

How to put Gender and WEE into practice in M4P:

A Description of the Ethos, Systems and Tools used in the Alliances Programme in Georgia



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The paper focuses on how the impact from development programming can be equitably distributed amongst male and female beneficiaries. It focuses on the Alliances Lesser Caucasus Programme (ALCP) in Georgia and examines how to put gender and Women's Economic Empowerment (WEE) into practice in M4P.

The first part of this paper gives a brief overview of the development of the field of gender and WEE and M4P, as well as identifying how Alliances fits into this. The second part gives an in depth description and practical tips about the methods and systems developed by the programme.

Previously, the programme has featured in several publications. However, the emphasis in these previous publications has been on mainly on developing the measurement tools for advancing WEE in programmes. There has been much less of an emphasis on the broader issues around the management of programmes for WEE. A gap exists in the literature on how to structure and motivate your team for these aims.

This paper also focuses on the practical constraints and costs that programmes can encounter in WEE. It argues that gender sensitised programming is an integral part of successful programming, and should therefore be considered to be part of normal operating costs.

The key lessons for practitioners that this paper details are on:

- Building effective teams for WEE;
- generating and using WEE indicators;
- carrying out effective field work;
- issues related to gender disaggregated data;
- negotiating institutional norms;
- contextualising WEE impact.

Interest in this field has been expanding rapidly. As such, the publication of this paper is very timely. This paper will prove useful for other programmes seeking to place themselves in context within the field of programmes using market systems development to advance WEE.

INTRODUCTION

This paper is based on a simple premise. The programme I run, Alliances (www.alcp.ge), is based on this premise. That M4P or market systems development programming done well is programming that benefits the women and men of the programmes target beneficiaries. This paper offers a simple explanation of the ethos, systems and tools developed by the programme to make this happen with an introduction to the context and background within which these developments took place.

In an ideal world, all impact from development programming would be equitably distributed amongst male and female beneficiaries. Often it is not. A focus on women's economic empowerment is necessary. Gender norms and the issues that arise from them often stymie teams and programming from the outset. Often the tools that allow us to diagnose the specific gender based constraints or opportunities within a market system and to analyze the extent of gendered impact or the lack of it are missing. Often teams understand the real need to ensure that women are economically empowered by their programmes but are overwhelmed by the seeming scale and complexity of the problems associated with it. Often team members feel frightened of making a wrong move as the topics of gender and WEE in the context of programme implementation become 'hothouse'd' and carry negative connotations for them. Often team members cannot overcome the first hurdle to successful programming, that of understanding their own position within the gender conventions of their own society and how this relates to the work they are supposed to do and the women and men they are supposed to help.

Understanding gender and getting Women's Economic Empowerment (WEE) to work in Market Systems Development Programming is a necessity. We all know the statistics, 'when women do better, economies do better', we know that women tend to plough back income into children, education, health and family nutrition. The main point of this however is not to set one sex above the other, or to seek to redress age old inequalities by promoting one to the cost of the other, but to facilitate the better use of resources and energy of women and men for the good of all. This can be difficult, gender has been and is a hot topic. Teams know it is important, they know they 'must' do it, often as a requirement from their donor or implementing agency. Gender and WEE can be perceived as a negative thing when it is seen as being for women only. Teams are often expected to deliver 'results' without knowing exactly what these results should look like and what they mean and without having the systems and the tools to respond intelligently to the demands being placed on them, which reinforces the negative cycle. Control in effecting equitable programming often then slips from the hands of the people best placed to effect it and becomes something external, something to fear and a hurdle to overcome, rather than natural reflexive and intelligent programming that is calibrated where it needs to be to ensure that impact is sensibly distributed amongst the communities it wants to help.

The Alliances programme is an M4P programme funded by SDC and implemented by Mercy Corps Georgia, which has been running in various forms since 2008 in Georgia in the livestock sector that has consistently tried to improve its gender and WEE programming. From 2011 this became a conscious attempt to operationalize gender programming and Women's Economic Empowerment in M4P and to

see how it could be done. The following paper gives a comprehensive overview of the operationalizing of gender and Women's Economic Empowerment in Alliances¹ programming.

