for gender outcome, 2010

3.3 Target women on commodity they share responsibilities though not reward

The other findings of gender analysis recognized that there are also commodities like vegetable and small ruminants where women have some contribution on the production but excluded from the benefit. Considering this IPMS intentionally target women for vegetable and small ruminant production and marketing.

Small ruminant fattening

Small ruminant is another livestock commodity where women have share responsibilities in production activities though they are excluded from the benefit. Likewise in sheep production women involved in almost all production activities either together with their husbands or as a sole responsibility. Women share activities with their husbands in rearing, feeding and day to day management, they are also sole responsible for keeping hygiene and collection of dung. However women are excluding from the selling and controlling of the income from sheep, it is the men who sell and control the income. The projects acknowledged the contribution of women to the sheep production and make every effort to make them benefited form the sheep development scheme as the issue of fairness and gender equity. Therefore based on the factual information explored from gender analysis on sheep and goat the project targeted 30 to 50% of women farmers for sheep and goat fattening. Accordingly stall feeding, supplementary feeding, breed selection and community insurance were introduced as production, input and market interventions (Table 4 and 5).

Table 4: Women who utilized of various technologies on sheep fattening

New practices	% of respondents								
	Atsbi		Bure		Goma		Meisso	All	
	n	%	n	%	n	%		n	%

• Stall feeding	7	20	11	42	29	83	9	100	56	53
• Supplementary feeding	34	97	26	100	20	57	8	89	88	83
• Selection of shoat by age, sex and body size for fattening	17	49	11	42	35	100	8	89	71	68
• Community insurance	-	-	-	-	35	100	-	-	35	33
Total	35	100	26	100	35	100	9	100	105	100

Source: IPMS household survey for gender outcome, 2010

Table 5: Women who utilized of various technologies on goat fattening

New practices	**% of respondents**					
	Metema		**Meisso**		**All**	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
• Stall feeding	-	-	19	95	19	58
• Supplementary feeding	4	31	20	100	24	73
• Selection of shoat by age, sex and body size for fattening	12	92	16	80	28	85
Total	13	100	20	100	33	100

Source: IPMS household survey for gender outcome, 2010

Vegetable production and marketing

Vegetable production is also another commodity where women share responsibilities though they don't have full ownership on the benefit. This is because vegetable production required land and irrigation which is usually labour and capital intensive. As a result, women farmers who own irrigated land mostly share crop or rent out their land. The IPMS project together with partners tried to assist women who have potential resources to produce vegetable through training and organize women as vegetable growers. For instance in Ada women are organised as a vegetable grower and saving and credit group and these women given land by the PA. The PA gave them half a hectare of land (which was left idle with in the PA) to each of the members by realizing their motivation. The project in collaboration with the BoARD (Bureau of Agriculture and Rural Development) provided them training on vegetable production and management. In 2008/09 cropping season, the 10 women supported by MARC earned Birr 5000 to 16,000 each by producing and selling of vegetables (Nigatu et al, 2010). The income from vegetable sale was also used for diversification of agricultural activities such as dairying, sending children to school, promoted saving and improved family nutrition.

In Alamata, Atsbi and Meisso female headed household who have full decision making power on their own land targeted for vegetable production and marketing. They have also provided training in the production management of vegetable production and linked with input supplier to have improved vegetable seed and grow onion, tomato and cabbage (table 6).

Table 6: Women who utilized of various technologies on vegetable production

New practices	% of respondents											
	Atsbi		**Alamata**		**Fogera**		**Adaa**		**Meisso**		**All**	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
• Introduction of new varieties	23	66	31	86	5	100	7	100	20	83	86	80
• Improved vegetable management	35	100	36	100	5	100	7	100	24	100	107	100
Total	35	100	36	100	5	100	7	100	24	100	107	100

Source: IPMS household survey for gender outcome, 2010

3.4 See opportunities to target women in male dominated enterprises

There are commodities strictly keep out women away in either the production or marketing of those commodities. Many historical, cultural, physical capability or any other reasons might kept behind all those tagged control and engagement for the commodities. So it is so important to explore that limitation and devise some measures to deal with those limitations with technologies.

