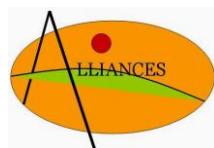


**Gender Analysis of the SDC-funded and the  
Mercy Corps-implemented  
'Market Alliances against Poverty' Programme Area**



**Akhalsikhe 2011**



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
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Swiss Agency for Development  
and Cooperation SDC

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## **INTRODUCTION:**

### ***Background and Purpose of this Study:***

The Mercy Corps ‘Market Alliances against Poverty’ (hereafter also ‘Alliances’) programme is funded by the Swiss Agency for Development & Co-operation (SDC) and began in October 2008 with a completion date forecast for November 2011. The programme is focused upon the development of the livestock sub-sector (beef and dairy) in the three municipalities of the Samtskhe-Javakheti region and is implemented with strict adherence to the ‘Making Markets Work for the Poor’ (M4P) approach. To this end, therefore, it has a light-touch facilitation approach to intervention design and implementation and makes strategic investments in order to address the systemic causes of market ineffectiveness and the exclusion of small-scale livestock producers. ‘Alliances’ is focusing upon five outcome areas in order to raise the incomes and the profitability of small-scale livestock producers: Food-safety, Nutrition, Breeding, Market Access and Terms of Trade and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR). In addition, the transversal themes of gender and governance are also strongly present in the design, implementation and monitoring of the programme. In gender, ‘Alliances’ is acutely aware of the exclusion that women face in agricultural markets even though they are major contributors in assets and labour.

Rural women in Georgia are heavily engaged in agriculture and in the Mercy Corps ‘Alliances’ programme area (Adigeni, Akhaltsikhe and Aspindza municipalities), they are primarily responsible for the care of cattle and the processing and sale of cheese. In 2009, ‘Alliances’ conducted a study entitled *A Summary of the Role of Women in Farming in Seven Villages in the Samstkh-Javakheti Region of Georgia* which utilised an open-ended focus-group questionnaire. In the study, gender was found to profoundly influence the activities carried out by, and the responsibilities assumed and meted out to, men and women. Physical strength was found to be the main criteria stated by the focus groups underpinning the division of roles related to farming. Typically, men undertook larger time-bound operations related to the land, such as ploughing or fencing, activities requiring greater physical strength, such as hauling carcasses and butchery, and one-time large scale transactions, such as the sale of livestock or large portions of the harvest. Women tended to be responsible for activities which, although seasonally bound, tended to consist of more sustained activities over time such as weeding, milking, harvesting, food processing and weekly marketing. It was generally agreed by both male and female groups that women tended to work harder as, in addition to their farm related activities and processing for which they hold almost sole responsibility, their work was extended to household activities from which men are traditionally excluded.

An initial study was focused mainly upon intra-household dynamics and labour division and did not analyse constraints and opportunities in the market for women. It led to an identification of the weaknesses upon which to focus and provided an assessment of the local livestock related services. In response to the need for more detailed research in this regard, ‘Alliances’ initiated this new study whose results are presented herein.

The new study considered not only the ‘horizontal’ dynamics (at household level) but also focused upon the ‘vertical’ dynamics to answer questions such as:

- Who benefits along the value chain?
- Who loses out?
- What happens to women when they switch from processing cheese (and, presumably, selling it, using it for their own consumption or exchanging against other products and services) to selling raw milk?
- What power do women gain/lose? What are the incentives/disincentives for men/women to switch to selling raw milk?
- What other options do different groups of women/men have?

The broader objective of ‘Alliances’ is to ensure equal access of women and men to and control over fundamental assets-capital, knowledge and technologies and improve the well-being of men and women by facilitating sustainable access to basic rural services and infrastructures.

### ***Methodology & Data Collection***

Sources of information included: (a) desk review of documents, (b) field focus group discussions (c) client questionnaire (d) Interviews with local government officials, (3) interviews with finance institutions and local university/professional training center and (f) review of ‘Alliances’ M&E documents.

(a) Desk review: The assessment of findings is based upon the review of documents on gender issues prepared by international organizations and legislative bodies.

(b) Field focus group discussions: A total of eight field focus group discussions comprising six-to-seven people of different ages were held in the three municipalities (Adigeni, Aspindza and Akhaltsikhe) of the Samtskhe-Javakheti region<sup>1</sup>. Of the eight villages, three were Armenian villages in order to try and capture any potential differences between Georgian and Armenian populations in addition with potential differences among Armenian communities. In each village separate male and female focus groups were organized. An open-ended questionnaire was utilized during the discussions which has been summarized and collated into the relevant sections of the report.

(c) Client questionnaire: A check list of questions was developed to interview ‘Alliances’ programme clients which are delivering agricultural services to the villages in the programme area. The aim of this assessment was to document the current practices of service providers from a gender perspective and capture any gaps for further consideration into the ‘Alliances’ programme interventions. (A summary of ‘Alliances’ clients are given in Box 1 below).

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<sup>1</sup> Focus group discussions were conducted in the following villages: Ude, Arali, Zanavi of Adigeni municipality, Rustavi, Mirashkhani of Aspindza municipality, Skhvili, Tskruti & Naokhrebi of Akhaltsikhe municipality. Villages for focus group discussions were selected based on the following criteria: distance from Akhaltsikhe Central Market to observe the differences between those villages located closer and far from the market, eco-migrants/Adjarian populated villages to observe the cultural differences; in addition two Armenian villages were selected to see the difference between Armenian & Georgian communities in addition with differences between Armenian villages

(d) Interviews were held with Gamgebelis of local governments and administration representatives to obtain information about women and men participation in the decision making process at community and local government levels.

(e) Representatives of Micro Finance Institutions and Local University/Professional Training Center representatives were interviewed to observe access to financial resources and education by men and women.

(f) Review of ‘Alliances’ M&E documents: including work plans, reports and proposal and outcome monitoring plans to assess how gender is mainstreamed into the programme at the design, implementation and monitoring of the interventions and identify the gaps.

**Box 1: A Summary of ‘Alliances’ Clients**

1. **Samtskhe-Javakheti Vet Association** – established within the USDA funded and GIPA implemented vet programme frame with the aim of serving the region with vet services. A representative of the Vet Association serves as a GDCI representative to consult local businesses on food safety and hygiene related issues.
2. **Rural Advisory Service** – a local NGO established within the Sustainable Livelihoods and Regional Planning Project implemented by CARE International. This organisation serves as an extension provider in addition to an input shop in the three municipalities (Akhalsikhe, Aspindza and Adigeni) of the Samtskhe-Javakheti region.
3. **Association of Business Consulting Organisations (ABCO)** serving as the representative of Caucasus Genetics (the leading AI company in Georgia) employing 11 AI practitioners in the ‘Alliances’ programme area for AI service delivery.
4. **LLC Meskheti Product** – a slaughterhouse in Aspindza built within the Government Cheap Loan Scheme and supported by ‘Alliances’ in Cattle Transport.
5. **LLC Akhaltsikhe Livestock Market** – the only livestock market in the region, attracting buyers from outside of the Samtskhe-Javakheti region where the livestock trade takes place.
6. **Local TV Company Imperia** – the ninth channel, broadcasting in the three municipalities (Akhalsikhe, Aspindza and Adigeni) of Samtskhe-Javakheti region.
7. **LLC Southern Gates** – a local newspaper agency, publishing the local newspaper in addition with an ‘Alliances’ supported Farmer Supplement, covering the entire region.