PART 1: Gives a brief overview of the development of the field of gender and WEE and M4P, how this impacted on Alliances and how Alliances was involved.

PART 2: Gives an in depth description and practical tips related to the methods and systems developed during the lifetime of the programme, which includes Team Building and Ethos, issues related to gender disaggregated data, WEE in results measurement, generating WEE indicators and getting the field work right.

PART 1: BACKGROUND:

THE DEVELOPMENT OF GENDER AND WEE IN M4P

By dealing with the poor as one target group rather than more traditional overt gender programming which targets women specifically, debate had surrounded the challenge of gender mainstreaming in programmes using the Making Markets Work for the Poor Approach (M4P). The first tangible result for practitioners of this debate was the development in 2012 of the M4P Hub² sponsored *Guidelines For Incorporating WEE into M4P Programmes*³ which included a framework for use throughout the M4P programme cycle⁴. The Guidelines formed part of a broad initiative with multi donor backing to support the inclusion of Women's Economic Empowerment in M4P which began in 2011.

Work on M4P and WEE was initiated in September 2011. The M4P Hub coordinated a multi donor process⁵ to improve the inclusion of WEE within the M4P framework. This process resulted in the *Discussion Paper for an M4P WEE Framework: How can the Making Markets Work for the Poor Framework work for poor women and for poor men?*⁶. It concluded that the two approaches of M4P and WEE were compatible but highlighted two specific challenges for M4P; how to address women's unpaid workload and how to concretely ensure gender mainstreaming. A draft framework was developed from the discussion paper, based on field work focusing on two M4P programmes⁷. The *Phase 2: Guidelines for Incorporating WEE in M4P* were published in May 2012. The SDC Employment and Income (E+i)

¹ The Alliances programmes began in 2008, and currently continues in 2016, funded by the Swiss Development Cooperation and implemented by Mercy Corps Georgia working in the dairy, beef, sheep and honey sectors. www.alcp.ge

² An online forum and knowledge management site for M4P supported by multiple donors including SDC, DFID and Sida.

³ M4P Hub (2102) M4P and Women's Economic Empowerment. Phase 2: Guidelines for Incorporating WEE into M4P Programmes. Consultation Document. Coffey International Development

⁴ There are five stages: 1. Setting the Strategic Framework, 2. Understanding Market Systems, 3. Defining Sustainable Outcomes, 4. Facilitating Systemic Change, 5. Assessing Change.

⁵ With SDC, DFID and SIDA as principal initiators and backers of the process.

⁶ The report was published in January 2012. Jones, L. (2012) Discussion Paper for an M4P WEE Framework: How can the Making Markets Work for the Poor Framework work for poor women and for poor men? M4P Hub.

⁷ DFID GEMS, Nigeria and SDC, Alliances Georgia.

network published a synthesis paper⁸ based on the process noted above and held a series of discussions, a public seminar and internal workshop.

A revised and updated version of *The Operational Guide for the Making Markets Work for the Poor Approach* (2014)⁹ was brought out in which more focus was put on gender mainly through the use of gendered language. In this period the Donor Committee for Enterprise Development (DCED) were instrumental in moving forward in the field of how to measure WEE in private sector development programmes, commissioning a measuring WEE Literature review¹⁰ in 2013 and guidelines for measuring WEE in private sector development programmes in 2014¹¹. Currently the focus within the DCED Standard itself is on putting the onus on programmes to clearly define what they are doing in WEE and why.