Apiculture

Apiculture is one of the commodities traditionally excluded women in the production and marketing of honey in many parts of the country. One of the reasons for this restriction is that in the traditional beekeeping production system the beehives have to be hanged up on the tips of the tree branches. Men are the one who assumed physically fit to climb the tree and put the beehives at the right place. Secondly in the traditional bee keeping system the beehives are preferably kept in the forest which is not safe for the women to cross the forest alone and manage the day to day activities of bee keeping attentively. However in the modern beehives bee keeping system, the modern and the transitional beehives can be kept around the homestead near the ground under the shade. Here women can potentially manage the day to day management of bees attentively and engaged into the business as long as they have provided with the necessary knowledge, skill and resources for the production and marketing of honey. Accordingly IPMS target women for modern beekeeping system in Ada, Fogera and Alaba. The involvement of more women in apiculture sector, also reflect the possible increase in their control of income from the business. Compared with traditional apiculture, modern apiculture is friendly for women

and encourages their involvement participation because it is less labour demanding. Together with the introduction of improved beehives other production packages supplementary feeds to bees, bee forage and colony splitting adopted by the targeted women (Table, 7)

Table 7: Women who utilized of various technologies on apiculture development

New practices	% of respondents									
	Atsbi		Fogera		Adaa		Alaba		All	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
• Using improved beehives	15	100	17	100	4	100	7	100	43	100
• Supplementary feeds to bees	12	80	17	100	4	100	7	100	40	93
• Introduction of bee forage	-	-	16	94	4	100	7	100	27	63
• Colony splitting	2	13	16	94	2	50	7	100	27	63
Total	15	100	17	100	4	100	7	100	43	100

4. Identification and promotion of labour saving technologies suitable for women

Women have partial or full control and involvement on the production and marketing of few marketable commodities depending on the type of commodities and the type of resources required to produce that specific commodities. This is because women have limited control power over important resources such as land, large livestock and farm implements required to produce and market agricultural commodities. Culturally important households' resources like land, traction animals and farm implements are entitled to men particularly to male headed households. As a result of this women have limited engagement in producing and marketing of agricultural commodities particularly for those commoditise that required resources like land and animal traction to produce. Moreover women are also traditionally prohibited to perform cultivation using animal traction which potentially obstructs their engagement in producing and marketing of agricultural commodities. In order to increase women's engagement in producing and marketing of agricultural commodities it is important to tackle such cultural barriers through strategic approaches.

The base line information collected across ten PLWs revealed that female headed households are resource poor. Only 8% and 25% of the female headed households categorise into rich and middle wealth level respectively while 67% of fall into poor (Lemlem, 2010). The majority of these groups owned one or no oxen. These women have to give their land for share cropping or rent out their land in order to have some produce for consumption and sale or purchase food crops respectively. Even a few better off female headed households who owned land with sufficient traction animals (two or more oxen) to draw the plow couldn't plow as women are culturally inhibited to plough. These women oblige to either hire men labour in cash or exchange their oxen for labour to produce agricultural products. All the above mentioned problems found to limit women's

chance to participate in producing and marketing of agricultural commodities and play down their potential to participate in market oriented agricultural development initiatives. Considering such kind of women's challenges and other related problem IPMS has go behind specific intervention to tackle the problems and assisted women to be engaged in commodity development.

Conservation Tillage: Conservation tillage is one of the technologies demonstrated through training and field days in Bure and Metema as a labour saving technology both to men and women in order to minimize labour and time required for frequent land preparation and weed clearance.