# **CHAPTER ONE: Overview of the Gender Situation in the 'Alliances' Programme Area - Akhaltsikhe, Adigeni and Aspindza Municipalities of the Samtskhe-Javakheti Region of**

## ***Policy & Institutional Environment:***

*"Gender balance, non-discrimination in every sphere and creation of equal opportunities for men and women is one of the priorities of the Georgian Government. These aforementioned aims are listed in the Georgian Law on Gender Equality Number 2844-IS dated 26 March 2010 and signed by the President of Georgia."*

Soon after independence, the Georgian Government took steps towards improving the status of women. Georgia became the state party to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and, like a number of other Commonwealth of Independent (CIS) States which attended the Fourth World Conference on Women, the Government established a system for the advancement of women, gender equality and gender mainstreaming. The gender related reform of the Shevardnadze administration has been characterised as formal rather than substantive but seems to have had the positive affect of introducing concepts of women rights and gender equality into the state structures and to society at large.

After the Rose Revolution, gender issues once more came to the forefront of the Government's agenda. As a signatory of the Millennium Development Goals, Georgia committed itself to achieving Goal 3 (promoting gender equality and empowering of women) by 2015 and elaborated a strategic plan for its accomplishment which focuses upon equality in employment and in the political domain. Previously existing institutions to promote women's rights were dissolved and two new structures, the Gender Equality Advisory Council in the Parliament of Georgia and the Gender Equality Governmental Commission within the executive branch, were established. In 2006, the Government adopted a State Concept on Gender Equality and a National Action Plan on Gender Equality for 2007-2009<sup>2</sup>.

In March 2010, the Parliament of Georgia adopted the Law on Gender Equality which was thought to be relevant for review in this report. The Law gives the Advisory Council on Gender Equality a permanent mandate to monitor the implementation of national action plans on gender equality, conduct gender expertise of legislative acts, make recommendations and provide annual reports to the Parliament. Other provisions of the Law set forth the goal of eliminating discrimination in labour and employment, education, health and social services, family relations and elections. The document clearly states support and state responsibility to adhere to providing equal rights and freedom of women and men to have (Chapter II, Article 4):

- Equal access to education and free choice of education at all stages
- Legal equity of spouses
- Equal rights and responsibilities towards children
- Support to elimination of violence in family and society
- Free choice of occupation of profession, carrier promotion, vocational training

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<sup>2</sup> USAID Gender Assessment Report'2010

- Employment in public service based upon profession, skills and qualification
- Equal treatment during performance appraisal
- Equal social security in case of diagnosing illness or disability
- Equal healthcare
- Equal access to information

Article 8 of the Law obliges central and local government authorities and legal entities of public law to ensure equal access to information kept with them or available to them for all persons interested in obtaining public information irrespective of sex as prescribed by the Georgian legislation.

Article 10 of the Law on Gender Equality in family relations is also clear and strictly follows equality principles which earlier were considered as a “private sphere” whilst stating the following:

- In family relations, in marriage and divorce women and men enjoy equal private and property rights, including the right to choose family name, profession and occupation and bear equal responsibilities.
- In family relations direct or indirect limitation or privilege in the rights and obligations based on sex is inadmissible.
- Women and men in the family shall have the equal right to independently make decisions upon the issue of participation in labour and social activities.
- Issues related to child-rearing and other family matters shall be resolved between the spouses together by mutual agreement. Equal opportunities for activities of spouses and child-rearing shall be guaranteed and ensured.
- The rights and responsibilities of spouses in house work shall be equal. The spouses shall have equal rights in ownership, purchase, management, use and disposal of property.
- The spouses shall have equal rights pertaining to leisure activities and participation in all spheres of cultural life.

It is also worth highlighting Article 11 wherein the equal opportunity for participation of representatives of both sexes is ensured in the enforcement of the right to be elected in a representative body. Moreover, women and men can be elected on equal terms and without discrimination.

Finally, it is worth mentioning that Article 13 states that local self-government bodies along with central legislative bodies are obliged to ensure identification and elimination of discrimination based upon sex. The budget, socio-economic development priorities, municipal programmes and plans of local self-government bodies are to be implemented in such a way as to exclude any kind of discrimination based upon sex. This Article also indicates that state authorities within their authority are also to provide organisational, informational and other types of support to the local self-government bodies for the prevention of discrimination based upon sex and protection of universally recognised human rights and freedoms in their activities.

The existence of a gender “demanding” and sensitive state level document provides the ‘Alliances’ programme with additional support to mainstream gender and involve local partners

and authorities in the implementation of gender programmes aiming at transforming the existing gender systems and relations at all levels.

### ***Division of Labour:***

#### **Reproductive Roles of Women and Men**

Women in program area lead hard lives. Their morning usually starts around 6-am and continues until 10-11pm. Every day women are busy with food preparation, laundry, cleaning the house, baking bread and taking care of the children. They are especially busy in late summer and autumn, when their huge list of responsibilities also include the preserving of fruits and vegetables alongside other tasks of prepare for the upcoming long and severe winter. Even though women think that the work is equally divided between the husband and his wife, a woman's work load is still much greater than that of a man who typically comes home from work in the field, eats, rests or goes out for some socialising with his friends whilst women need to finish up with washing and other housekeeping related activities.

*"We have divided the work between us. My husband works the same as I do and he is very supportive. But when we come back from the field, he normally rests after having a heavy dinner and I still need to do either washing, ironing, food preparation or something else."* (Tsitsino, 47, female, Arali)

The table below details the list of activities which women undertake on a daily basis. It was calculated that every day women need minimum 5 hours in order to perform their reproductive roles within households. In addition, 2 more hours are added during the summer and autumn to preserve vegetables and fruits for the winter time.

Activity Description	Women
Housekeeping (Cleaning, food preparation, washing, ironing)	2-3 hours per day
Bread Baking	1-2 hours per day
Water Gathering	Half an hour a day
Wood chopping for heating and when required for baking	10-15 minutes per day during the
Preserving vegetables and fruits for the winter time	2 – 3 hours per day in (Summer and Autumn)
Child Care	2 hours per day

#### **Productive Roles of Women and Men**

The roles of women and men usually differ in relations to the kind of work they do. Work which is done at home is considered to be women's work—which includes tending the cattle and some of the field activities—whilst the work done outside of the house and requiring physical strength is considered to be a man's task.

Women look after cattle twice in a day in terms of milking. In addition they go the field and help their husbands in different land cultivation and harvesting activities.

Milking cows twice a day takes up a considerable amount of time. The cleaning of the animals shelters and feeding is a job for the men although there are many cases when women are heavily involved in shelter cleaning and feeding, especially when a women is either widow or her husband has gone abroad or to another region to serve as a migrant labourer.

*"I am the man and the woman in my family when my husband goes to work. This is mostly in the summer time when I need to play both roles. I need to get up early, clean the house, do the washing, prepare the food, milk the cows, go to the field and then late in the evening milk my cow again, clean the shelter, feed the cow and then finish up with the housekeeping."* (Nana, 57, female, Arali village)

Men mostly deal with the more difficult work requiring physical strength such as feeding the cows, cleaning the animal shelter, disposing of manure, supplying and chopping firewood, looking after the irrigation and doing field work such as land cultivation and mowing, amongst others

Women play a major role in marketing the products they make. Many women go to the market, sell their goods and then stop to buy the products they need for their families on their way back home. Men are also involved in marketing but mostly in terms of selling large volumes of produce, such as potatoes, which must be transported by car or truck. Men also play the main role in the selling of livestock, often walking with their cattle as far as 30 km from their villages, then spending the night in Akhaltsikhe, and then walking home the next day.