More recently, USAID Leveraging Economic Opportunities Program (LEO) has also implemented a WEE learning agenda and in 2015 the USAID Microlinks Market System's Blog had WEE as its theme and several key publications on Market Systems Development and WEE were published¹². In 2016 the BEAM Exchange¹³ has commissioned several key pieces of work including updating a WEAMS Framework¹⁴ (Women's Empowerment and Market Systems) and considering and dealing with unpaid care burdens within market systems programming. The original WEE Guidelines have been revisited and field tested; a significant step in finalizing a simple, working tool that will work for all MSD programmes¹⁵. There are a greater number of programmes now able to enter and contribute to the growing body of practice. This was seen at the DCED's Global Seminar in Bangkok in March and at the BEAM Conference in Lusaka in May, where a diverse range of programmes and implementers shared aspects of their WEE work.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF GENDER & WEE IN THE ALCP

The Alliances programme has been committed to gender and M4P from its inception and has learned many lessons along the way. The programme was always committed to gender disaggregated data but learned soon in the first phase of the initial programme Alliances SJ (2008-11) that it was not in possession of the right kind of data to enable informed gender programming. So began the first of

⁸ SDC Employment and Income Network August (2012) Women's Economic Empowerment and Making Markets Work for the Poor. Synthesis of a process carried out between March and May 2012 as part of a broader initiative in collaboration with the M4P Hub.

⁹ The Springfield Centre (2014) *The Operational Guide for the Making Markets Work for the Poor (M4P) Approach*, 2nd edition funded by SDC and DFID. The foundation theory document of M4P.

¹⁰ Diana Wu (2013) *Measuring Change in Women's Economic Empowerment: A Literature Review*. DCED

¹¹ Markel, E (2014) *Measuring WEE in Private Sector Development. Guidelines for Practitioners*. Donor Committee for Enterprise Development

¹² The most recent of which has been: Markel, E, Hess, R & Loftin, H (2015) *Making the Business Case: Women's Economic Empowerment in Market System Development*.

¹³ The BEAM Exchange (Building Effective and Accessible Markets) is the DFID and SDC sponsored network and successor to the M4P Hub

¹⁴ Jones, L (2016) *Womens Empowerment and Market Systems. Concepts, Practical Guidance and Tools*.

¹⁵ Ruegg, M and Carter J (2016) *Synthesis Report WEE Guidelines Field Tests*. Helvetas Swiss Intercorporation.

several separate gender studies¹⁶ and analysis, using the *SDC Gender Analytical Framework* as a guide. From 2011, the Alliances programme also renewed its commitment to finding a way to marry the principles of M4P programming with gender equity and actualizing and measuring Women's Economic Empowerment. Alliances KK began its programming in 2011 with a stand-alone gender analysis¹⁷ as part of the market analysis process in the inception phase which allied with the gender disaggregated focus group data and market analysis allowed for the development of preliminary gender sensitized programming. Annual gender workshops were held in 2011, 2012 and 2014. Staff capacity building in gender was made a priority with a three day *Mercy Corps Act for Impact Gender Training Courses* where staff were given a foundation in key gender concepts and tools. Courses were held in September 2013 and 2014 by a certified trainer. In early 2012 the existing gender work of Alliances led to its inclusion as one of the two programme case studies along with DFID GEMS Nigeria, for the aforementioned *M4P Hub Guidelines to the Incorporation of WEE in M4P programmes (2012)*.

March 2014 saw the inception of the current Alliances Lesser Caucasus Programme (ALCP), integrating three regions. In the new cycle of market analysis, all research outputs were fully gendered rather than just having a separate gender analysis. In Kvemo Kartli where the programme was established no further stand-alone gender analysis was required but in Ajara, a new region with inexperienced staff, a separate gender analysis was also commissioned as the gendered market analysis and gendered disaggregated focus groups illustrated the need for more in-depth information as illustrated below.

BOX 1: CASE EXAMPLE: WHEN A GENDERED MARKET ANALYSIS IS NOT ENOUGH.

Following extensive work on operationalizing gender and women's economic empowerment in Alliances gendered market analysis is conducted as a matter of course. However it is still sometimes necessary to conduct a *stand-alone gender analysis* when the focus group surveys and market analysis are felt not to have collected enough information on deeper gender issues, such as unpaid care burdens and mobility and the reasons for them. Another factor can be that *the survey techniques did not lend themselves to women being able to openly express their true opinions and need to be adjusted*.