All land in Bure and Metema woreda is ploughed using a pair of oxen. The field is usually ploughed three to four times prior to planting, followed by a final ploughing to cover the seed. This work is performed by men. If the household owns a pair of oxen, the head of the household ploughs and another man broadcasts the seed. However, over 10,000 households in Bure woreda have only one ox and a further 5,800 households have no oxen (Yigzaw, 2009). The majority of female headed household fall in these groups. It is straightforward to guess how the female headed households are hampered by this tradition/practice. Conservation tillage therefore brings a ray of hope to the women who are now able to use non selective herbicide that minimize weed infestation and the women's and family labour requirement for weed clearance. Because under conservation agriculture, all the pre-broadcast ploughing is replaced by spraying (performed by men); only the ploughing to cover the broadcast seed remains. This helps women to minimize their labour requirement as they are supposed to hire or lend labour and oxen only once as compared to the traditional agriculture which is 3 to 4 times. They are not tending to be forced to share out or rent out their land. The chemical spray used also reduces the demand for labour for weeding because the weed population that emerges during the growth of the cereals is significantly reduced. This has also significant impact on saving women's labour and time for other productive activities. Eventually conservation tillage helps women to be benefited from their lands in many ways.

Considering this problem, IPMS in collaboration with the woreda OoARD introduced the conservation tillage to the woreda through demonstration and training because of its many advantages particularly for the poor and female headed households. and organized training for couples. Moreover it organized field demonstration to farmers including the female headed households. IPMS

Weed Control Herbicides: is another labour saving technologies which IPMS introduced to Metema as suitable technologies for women. Weeding is one of a sole or partial responsibility of women both in male headed households and female headed households. Even in an area like Metema where the contribution of women in the production and marketing of food and cash crops is very minimal, women contributed tremendous labour force for weeding. Weeding is one of the tedious and time consuming production activities for sesame and the rest of the crops and women have more involvement in weeding.

In response to this weed control herbicide such as round up introduced in Metema where sesame, cotton, sorghum and maize are widely grown of which sesame accounts for 54% of the total arable land in the woreda. The introduction and the utilization of such herbicide replaced or highly reduced the labour required for removing the weed and contribute to save the women's labour and time for other productive and household activities.

***Women's plowing*:** plowing with oxen traction is culturally known as men activities in Ethiopia. The gender baseline information collected across 10 PLWs also confirmed that women are not involved in drawing the plow using oxen traction while they can prepare land using hand tool implements for hoeing. This tradition is a threat particularly for female headed households who don't have grown up sons and men relatives. Female headed households who have a considerable size of land with at least minimum required number of traction animals can't utilize their potential to produce agricultural commodities for consumption and market to their level of potential. Considering this fundamental problem IPMS in collaboration with the woreda OoARD and Women's Affair Offices explored the opportunity of breaking this norm through field demonstration of the experience of female farmers who plow her land using oxen traction.

One model women farmers in Zalema PA of Bure from female headed household fortunately plow her own land holding using oxen traction by her own initiatives. This lady breaks the mood because of the problem she faced to get men relatives and to pay for labor cost.

5. Strategies used to increase women's Access to knowledge and services for value chain development

The gender analysis of the project on information and networking clearly revealed that the gender dimension of accessing sources of information and opportunities for knowledge and skills development are distinct for men and women (Lemlem et al, 2009). This has serious implications for promoting agricultural development initiatives. As it was observed in the study, even though women contribute a significant amount to the agricultural labour force, they are not updated regularly about new farming practices and have few opportunities to develop their skills base. Instead they have to rely on information being passed on to them from their husbands, other men, or ideas gleaned through their informal networks. In turn, this will affect their productivity and their ability to innovate and fulfil their productive potential. Ultimately it has also an impact on the commercialization of marketable commodities.

This is because women are traditionally supposed to spend much of their time on the household activities that actually result in women to have limited exposure to the out door/public activities from where there is high possibility of getting information about the new technologies and ideas.

Similarly the development practitioners also tend to work to male farmers due to the fact that male farmers have potential resources to work with them as beneficiaries. This is perhaps due to the fact that men are the one who control most of the important resources which is handy for men to implement what they are thinking useful to them.