Some women like to go to market for selling produce and for many, in addition to buying products needed at home, it is the only chance to "see the town" and visit some shops. This trend varies in different villages. In the highland communities, populated mainly by those from Ajara, it is still a problem for a woman to go to the market because of the very traditional and conservative culture still existing in these communities. Therein, the women either do not express an interest or are limited in their ability to access markets because of the perception that "a woman should sit at home and take care of the family and the children."

*"I have a small child to take care of. If I want to go to the town or the market, I will need to catch a village bus and then explain to all my neighbors where I am going and why."*

Similar to reproductive roles, women's work load is very high and time bound while performing productive roles. The table below indicates that in addition to reproductive roles, women spent up to 2 hours to look after cattle and then add 2 more hours to produce cheese. Though land cultivation, sowing and other field tasks are performed only late spring, summer and autumn, women support their husbands in mentioned activities and spent full and half days in the field. In addition, women tend to look after chicken and pigs which takes them around 1 hour every day.

Activity Description	Time spent by women
Livestock Husbandry: Early in the morning women milk cows, send them to the herd. In the evening women prepare animal shelter and milk cows	2 hours per day (1 hour in the morning and 1 hour in the evening)
Cheese Making	2 hours per day



Land cultivation and sowing	1 week of 8hrs/day – during the spring season
Hoeing, sowing, fertilizer application	Late spring/summer, full and half days as and when required
Harvesting (Potatoes, and other agricultural products)	End of summer and Autumn/8 hours per day
Chickens: (feeding and egg collection)	20 minutes per day (10 minutes in the morning and 10 in the evening)
Pigs (feeding)	30 minutes per day (15 minutes in the morning and 15 minutes in the evening)

### ***Decision-Making:***

#### **Women and Men in the decision making at household level**

In rural families, larger decisions are usually taken by both the husband and the wife. Women sometimes take larger decisions based upon the needs of the family but it is always with the corroboration of the male head of the family. When a woman sells produce in the market, however, she can buy the goods for family independent of her husband in that she knows best what is required for the household. In one of the Armenian villages, for example, all of the male respondents admitted that money is always kept with the women in their families and that they can spend it independently because they better know the needs of what is required at home. Men have confidence in their wives and are certain that the women will not spend money without good reason or purpose

*“When my husband comes home with money, he empties his pocket and I keep the whole amount. He never asks where I spend it because he knows that I will use it for the benefit of the family.”*

There are several families within the programme area, however, where only men take decisions and never give money to their wives. According to one of the respondents, “mistrust” is the biggest reason in such households. Men sometimes do not trust women and prefer to keep money with them and take the decisions themselves when it comes to making a purchase or buying commodities

*“Of course, men will not trust women if they do not see confidence in their wives. How can a man trust a woman who buys coffee and chocolate instead of flour when the family is in desperate need of bread?”*

Except for a mistrust in their wives, some of the respondents also stated “selfishness” of men to be the reason for taking individual decisions. Therein, money was always associated with power and giving money to women was thought to be a loss of power

*“Sometimes men are selfish. Traditionally, men used to be family heads and it was only their opinion which mattered. Sometimes, they think that if money is kept with the women, they are losing their power.”*

Women's opinion always is prioritized and taken into consideration by men when taking decisions about spending money on family needs and buying needed commodities for the house and family. Men, however, take independent decisions as concerns buying agricultural machinery, vehicles or spare parts for their machinery. As explained by the majority of men, women do not have the knowledge to advise them on this issue and so it is for this reason alone that these particular decisions are made by them.

*"Certainly, it is my decision to say whether or not we will buy a mower or a tractor or any type of agricultural machinery as I have the better knowledge in this. Imagine when I need to buy a tyre or spare parts to repair machinery! How can my mother or my wife know what to buy?"*

A different picture, however, was seen in those villages where the majority of the population is from Ajara and is generally considered to be more conservative. Even though men admit that women are doing difficult and valuable work, men lead their families and consider decision making to be their responsibility

#### **Women and Men in Decision-making at Community and Local Government Level.**

According to the data obtained from the target municipalities, there is a fairly low level of the participation of women in decision-making processes either at community or local government levels. The Municipality of Akhaltsikhe employs a total of 129 people with 31 women and 62 men working in the municipality's administration and only four women out of 10 appointed to decision-making positions. Of the 26 city council members, only six are women. In the Municipality of Aspindza, six women are employed in the legislative body, which comprises about 40% of the total employment in the *sakrebulo*, whereas there are 21 women (around 70%) in the executive body wherein only two women are represented as heads of services. In the Municipality of Adigeni, a total of 16 women from the body of 47 employees work for the municipality's administration. In total, the local government of Adigeni employs 107 people of whom only 22 are women and mostly concentrated in the spheres of administrative, cultural and financial services. The reasoning behind these figures is that there is no gender explicit policy and the criteria for evaluation during the recruitment process are addressing "professional competence only." There was a consensus amongst respondents in the Municipalities of Aspindza and Adigeni that men are definitely more efficient as managers and in other higher level positions. Women's "principles and qualities," to their view, are not appropriate for working in self-government bodies with this work requiring specialised education and being too difficult for women to perform.

*The attitude expressed by the gamgebelis can be qualified as "gender blind" or "gender unaware" as evidenced by their statements such as "We have women everywhere" or "Women are very active." It was clear, therefore, that municipalities are not aware of the state-level gender equality commitments and no strategies to act in accordance with them have been planned.*

**Participation:** To the view of the Aspindza Deputy, the number of active women in local government is increasing due to their growing motivation and results-oriented attitudes. This respondent also mentioned that "women actively participate in community and *sakrebulo* meetings although their ideas are considered only if men revise and approve them." He estimates that about 30-40% of women usually attend these meetings. The number of women attendees, however, is much lower in Armenian villages.

According to the opinion of local government officials, women remain actively involved in both decision-making processes and their implementation even though their numbers are low at both the municipality and city council levels. They have initiated different interventions, for example, such as reducing the fees for kindergardens and music and art schools for the mothers of the large families as well as for orphans.

Needs: Community meetings are the sources for learning about local needs. Although the *gamgebeli* admitted that he is not aware of what women truly need of, he recalled the case of some women rushing into the *gamgeoba* and demanding them to repair the roofs of several block houses through a budget project. The women, he added, achieved their goal and the work was done. This story was told to illustrate the local administration's sensitivity towards the needs of women.

The respondents surveyed in this study believe that women's needs will be well addressed through establishing a small healthcare centre where women will be employed and provide women with healthcare services. This is a local self-government initiative. The local budget considers women's needs through subsidising pre-school institutions which means that a family has to pay only 15 GEL per month. The building of a ritual house was also mentioned as a project addressing the particular needs of women.

In commenting further upon the needs and interests of local women, both the *gamgebeli* and his deputy mentioned occupational opportunities which can be created with the building of food processing factories. They reported that approximately 50% of the women in the municipality are engaged in individual entrepreneurship activities.