This was the case when the programme expanded to a new region, Ajara. Although less ethnically diverse than the other two programme regions, Ajara has clearly defined Christian and Muslim populations and has had traditionally more conservative gender roles than other regions. The focus group surveys had been organized with the local government and mainly held in local government buildings and local government had involved a higher than average number of professional women such as teachers. The new programme team learnt from the experience and conducted a separate gender analysis in the villages under the guidance of a gender expert employing less formal research techniques. This allowed women to speak more openly and fill in the gaps in information for village women.

¹⁶ Bradbury, H; Lomidze, N; Stewart T.P; & Rukhadze, N (2010) A Summary of the Role of Farm Women in the Samstkhe Javakheti Region of Georgia. Agriculture for Development .Journal of the Tropical Agricultural Association. Issue. No 9, Spring 2010, Alliances SJ Gender Survey Part 1 Adigeni, Akhaltsike and Aspindza (May, 2011), Alliances SJ Gender Survey Part Two Akhalkalaki, Ninotsminda (August, 2011)

¹⁷ A Gendered Perspective. Livestock Husbandry in Kvemo Kartli (2011) Alliances KK & ICCN.

THE IMPORTANCE OF MONITORING AND THE DCED: The *Guidelines* coincided with the programmes development of its Monitoring and Evaluation system and implementation of the *DCED Standard for Results Measurement* with a pre audit review in February 2012 and a full audit in January 2014. The main impacts of becoming DCED compliant on WEE programming were:

- » Results chains with better specifics were developed which laid the foundation for developing methods to plot the change pathway for WEE in the results chain more efficiently and confidently.
- » The development of an approach, systems and tools which could be harnessed to develop *gender sensitized interventions* which address the specific changes required for women within an intervention to ensure successful and equitable impact.
- » The generation of solidly attributable Gender Disaggregated Data which could be used for improving intervention design and the targeting of the interventions to operationalize WEE.
- » Better systems for measuring impact which could be used to prove that interventions had impacted women and that overall impact for women had increased.

The programme then gave a presentation of its WEE work¹⁸ at the 2014 DCED Seminar in Bangkok in March and became one of the two programmes used as case studies¹⁹ for the ensuing DCED commissioned *Measuring Women's Economic Empowerment in Private Sector Development*²⁰ guidelines published in July 2014. Their inclusion recognized the advances made in operationalizing gender and WEE in M4P and aimed to capture these for developing good practice recommendations and tools for practitioners. Detailed case examples of ALCP WEE work was also included in the most recent WEE publication of note the USAID LEO's: *Making the Business Case: WEE in Market Systems Development* in 2015. The ALCP also sat on the working group and submitted examples for the BEAM sponsored research into unpaid care in market development programming.

¹⁸ Measuring Changes in Women's Economic Empowerment in the SDC funded Mercy Corps Georgia implemented Alliances KK Programme.

¹⁹ The SDC funded Making Markets work for the Chars, Bangladesh was the other programme in the case study.

²⁰ Markel, E. (2014) *Measuring Women's Economic Empowerment in Private Sector Development: Guidelines for Practitioners*. DCED.

PART 2: OPERATIONALIZING GENDER AND WEE

OPERATIONALIZING WEE IN THE ALCP

OVERVIEW

Gender is integral to every programme activity and is included from the first in every step of the programme cycle

The ethos of the programme team is a belief that the key to lasting systemic change is impacting women as well as men within the market system. Based on numbers alone calibrating programming correctly to impact women and men means targeting 100% of a population of potential beneficiaries rather than 50%. It makes good programmatic sense.

To make it work however, systems must be in place operationally and programmatically. From the hiring and development of a qualified team to reporting, mechanisms must be in place to successfully incorporate WEE in every stage of the programme cycle. It requires commitment to gender mainstreaming and seeing Women's Economic Empowerment as a constant element of programming and expected outcome rather than an add on component or an extra.