The project believed that provision of the necessary knowledge and skill is a central component for the success of increasing productivity and effective marketing. While doing so equal opportunity also should be given to women as that of men. In order to break these pattern IPMS took a move to design various strategies that open up options to increase women access to information, knowledge and specific skill in commodity development chains (Table 8) which is eventually leads them to be engaged in producing and marketing of marketable agricultural commodities and empower them economically.

Table 8: Women got various training opportunities through various strategies until March 2008

PLW	No events	Participants			% of female participation
		Male	Female	Total	
Atsbi	15	538	625	1163	53
Alamata	8	165	77	242	32
Metema	5	210	11	221	5
Fogera	12	318	57	375	15
Bure	5	130	10	140	7
Adaa	20	416	410	826	50
Meisso	15	362	166	528	31
Goma	5	391	61	452	13
Alaba	17	259	110	369	30
Dale	5	133	108	241	45
Total	107	2922	1635	4557	36

Source: M and E report of the project year 2009

5.1. Importance of venue and timing of training

Women are not only the major source of labour in the agricultural sector and contributor for community related activities but they are also responsible for the vital household's tasks such as carrying of children, cooking, fetching water and fuel- wood and cleaning the house as part of their household responsibilities. The gender baseline survey revealed also that women have longer working time than men. They work for 10-12 hours per day both in the wet and dry season. Due to their tremendous contribution to the production of agricultural produces provision of appropriate knowledge and skills to women are critical for enhancing their productivity and increased their market success. Moreover it also serve as powerful weapons to empowering women economical as well as socially. So it is very important to consider their daily calendar to identify their convenient time and place while arranging the training section to them.

Unlike the conventional extension approaches, the project delivered the trainings to women in innovative ways. Trainings organized in a place selected by the women themselves. In order to increase women's attentive participation in the training, the project tried to deliver the trainings in a convenient time of the day chosen by the women so that it didn't interfere with their daily routine activities.

By doing so a number of women could attend trainings on various commodity development trainings such as on poultry, fruit, vegetable, feed, dairy, shoat, apiculture, fish cattle attentively and actively.

5.2. Couples training

It is often assumed that there is a trickle down of information, ideas, skill and knowledge from husbands to wives. This assumption is underprivileged women particularly the married women not to be invited in training, meeting and other similar forum. Considering this problem the project adopted brand new training approaches called couples training. It has been used in Ada for dairy trainings, in Dale for fruit seedling production training,, in Fogera for apiculture training and in Bure for conservation tillage.

Couples' training is an approach where both husbands and wives get training together at a time. This has a number of advantages. The first and the most acknowledge advantage is it widen up the opportunity of women in getting the necessary and required information skill and knowledge for the production and marketing of marketable agricultural commodities. Moreover it helps also to bring up women at equal position as that of men in terms of having equal understanding level about the production technologies and marketing of a certain commodities. That in turn also contributes women to strengthen their decision power and back-up their husbands to decide what technologies to use and which marketable commodities to produce.

On the other hand it provides also good recognition to women in male headed household as these group is over shadow by the female headed households while both are facing distinct problems. It is very common that women in male headed households who get less attention than women in female headed households in addressing the gender issues and reaching women through agricultural extension. Ada , Fogera, Dale

5.3. Experience sharing visit

Experience sharing events are powerful tool to spread new technologies among farmers and effective ways of demonstrating new ways of producing and marketing of a certain commodities. This systematic knowledge and skill acquisition events inspire many women to use new technologies and engaged in producing and marketing of agricultural commodities. The experience of IPMS showed that the hands-on trainings through practical demonstration study tours and field days enabled many women to manage and mater new technologies successfully and become entrepreneurs.