A rather different picture about the participation of women in community meetings, however, was obtained through focus groups conducted with male and female villagers. Although the *gamgebeli* informs everybody about the community meeting by means of a door-to-door method, the women in Gomaro village say that women can only participate if "their men are absent." They also said that they sometimes do not get the information about which problems were discussed and what was decided and that "in the end, the men will decide what the men want." In Tskaltbila village, the female secretary calls and gathers participants by telephone in which about half of the participants are usually women. Even here, however, none of the respondents could remember any decision which answered the needs of women. In Tskruti, the women explained that they know nothing about decisions which are being taken and that they are used only if their signatures are needed. The women have also complained that they are excluded from important decisions and events as they speak only Armenian. In Khertvisi village, the women expressed pride in their active participation in community meetings and named the ritual house as a result of their decision-making participation. It is worth mentioning that ritual houses are named as special priorities in every village and that it is the men who are mostly inclined to choose this project which, of course, have nothing to do with the strategic needs of women.

## **Access to and Control over Resources and Services:**

### **General overview of Access and Control over Resources**

According to the SDC's analytical framework, the following *tangible* resources within reproductive roles are identified: food, money, housing, clothing, clean water, transport and information about services. Intangible resources include health, education, reproductive rights, time and social networks.

We tried to deepen our understanding of **the resources which women have access to and control over within their reproductive roles as well as their productive ones.**

According to our respondents, the tangible resources such as food, housing, clothing, clean water are the issues over which women do have their own opinions in most cases. In the case of transport, for example, women tend to be indirect or secondary beneficiaries of information about services and money as they are dependent upon the good will or time of the men together with the cultural norms which limit women's mobility and the right to perform an active role. Women participants, however, said that they can always use common (belonging to the household) money for the care of their or their children's health.

Education is a special issue. It is considered as obligatory and very appropriate for women and so every girl has access to secondary education. If, however, a choice had to be made between a male or a female child in terms of who would get a higher education, some participants said that investing in boys is more rational. At the same time, those indicating that preference would be given to girls could not envisage any other opportunities for using the higher education except for getting married into a "good family." It was a general evaluation that girls do much better in schools and so they deserve to be able to continue their studies.

Women's **time** belongs to the sphere of their performing in a reproductive role. When asked "How would you use any extra time" (two or three hours) so that it could bring in more income for the family, the most frequently given response was "I would use it for my domestic tasks."

In Khertvisi, the women said: "The milk collecting service has saved a lot of our time which now we can use for sewing and knitting."

### **What Resources do Women Have Access to within Their Productive Role?**

Women have access to household land as they are involved in all land-focused operations such as seeding, harvesting, providing irrigation, etc. They are also able to take decisions concerning vegetable gardens or participate in making decisions about what is to be planted during a given year in order to generate income. Due to the lack of information and updates in this area, however, their participation is often limited to agreeing with their husbands' decision and participating in physical labour. According to the information taken from the focus groups, equipment is not available for women to use. "Only men can drive tractors, because it is a man's job." These tractors are too heavy for them" (respondent from Gomaro). "One woman tried to use a manual tractor but she ended up with a broken leg because it was too heavy for her. No woman will try to do this again" (respondent from Tskaltbila). Although participants were articulating the lack of physical strength as being a problem, it was clear that cultural norms do determine the "rights of what can be done and what cannot be done."

## **Education:**

Cultural traditions have a great influence upon rural households. Most of the rural families try to give their male and female children equal access to education although if it comes to a choice, however, sons are typically the recipients of a higher education. This is explained by the perception that the “man” is the one who looks after the family and, accordingly, it is the male member who is most important. The reasoning behind this trend was found to be the lack of employment opportunities with men typically finding jobs more easily than women.

The data obtained from educational centers showed that the numbers of male and female students are almost equal with a further equal activity and involvement in activities depending upon the particular fields of interests. The numbers also showed that an almost equal number of girls and boys go to university after high school.

Most of the school or kindergarten buildings are rather old (some of 100 years and more) and have inherited the buildings’ out-of-date utilities which means that they have only unisex lavatories. The kindergartens do have gender segregated toys but the interviewed teachers say that the children play with both kinds of toys regardless their sex.

Although all the respondents verify that the only criterion in the hiring process is professionalism and that gender does not play an important role, the staff of the educational sector is predominantly female.

In most schools, there is no correct data about the numbers of male and female students. Researchers for this study did not face any serious difficulties in conducting their work and respondents were willing to give the data following the receipt of permission from the principal or head of a particular institution. The figures from the Akhaltsikhe Professional Training Centre indicate the level of attendance of girls and boys within various agricultural faculties as follows:

- The Veterinary Faculty is attended by nine men and seven women.
- The Agricultural and Livestock Products Storage and Processing Faculty is attended by 11 women and three men.
- The Farming Faculty is attended by eight women and seven men.

The highest attendance of women is observed in the Chemical Analysis and Laboratory Specialist Faculty with 16 women and five men.

## **Access to Financial Resources:**

Meetings were held with Chief Officers from the Credo micro-finance institution, to obtain information about the equal access of women to loans and, in particular, agricultural loans. To our estimation, the overall situation and attitudes provided a good illustration of the gender blind policy with the formula “We make no distinction between men and women” which means that there is no understanding of the different needs, interests, opportunities and statuses of two genders in a given society. Other signs of the existence of a gender blind approach were that there were no gender statistics and no problem diagnosis.

The first challenge which was faced was the lack of gender desegregated data and it was necessary to consult the database of Credo’s central office in order to obtain precise numbers which were not available during the initial interview. According to this information, men to women ratio of loan recipients is 70% to 30%, respectively. At the same time, our respondents expressed a good understanding of the reason for the loan request in the cases of men and

women. Amongst the two major types of loans, women were more active in applying for and receiving personal loans whilst men were looking at agricultural loans (especially for the purchase of seed and mechanisation equipment). In the context of accessibility, we questioned Credo on its informational policy by asking how it makes information about its services available to women and especially rural women. It was a pleasant surprise to learn that a “knock on every door” methodology was used to disseminate the information which theoretically means reaching every house-wife or elderly woman in the community.

At the moment, it is rather difficult to make an analysis of the impact of these procedures from the gender point of view. On the one hand, women have more information about the loan taken by the husband (within an activity of partial participation and sharing of the responsibility) whilst on the other, it is obvious that this rule decreases the quality of economic decisions.

When asked about the amount of the average loan for women and for men, Credo representative indicated that women generally apply for and receive less as larger loans require guarantees linked to owning property. The largest loan on record was given to male farmer for the development of his farm.

The most original business idea belonged to a woman who was asking for a loan to buying a yacht and start river tours on the Potskhovi River in Akhaltsikhe. This loan request, however, was denied upon careful consideration of the risks and validity of the project.

The data obtained from another micro-finance -institution the Finca showed that 525 agricultural loans were issued in the last four months of which 245 women and 280 men were applicants. It was interesting to note that similarly to Credo's experience, women applied to Finca for loans for personal purposes whereas men's loans were mostly related to agriculture. It was also observed that the male head of the family could not take a loan unless the permission was given by the wife or vice versa. Women's loans were common within group loans whilst men applied for larger amounts due to their access to property as collateral given that the household is always registered on the man's name.

#### **Real Estate Property:**

One of the most important resources in the community is land and real estate property. Traditionally, parents provide the son with the house whereas the daughter gets married and leaves her parents' home. This tradition is widespread and accepted by both men and women. Accordingly, the land, house and other property is registered on the man's name in 98% of rural households. There is, however, a small number of families in which property is registered on the wife's name but this is mostly an occasion when the woman is a widow.