In current Alliances programming this is constantly maintained and developed. Women's Economic Empowerment is operationalized, ethos, culture, systems, instruments and tools are in place to ensure that WEE is translated into M4P programming and impact. Programming and monitoring systems are systematized to generate, capture and analyse WEE impact. These tools and methods are summarized below. Currently in Alliances all reported changes in key indicators are gender disaggregated, with outputs and outcomes for farmers described in an appropriate and meaningful manner. If an exception occurs and results are not gender disaggregated valid justification, has to be provided. The following sections describe in detail key elements required and methods and tools employed to operationalize WEE.

INCORPORATING WEE IN PROGRAMME SYSTEMS

Flexibility and Rigour

The key tenet of Alliances is flexibility in management, programming, strategy, thinking and operations, with gender and WEE incorporated naturally within it. This flexibility allows for growth both in programming and in the team and it allows for the development of intuitive reactions. Rigour based on systems, knowledge and data allow this flexibility by underpinning decision making and reducing risks.

The following section examines the steps which should be taken to nurture an intuitive understanding and inclusion of gender.

TEAM BUILDING, ETHOS AND MAINSTREAMING IN OPERATIONS

The programme team is the foundation of full inclusion and actualization of WEE. The team should instinctively be able to incorporate and navigate gender norms in their work. It is important to build team confidence and ownership of gender and WEE leading to a permanent change in perception which includes harnessing existing knowledge, experience and good practice in M4P and expanding it to include gender and WEE in M4P.

Most importantly a safe space for dialogue must be nurtured by management and programme team members should be encouraged to speak frankly and openly about gender norms. Management must present a consistent message on the importance of thinking about norms, stripping away misconceptions and pressures which surround perceptions of gender. This must occur in tandem with robust capacity building which ensures that team members are equipped with the confidence, knowledge and tools to enact change to their fullest potential. This capacity building is described below.

1. Teams should develop clarity in thinking surrounding gender, acknowledging the need for rigour and comprehensive analysis into strategic gender areas of relevance to the programme. A key part of the above is maintaining clarity among team members of what gender in M4P is for and where it sits within the programme. Confusion and a perceived pressure to act which sometimes surrounds thinking on and perceptions of gender, should be stripped away and focus put instead on seeing *poor women and poor men as part of the target group*, albeit a group with often different needs and constraints. The multiplicity of perceived problems for women, can lead to ‘not being able to see the wood for the trees’ or become overwhelming leading to a sense of hopelessness amongst team members. This can then result in gender and subsequently WEE programming becoming static rather than moving forward on issues where change can be effected.
2. Understanding should be developed amongst all team members of the relevance of gender to WEE in the programme, their remit to it and the extent to which they can effect change. The development of an understanding of where the opportunity for WEE lies and the ability to identify the key WEE entry point or key constraint from amongst other constraints is crucial amongst team members but particularly for the Team Leader. There must be an understanding that *gender and WEE will always be considered*: in every sector scoping survey, every piece of analysis, every intervention, all data collection and every report. However, *depending on circumstances and the remit of the project this will vary according to sector and intervention* and that where WEE can only be marginally affected in a sector, as long as due diligence has been done in analysis, intervention design and implementation, this is acceptable.
 - Without adequate research and analysis WEE cannot be properly effected or the full impact potential of an intervention exploited. Ongoing support to staff should include guidance in **good research practices**. The key factor that teams must grasp is that without the requisite analysis it is impossible to structure an intervention correctly to achieve this impact.
 - Teams must have knowledge of the most basic gender tools i.e. the **Access and Control Matrix** and the **Roles and Responsibilities Matrix**. **Gender Sensitized Results Chains** used to map out

Gender Sensitized Interventions (GSI), i.e. results chains which include the specific change pathway required within an intervention to guarantee impact for women and men, are the main tool in ensuring that WEE activities are integrated into the programme cycle. Once the requisite analysis has been done the gender sensitized results chains can be constructed with a separate box, boxes or chain of steps to address the key constraints affecting women under that particular intervention. These will lead to the same outcomes and impact as the rest of the intervention. In a **Gender Overt Intervention (GOI)** the whole results chain will be constructed as normal with however the impact being specific to women as the target group.