6. Increase women's Access to inputs and services through credit

Though the micro credit institutions are so keen to provide credit fund to women many women fear to take credit as they have a feeling that they don't have enough knowledge and skill that able them to produce commodity for market and make profit out of the loan. IPMS recognized these issues and tried to reach out women through innovative credit system. The women who trained in a specific commodity development linked with micro institute to have financial access through which good opportunity is created to women to make use of the loan efficiently using the knowledge and the skill they gained through training. All women trained in specific commodity development received credit fund if capital is found very critical

7. Challenges

- Cultural and religious issues that put women at lower position hinder the participation of women in high value commodities
- High literacy rate of women predisposed them with low confidence in success.
- Limited credit services
- High women's work load hinder them to take part in market led agriculture production and marketing
- The mind set of technical staff and community leaders not changed to internalize gender equity

8. Lesson learned

- Commodity based gender analysis is important to understand the gender context of the commodity development initiatives
- Identification of appropriate approaches and strategies how women access to resources and information increased their participation in market oriented agricultural initiatives.
- In order to increase women participation in commodity value chain development it is important to uses a combination of various strategies and approaches
- Important also to consider the complimentary services and supports required ensuring women's access to knowledge and skills are increased through market oriented agricultural initiatives.

9. Implications for scaling out

The rationally behind giving emphasis to the participation of women in commodity value chain development is that women are also farmers whose contribution to the production and marketing of marketable commodities can not be disregarded. So any development or action that includes women as major actors will have higher chance of success in improving life standards of the family, fight of food insecurity and poverty alleviation and above all making women competent enough in creating human agents for growth.

Targeting women for commodity development found to be an important strategy one should aimed to increase women's involvement in the value chain development. Support the development of commodities which is traditionally considered as women dominated like poultry found to be important to increase women income and make them entrepreneurs**.**

Through deliberate targeting women involvement in commodity value chain development can be enhanced. In addition after the intended women are selected all the required supports such as capacity building, provision of credit and input supply that considered women's situation and condition found to be crucial in empowering women economical through knowledge and skill empowerment. Moreover women tend to have also decision power on controlling relatively large amount of money from the sale of the enterprises and decide by their own how to spend the money.

10. Recommendation

1 Change mindsets
Men and women at all levels need to change their traditional ways of working and begin to acknowledge the potential and need for actively involving women in Ethiopia's rural development.

2 Provide incentives
Increasing women's participation in trainings and skill development should be part of the development agents' performance evaluation criteria.

3 Set high, but realistic gender targets
At the beginning of development projects, set high but realistic targets for the numbers of women to be reached through the interventions.

4 Work with both men and women Include both the head of the household and spouse in all gender development work so that men and women together can learn and give each other support in increasing household income, which should then give them both real incentives for increasing the decision-making power of the women.

5 Take a stepwise and flexible approach to gender issues
Projects targeting women should start with a focus on commodities such as dairy, small ruminant production, poultry raising, bee keeping and backyard fruit production, which have traditionally been the domain of women; as their incomes raise and capacity is built, they may then take on other more profitable enterprises such as cattle fattening.

6 Tailor training for women
When designing capacity building strategies aiming to enlarge women's participation in markets, take into account that women often lack the time, confidence, skills and networks that make it possible for them to participate in the training.

7 Facilitate input and services provision in the value-chain
Government should promote private sector and rural entrepreneurs development to provide inputs and services.

8 Link women to markets
Create opportunities that will involve women as well as men in market-led agricultural activities by, for example, bringing them into relevant discussions; attending to their concerns, needs and ambitions; and ensuring in particular that those ready to enter markets have the links and tools they need to do so.

9 Change self-perceptions
Help women to realise that they are a vital link in the agricultural value chain. As in many other parts of the world, rural Ethiopian women typically view themselves more as farm labourers than as household providers and income-earners. To change this will require women accessing more and better-quality information, being part of stronger networks as well as women who are entrepreneurial role models.

10 Scale out successes by adapting them to particular contexts
Agricultural interventions and options that work in one place will often not work in another unless the approach to the innovation as well as a given technology is also adapted appropriately to the new given context.

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