#### **Access to Agricultural Services:**

Women were identified as particularly vulnerable in the programme area. They make up 51.5% of the labour force in the agricultural sector which is a number that reflects their importance in contributing to household food security. In addition to housekeeping, women take an active role in farm-work (looking after animals, feeding, cleaning animal shelters, milking cows, processing milk and marketing the produce) as well as field work (sowing, hoeing, fertilising, harvesting and storing). When the men in the family migrate as labourers to the cities or to Russia, women also take on the traditionally male roles (land cultivation, irrigation, fertilisation, viticulture, wood supply, hay production, etc). During the hay production period, for example, women's work tends to be doubled as this takes up all the man's time for up to 1.5 months. Nevertheless, their earnings are 13%-48% lower than the men who are engaged in the sector.

It is also commonly observed that women are not well represented in decision-making processes within the household, within business and within politics, although this varies from community to community as well as on religion affiliation. In farm decision-making, only 30% of farms are headed by women on average although this figure rises to 67% for women over 60 years old emphasising the importance of involving women early on so that they are adequately catered for in succession planning. On average, women also own less land than men (only 27%).

Women have no barriers from service providers in terms of accessing services. There might, however, be different perceptions and cultural traditions which may prevent women from participating in different activities or holding different positions.

*“Woman can never be a butcher,”* stated one of the male respondents of this survey due to the physical strength required for doing this work.

Women have no barriers to access AI services but due to the prevailing culture, they are sometimes “ashamed” to contact a practitioner and call him to deliver the service to their cattle.

### Time Saved - Versus Opportunities



One of the objectives of the ‘Alliances’ programme was to document both the incentives and disincentives for women and men in switching from cheese making to raw milk sales. As understood from the interviews conducted, the majority of both male and female representatives prefer to sell raw milk instead of engaging in cheese making after acknowledging the benefit of doing so.

Cheese making takes up to two hours from the time the women start milking the cows, washing the cans, adding additives to the milk and then making the cheese itself. Selling the raw milk, on the other hand, is less work consisting of milking the cows and putting the cans of milk at the door for a representative from a milk collection centre.



The majority of the women interviewed stated that there are no alternative employment opportunities within their communities where they could spend the two hours they saved from making cheese. Instead, they indicated that they would spend this time to do their work more efficiently as follows:

- Some of the women see the profitability of the time saved as it would be spent in their gardens to grow vegetables. This time saved provides them with an opportunity to properly irrigate and weed vegetable plots which leads to increased productivity and, accordingly, increased incomes after they harvest and sell the produce.
- Women see an opportunity to deliver quality service to their families. Two hours saved enables them to serve their family members “without running” which results in the provision of quality service and, accordingly, the “satisfaction” of their family members.

- Some of the women see the benefit of extra time spent on their children's education. Because of their work load, women pay less attention to their children in doing their homework. The quality of education is a precondition for good farming practices or employment in the private or government sectors which can lead rural families on the path to increased incomes.
- In addition with above stated, Armenian village women prioritised the learning of the Georgian language which, in many cases, prevents them from accessing trainings or using demo plots which could also add to their knowledge.

Switching from cheese making to raw milk sales, however, did not seem to be profitable for those women having less than three milking cows who stated that their milk volume was insufficient to supply to a milk collection center and, at the same time, produce cheese for their own consumption.

*"I wish to have more time to spend on other things rather than making cheese. But I have no other choice. I have only one milking cow and I make cheese for my family. Whatever is surplus, I am taking to sell at the Akhaltsikhe market."* (Tamara, 54, female).

The situation differs in the villages located far from Akhaltsikhe where milk collection and raw milk sale practices are not known. After considering the benefits of raw milk sale, some of the women in these communities are willing to adopt this practice whilst others still think that it is more profitable to make cheese. Firstly, they always make and have cheese for family consumption which they can store until late autumn when the price is significantly higher in comparison to the summer. Additionally, most of the rural families keep pigs and the whey, which is left over from the cheese making process, is used to feed them.

It was interesting to observe how male respondents appraised women in terms of their having extra time. Some men are supportive of their wives in selling raw milk as a means of freeing up some of her time whilst others still see the benefit of cheese making.

One of the male respondents from Tskruti village stated: *"I am all for selling raw milk. If you make the calculations, you get the same income through selling raw milk in the summer time and my wife gets free time to spend on the family. Women can knit socks using that time and make sure that their husbands' feet are kept warm."*

*"She is also a human being and she also needs time to sit with the neighboring women, drink coffee and chat,"* stated a 32-year old male respondent.

### ***Gender Inequalities and Needs***

**Needs Expressed by Women within their Reproductive Role:** It has been expressed many times that women desire to continue their educational training as well as indicating the need for the education and qualification of their husbands. The importance of kindergartens, which could save time for mothers with young children, has also been underlined repeatedly.

**Gender Inequalities:** Existing inequalities in the division of domestic tasks are perceived as a natural order. Women can make a decision upon what to buy only in terms of food and clothing for children but this must have been previously agreed upon with the men. Women's need for time for themselves and for the undertaking of domestic tasks is a serious issue.

**Needs of Women within their Productive Role:** Greater opportunities for paid work were most often named as a priority (factories, small shops, for example). The need for equipment was expressed in regards to the role and tasks of men such as cars, tractors, advanced agriculture technology and computers in order for the men to be able to increase the effectiveness of their work in favour of the household. It seems that women do not associate themselves with equipment with the exception of a washing machine.

**Gender Inequalities:** It was difficult to think about the possibilities for women to participate actively in the income generation process overall. Answers from both genders were more of a quantitative nature; that is, to sell more cows, to produce more cheese or to plant more vegetables. No strategic gender changes were mentioned.

There is a big difference between the mobility and use of space between men and women. There are different restrictions depending upon local traditions. Our analysis showed that twice as many men than women could be mobilized for participation in the focus groups. Women explained this by saying that "women are always busy" which is a true statement but there is also some control over the movement of women from the side of the community.

"When I rush to my job early in the morning, and especially when I come back late, after six o'clock, my neighbours are watching me disapprovingly from their windows as if I am doing something inappropriate or dishonourable" claims a business woman from Akhatsikhe.

Source: *The Study of Women's Participation in Akhatsikhe*, ICCN, 2011.

### **Needs Expressed by Men within their Reproductive Role:**

Men in a reproductive role do not comprise a typical case. We met two men who are involved in domestic tasks. One of them was a teacher whose wife also works as a teacher. He said that they divide the domestic tasks equally and that he takes care of the children when needed. Another man (from Gomaro) said that he knows how to cook and how to look after his children because his wife leaves their home during the summer to follow the cattle in the mountain pasture. Although this was said in a humorous manner which prompted laughter amongst the other male respondents.

There were opinions that women are too busy in terms of their reproductive duties and that they would need more time for this. Only in the Armenian village of Tskhaltbil did the men say that women are doing nothing and would use any extra time for drinking more coffee with their neighbours or watching a comedy show on television.

In Khertvisi village, one man expressed a general opinion of the villagers. "Our women are in good conditions in our households," he said. "They live like queens."

Washing machines were mentioned repeatedly as a piece of equipment which has solved all of the problems women have previously had within their reproductive role.

### **Gender Inequalities and Needs not Easily Expressed by Men?**

Inequality between men and women as a term was never mentioned. Generally, men think that women will like what they do and how they live if the men have paid jobs and earn more in favour of the household. It also seems that men see the value of productive work and undervalue a woman's traditional duties in terms of cleaning and cooking.

### **Gender Needs and Inequalities within their Productive Role:**

Gender inequalities and needs within the productive role are not easily expressed by men. Property and the right to possess and control property is one of the fields which manifests inequality between the sexes. Houses, cars and land, amongst others, are officially owned by men and typically inherited by male children. The typical articulation of this fact is “Of course, according to the documents, the property is my ownership but, in reality, my wife owns it upon an equal basis.” To our observation, this fact reflects a great many inequalities within the taking of economic decisions and the right and practice of taking a loan. In Gomaro, for example, men said that “Women never take a loan but she is involved because when her husband takes the loan, she has to sign as well” or “What if she takes a loan and then the family has to cover the debts? That is not a right way to do things!” Opinions and practices differ from community to community but in the majority of cases it is the man who takes the loan although we met women in Tskaltbila who have taken loans themselves but were limited in the amount available to them from the side of the micro credit organization.

It was surprise to hear the various opinions of men who said that they have nothing against women driving a car and that there is already one such women in their village (Gomaro). This is indeed a great shift in the mentality which means that certain autonomy for women within a productive and communal role is available although this seems to be a rather optimistic prognosis rather than a new perspective.

A more typical case is the following: Two women teachers walk from Adigeni to the school in Gomaro everyday comprising a distance of about ten kilometers along a very difficult road. Despite this, there is nothing which prompts them to think of taking an initiative in making for some transportation even though their family member have a car and they are main breadwinners.

Men wanting to express how freely women are able to move about told that : “Of course they go everywhere they want. They ask us for permission and then go. They walk to see neighbours or use the minibus if they want to go to town” (respondent from Tskaltbila).

### ***Assessment of Agricultural Service Providers from a Gender Perspective:***

The majority of the interviewed agricultural service providers apply a “non-discrimination” approach in delivering services to farmers. They serve equally male as well as female clients and make sure that the quality of the delivered service is applicable for both. When introducing and marketing their services, however, the majority of the interviewed clients at times do not undertake the preliminary work necessary to ensure that they are maximizing their “customer audience.” Specifically, they are not usually focused upon a proper identification of their customers which also comes from the prevailing male dominance as well as a lack of awareness on the part of women. Along with circulating information by placing posters at different locations in respective villages, service providers use *Sakrebulo* and *Gamgeoba* offices for reaching out to as many people as possible. Sometimes they do spread information about the meetings at such an informal gathering of people as a “*birzha*”. Whilst posters placed at bus stops, shops and other places are accessible to men as well as women, the *birzha* is an open space meeting of men only. Some of the interviewed clients, therefore, take this reality into consideration and do place posters at schools or wells where women gather to make sure that access to information on their service availability is provided to women as well.

*"When we wanted to advertise an Artificial Insemination Service in the village, we used birzhas, school boards and wells. We wanted women to have access to information as they are the ones who spend quite a long time working with the cattle and, perhaps, they will know better when the cow is in heat and can inform either their husbands or contact us directly in case their husband is not at home."* (Kachik Chakhoian, AI Practitioner, Tskruti village)

There are no barriers for women to access different agricultural services or input supply shops. There might be cases when the terms of access are not convenient for them, however, and ultimately dominated by male customers. This might be caused by the poor infrastructure or the perception amongst people that certain services are a male domain due to the physical strength required for the job.

**Case I:**

The Akhaltsikhe livestock market can serve as a case for employing 'an access and the terms of access' approach. Hypothetically speaking, women farmers have an access to this market. Owing to the reality of access, however, which means that it is not always convenient for either men or women as quite often the people will spend all day and all night there without any proper facilities for buyers or sellers, it is usually only the men who are selling cows there. Women are coming only if they do not have any other choice.

Some of the clients take into consideration the time constraints of women whilst making their initiatives. The Local Business Development Service provider reported that organizing business trainings or other activity deliveries are always done to schedule meetings which will also be convenient for women.

In the Armenian communities, the lack of Georgian language skills is often a barrier for attending either trainings or participating in demo plots as these initiatives are mostly implemented by local organizations or extension providers and are conducted in Georgian which precludes Armenian women from attending them, whilst, some of the clients consider language barriers of ethnic minorities and develop products accordingly to address this constraint.

**Case II:**

The Southern Gates is the only regional level newspaper, funded by donors and international organizations, the circulation of which is approximately 2,500 copies per month. The newspaper covers issues of local importance in addition with the information on market prices, improved agricultural practices and technology and sources of inputs or services in the form of Farmer Supplement facilitated by Alliances. Before the supplement was commenced, the organization conducted the survey to document information needs and priorities and held separate male and female focus group discussions to capture the differences in information needs by men and women. In addition, the Southern Gates newspaper with its Farmers Supplement is being published into two languages (Georgian & Armenian) to ensure that ethnic minorities have access to information.

To this end, the results of the research revealed that the female farmers in the surveyed communities have little access to agricultural services in compare with their male counterparts which is constrained either by cultural factors, time, poor infrastructure or the perception amongst people that certain services are a male domain due to the physical strength required for the job.

*To this end of main findings observed during the implementation of the survey, we bring the brief case of a young lady “Lia” to illustrate some rural women’s life and their contribution to community matters before we move on to the description of Alliances in the context of Gender Mainstreaming*

### ***A Story of a young lady “Lia”!***

Lia is 25 and married with two children. She lives in a big family together with her mother-in-law. Lia readily tells what a happy family she has.

What is the reason for her happiness?

Although she looks much older than she really is, Lia is still a young woman. She was 15 when she got married. Most probably, she was given into marriage by a match-maker which was very common in her village. Now, however, the people are saying that more marriages are taking place because of love. Lia says she wanted to study but her children and the hard work at home did not allow her to continue her education.

She speaks modestly and quietly. She prefers not to speak at all. Has she ever thought about continuing her studies? She is still young. She wants so much to do this but the work at home makes this impossible. Who will look after her children? At the same time, the whole village knows that her mother-in-law has a problem with her eyesight. The village knows everything. Except of where and when a community meeting is taking place and what it will be about. But these meetings are not for women. Lia knows very little about these meetings and the issues to be discussed. That is not for her. *“That is only for women whose husbands are away.”* She does not have any idea how to be involved in income generating processes.

Does this “happy” young woman want the same life for her children? No, never. *“My daughter has to study and have a good job. She ought not to get married until she is 25.”* Lia does not want her daughter to live in the village.

What is going to happen in Lia’s life in the future? What could be done to make Lia an agent of her own and her community’s life? – most probably she will continue to deliver the quality services to her family, therefore, she will be utilizing opportunities to better educate her children with the perspective to find a paid work and live a happy life that she dreams off so much.

## ***CHAPTER TWO: General Overview of the 'Alliances' Programme from a Gender Perspective:***

Gender balance is a primary concern for Mercy Corps for the implementation of the 'Alliances' programme. Even though the programme was not designed to implement gender specific activities, 'Alliances' has nonetheless aimed to address gender issues by means of three different approaches:

- Disaggregation of impact logic indicators by gender
- Analysis of how interventions influence women's livelihoods
- Mapping of women's role in the household, community and sector

Gender mainstreaming can be broadly described as ensuring that women have equal access to supported interventions and that the terms of that access are favourable. 'Alliances' is gender disaggregating all data where this can be achieved in order to examine the access of women. The table below shows the participation of women in programme interventions according to outcomes:

OUTCOME	% women accessing interventions	Notes & Recommendations
<b>1: Food-safety</b>	60	Both members of the GDCI staff are women as well as the SJVA Food Safety advisor trained by them. Two women trainees have participated in the facilitated trainings. The services have yet to have an impact at the farm scale.
<b>2: Nutrition</b>	-	Nutrition interventions are mainly focused on the availability of improved feed for cattle, such as silage, concentrated feed. Data yet to be obtained from local millers.
<b>3: Breeding</b>	14	Alliances is working with Caucasus Genetics to improve marketing strategy to target women for increased revenue.
<b>4: Market Access</b>	59.6	Work with Meskheti Products to look at access of women. Follow-up research to look at displacement effects upon women's activities.

There is an active engagement of women in the Disaster Risk Reduction Working Groups (DRRWGs)<sup>3</sup> although the overall gender balance has shifted since the inclusion of the Emergency Management Department (EMD)<sup>4</sup> in the activities as the department is large and is comprised mostly of men (most of their activities are in search and rescue in which women are deemed to lack sufficient physical strength).

<sup>3</sup> Disaster Risk Reduction Working Groups were established in the three target municipalities (Adigeni, Akhaltsikhe & Aspindza) of 'Alliances' Program, through which program implements DRR related interventions.

<sup>4</sup> Emergency Management Department, created in all regions within regional administrations across the country to work on disaster mitigation and response.

WORKING GROUP	TOTAL	MEN	WOMEN	% WOMEN
Akhaltsikhe	6	5	1	17
Aspindza	5	3	2	40
Adigeni	6	5	1	17
Regional departments (including EMD)	25	22	3	12
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>17</b>

Alliances has applied the Gender Toolkit and learning from SDC in order to examine the terms of access of women to programme interventions. As a result, 'Alliances' has intervened in the following issues:

- **Akhaltsikhe Livestock Market Redevelopment:** Ensured that male and female lavatory facilities were incorporated into the design as this was found to be one of the key reasons for which women were rarely accessing the market in its current form.
- **Artificial Insemination:** 'Alliances' advised Caucasus Genetics to emphasise the marketing of their services directly to women as they are the primary animal keepers.

To this end, 'Alliances' produced and published a study entitled *A Summary of the Role of Women in Farming in Seven Villages in the Samstkhе-Javakheti Region of Georgia*. The study highlighted the myriad of roles of women in the household and on the farm and their valued role in decision-making.

### ***Organizational Culture and Technical Capacity:***

'Alliances' programme staff includes 19 members of which ten are women. It is worth mentioning that the composition of the project team is based upon professional capabilities and is not related to the sex of the employees.

	ALL STAFF			PROGRAMME STAFF (excluding support staff)		
	MALE	FEMALE	% FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	% FEMALE
Full-Time	3	7	70	3	4	57
Part-Time	6	3	33	0	1	100
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>62</b>

'Alliances' aims to create and maintain a positive gender balance in the work place.

Staff working in the programme has significant experience in mainstreaming gender and monitoring the impact of interventions with a gender focus. Mercy Corps has significant experience in the Samstkhе-Javakheti region working on economic development and employment as well as in community mobilization and participatory planning with local self-government. Locally relevant best practices for ensuring the meaningful participation of both men and women in project implementation is being pursued during the 'Alliances' project

implementation using previously gained knowledge from nine years of experience working in the region on these issues.

In addition, a Gender Co-ordinator is in place to further assess 'Alliances' interventions from a gender point of view and make sure that gender is adequately mainstreamed at intervention design, implementation and monitoring phases.

### ***Conclusions and Recommendations:***

The focus group study was undertaken to further define the reproductive and productive roles of women and men in addition their participation in the decision making processes at local government level. In addition it was identified the role of women in farming particularly in relation to the role of women in milk processing and cheese making and capture benefits of switching from cheese making to raw milk sale.

Gender was found to profoundly influence the activities carried out by and the responsibilities assumed and meted out to men and women. Physical strength was found to be the main criteria stated by the focus groups for the division of roles related to farming with men undertaking larger time-bound operations related to the land, such as ploughing or fencing. Women, on the other hand, tended to be responsible for activities which, although seasonally bound, consisted of more sustained activities over time, such as weeding, milking, harvesting and food processing.

Delivery of quality services to the family members, proper care of vegetable gardens, learning the Georgian language and paying more attention to children's education were priority alternative ways to engage as stated by most of the focus group discussions.

Gender related traditions seem to frame and define women's life trajectories to such an extent that it makes it nearly impossible to think about individual development, initiating new options or handling changes concerning their reproductive or productive roles.

### ***Outcome Recommendations:***

#### **Food Safety and Hygiene:**

'Alliances' aims to mitigate the negative effects of the new food safety law on small-scale producers and their markets and provide new opportunities through quality-enhanced value-chains. As a result of interventions in this sphere, 'Alliances' expects to see a greater level of understanding of and compliance with food safety and hygiene laws throughout the livestock value chain. To this end, the programme has worked with some institutions in order to achieve the objective of this outcome:

Recommendations:

1. Include gender in all surveys and assessments.
2. Work with clients in this component to target more women whilst marketing their activities or attracting new customers. Activities dealing with milk are the primary

responsibility of women and milk market hygiene needs to be improved which means that the inclusion of women in the work of ‘Alliances’ to improve hygiene is imperative.

#### **Animal Nutrition:**

Animal feeding is, in general, the most limiting factor in meat and dairy production. Improving nutrition may improve production in the short- to medium-term for adult animals and will raise the overall productivity in the long-term if applied to young animals. Through working with local clients and businesses, ‘Alliances’ aims at facilitating access to affordable and appropriate nutritional inputs for small-scale producers. To this end, the programme facilitated access to machinery (balers, choppers) and concentrated feed by strengthening feed mills in different villages through the Rural Advisory Service (RAS).

#### Recommendations:

1. Include the gender component in surveys and assessment of the target market.
2. Although machinery is considered to be the men’s remit due to the physical strength required, women can have access to concentrated feed. Whilst millers are disseminating information on good feeding practices, more women should be targeted and educated on this issue as it is women who in many cases are feeding cattle; perhaps framing it to the millers as accessing an “untapped” segment of the feed market.

#### **Animal Breeding:**

Farmers are well aware of the benefits of improving the genetic resources of their herds and flocks. ‘Alliances’ aims to improve farmer’s access to and the adoption of improved breeding animals through a combined approach of facilitating the improved delivery of artificial insemination (AI), the improved supply of high quality bulls for natural service and improving the awareness of farmers to enhanced breeding practices, including AI. ‘Alliances’ is working with the leading AI company in Georgia, Caucasus Genetics, and has facilitated an opening of this company’s representation in the ‘Alliances’ programme area which provides access to improved breeding practices.

#### Recommendation:

1. Caucasus Genetics did work to target women whilst marketing their services. The recommendation would be to continue the dissemination of information to women (by placing posters and other advertising materials at locations which are accessible for women).
2. It has been mentioned that women often feel ashamed or embarrassed when it comes to getting information about and, especially, the provision of AI service for their cattle. They do not contact a practitioner directly and communities generally consider this as a man’s task. To our knowledge, the terminology and the description of the services in this industry articulates a slightly sexist, sexualized (and, thus, shameful) and, for some, degrading language. This partly explains and accounts for the alienation of women in this particular area even though they are mostly in charge of the family’s cattle. We would recommend revising some terms from this perspective in order to make them more neutral and “women friendly.”

### **Market Access & Terms of Trade:**

This is the major component of the ‘Alliances’ programme. By working with major actors in the region and at the central level in the beef and dairy value chain, ‘Alliances’ is aiming to facilitate a small-scale farmers approach to markets. To this end, the programme works with a slaughterhouse, cheese processors and milk collection centres to ensure that access.

Recommendations:

1. To include a gender component in all surveys/market assessments.
2. Determine and consider cultural and time constraints for women’s access to market and create opportunities where constraints can be eliminated.
3. Target more women by the Services involved in the meat and value chains (framed in terms of accessing an under-tapped segment of the consumer market) whilst marketing their products and services.
4. Investigate options regarding the provision of milk collection opportunities to higher elevation communities.

### **Disaster Risk Reduction:**

‘Alliances’ aims to ensure that the three Georgian municipalities of Akhaltsikhe, Aspindza and Adigeni are better prepared to respond to natural hazards and are adequately trained and linked with response systems and contribute shared learning on risk reduction practices through a concerted approach addressing mitigation, response and recovery mechanisms. ‘Alliances’ supported the establishment of DRR Working Groups in the target municipalities and is actively engaged with the Emergency Management Department.

Recommendations:

1. Even though women are represented in DRR working groups, the overall gender balance has shifted since the inclusion of the EMD in the activities as the department is large and consists mostly of men (most of their activities are in search and rescue and women are deemed to be lacking in the physical strength required). It is recommended to work with the local government to increase women’s participation in DRR municipal working groups.
2. It is also recommended that ‘Alliances’ work more with DRRWGs and the EMD to create awareness amongst women in communities as women tend to be more in tune with safety and disaster issues as it relates to family welfare.
3. Development of a manual with the accent upon what women can do and how they can contribute in DRR or how to develop special skills which will make this approach more gender sensitive and include rather than marginalise women. The manual can be presented as a part of the gender programme along with specialised trainings.

### **General Recommendations:**

1. Since quantitative data in most of the sections of this report could not be obtained due to the limited time, it is recommended to include sex disaggregated indicators in the survey to be conducted for the second phase of the Alliances program.

2. Sex disaggregated data is being collected in most of the programme's interventions. There is, however, little work done to analyse this data on how interventions impact women. It is recommended to use collected data for a further analysis of women's benefits.
3. Elaborate simple and effective gender analysis tools for different stages and levels of the programme for 'Alliances' partners (service providers).
4. Make systematic gender analysis and reporting a requirement. This will make gender updates, adjustments and corrections possible.
5. Consider gender components in interventions around infrastructural facility provisions. It is necessary to make sure that building designs accommodate women's requirements. It means direct and accurate gender needs assessment for each intervention to be conducted.
6. Since women are more involved in milking and in the processing and sale of milk and dairy products, further development of milk collection and a market infrastructure, as well as supporting services, will help women to perform their functions more effectively and save time and labour which can be used for other purposes.
7. It is advisable to work around facilitation of access to mechanization (e.g hay making considering hay cutting, baling and transportation requiring men spending more than 6 weeks out in the field) which means men will spend less time away and more time on the farm to support their women resulting females having less pressure.
8. Working in well-equipped milk collectors requires special qualification training and working with equipment which gives women confidence as a means of overcoming alienation from any kind of mechanization.
9. Train 'Alliances' programme staff on gender issues and gender mainstreaming in the context of market development programmes.
10. Facilitate the delivery of gender training to service providers at the beginning of an intervention. The training programme should include tools of gender analysis and evaluation of the services from a gender perspective.

### ***Recommendations addressing Gender Inequalities & Needs***

The study and analysis undertaken by 'Alliances' identified several problems concerning gender needs and inequalities within reproductive and productive roles of women and men. Women and men farmers themselves could hardly express these needs and inequalities, however it was judged on their content through some ideas expressed during focus group meetings about practices within productive/reproductive role, and especially about traditional ways of labor division and the value given to the contribution of men and women in the household economy.

**The following main features of inequalities concerning women's reproductive and productive roles were observed during interviews:**

- Women are overloaded with domestic tasks
- No intention of, acceptance of, or knowledge of how to re-distribute household roles and tasks.
- No access to machinery, advanced technologies, or equipment
- Restriction of movement within and outside the community
- Underestimation of women's role and value

- Control over women's activities from the community's side
- Alienation of women from decision making at household (economic decisions) and especially at community levels
- Absence of women's unions and collaborative actions
- Absence of possibilities of paid work
- Minimal opportunities of gaining new qualification
- Absence of gender consciousness

Taking into consideration the gender blind approaches and related problems which were revealed in local administrations and partly in Micro Credit organizations concerning: women's low participation in decision making, absence of sex desegregated data, little understanding of gender/women's special needs and traditional barriers that keep women aside – following recommended activities might reduce negative and increase positive gender trends.

### **Recommendations which might be addressed with Alliances Facilitation:**

1. When implementing interventions through rural service providers, recommend service providers to ensure maximum customer coverage (i.e. ensure women's participation as consumers);
2. Alliances can therefore assist local organizations (through the provision of client information, demographic monitoring data, etc) with a gender mandate to organize experience sharing tours to neighboring communities/villages through clients/service providers involving women, where new interventions/approaches (projects) were successful especially focusing on "women headed" projects . Alliances can elaborate meeting agenda, which can help/guide participants to make correct estimation of women's contribution, real potential and rationale.
3. Facilitate the development and dissemination of information through media outlets on the benefits of women involvement in the dairy value chain, cost-efficiency of the work done by women which will further enable them to evaluate their roles.
4. With the help of micro credit organizations (Credo, Finca, Constanta) Alliances can collect stories of how agriculture loans were successfully and creatively used by women in **livestock** and use them among service providers to help them learn how not only men can effectively utilize loans but women as well for purchase of livestock related goods and services.
5. Alliances might cooperate with local government on awareness raising campaign regarding Gender Equality Law concerning issues which are relevant to Alliances' program.
6. Alliances can initiate organization of seminars with participation of Alliance partners, service providers and local authorities on Alliances data collection system and the importance of each component of information that is being requested including the importance and methodology of sex disaggregated data.
7. Alliances might assist Local government in elaborating simple guidelines for Village Representatives on ensuring of women's real (not nominal) participation in community meetings. Since the huge list of responsibilities of women while performing their productive and reproductive roles includes child care which takes considerable amount of time. Most of the women emphasized pre-school facilities for looking after children which would save them time for other purposes. It is therefore recommended to

communicate with local governments in the target municipalities to consider arrangement of kindergartens within local budgets.

### ***References:***

The following reports and documents were used in compiling this report:

1. *A Summary of Women's Roles in Farming in Seven Villages in the Samstkhе-Javakheti Region of Georgia*, published by 'Alliances,' 2009
2. Gender Assessment – USAID/GEORGIA, published June 2010
3. Georgian Law on Gender Equality, 26 March 2010
4. 'Alliances' proposal, work plans, reports, M&E documents