3. Better calibration of Gender Sensitized Interventions and Gender Overt Interventions are dependent on *sophisticated definitions of target groups* based on thoughtful analysis. Attention must be paid, to ensure staff understand all demographic aspects of a beneficiary population to develop effective gender sensitized and gender overt interventions, including ethnicity, age, and rural and urban differences.
4. Improved mechanisms within the M&E system will enable teams to plan, monitor and feed data back into the calibration and better targeting of existing interventions.

The use of gender sensitized results chains will result in monitoring plans with better defined indicators for women which will in turn improve data availability on women. Once gender sensitized boxes and their attendant indicators are in place in the results chains and monitoring plans, this provides options for aggregating impact for women across interventions in addition to the jobs, scale and income aggregated at outcome level. In addition to ensuring that all relevant data is gender disaggregated, attention should be paid to the qualitative monitoring system and ensuring that baseline information is gathered on qualitative indicators to allow a before and after comparison. Qualitative indicators will be ascribed to the gender sensitized boxes in the gender sensitized results chains, in addition to the quantitative indicators ascribed to them, for key changes in behaviour according to the definition of WEE. At output, outcome and impact level WEE indicators may be inserted where appropriate.

5. Capacity must be built to understand, generate and use WEE indicators.

The generation of WEE indicators requires an understanding of what to measure, how to measure it and how to report it. It is reliant on a solid M&E platform based on robust research and analysis, timely data collection and gender disaggregated data for all relevant data as a minimum. WEE indicators have to go beyond gender disaggregated indicators and measure the change effected for women in terms of not just access but agency i.e. choice, decision making or increase in control in the use of resources or life chances. This is easier for programmes to measure in the public sphere e.g. public decision making; otherwise impact assessment will largely be at the household level and require HH level surveys. Adequate research and analysis throughout the whole programme cycle is a **MUST** as the data must be available for the teams to make a before and after comparison as well as having the relatively sophisticated data and understanding of what is happening at the HH level in order to be able to measure it later on.

6. A mechanism for regular (ideally bi monthly) discussion by monitoring and programme team members of impact per intervention should be instituted, with all figures gender disaggregated for trouble shooting, capacity building, and feedback of impact into the calibration and better targeting of interventions.

A regular meeting where data is presented by each respective intervention manager and discussed by the team as a whole is a pre requisite of gender and WEE mainstreaming. This requires a well-functioning management and M&E system which possesses the requisite feedback loops from data and analysis of the data into management. It is also of course good management practice for teams to have a greater ownership of their data but is particularly necessary in WEE where constraints are generally more hidden, often more persistent and may require more frequent facilitation to achieve the desired results.

- Each Business Development Officer/Portfolio Managers/Theme/sector or value chain coordinators should be responsible for 'caretaking' the data generated from their interventions in tandem with the M&E officer. This may include data entry and should definitely include the manipulation, presentation and basic analysis of the data. This data will be gender disaggregated and when feeding back from appropriately gender sensitized or overt interventions will then be collected and analyzed regularly. It will then be able to serve as a management tool for ongoing calibration of the intervention. For example too low a figure for women when compared to the target will immediately alert key staff to a problem and the analysis of this problem. Discussing figures on a bi monthly basis will allow for contextual and programmatic insights to be used to interpret the data and may result in finding 'hidden' beneficiaries or people benefitting indirectly, which again may result in re calibrating an intervention or undertaking a piece of research to further understand an aspect of an intervention which once understood may unlock the potential for further impact.

7. Team members should understand their role in and have examples of reporting in which reporting on women and men is a given and which highlights the way in which interventions have been calibrated to overcome key constraints to women and the specific impact on women generated as a result. This will include a synthesis of quantitative and qualitative data (including the impact from WEE indicators), showing how impact contributes to the goal of the intervention and the project goal.

In the same way that all analysis, planning and design should incorporate gender and WEE as a matter of course, so should reporting. Improved qualitative and quantitative data pertaining to all relevant WEE interventions should be available and included in reports clearly showing the specific roles of women within the intervention and the impact upon them. The resulting full and meaningful picture of women within the targeted sector will further improve the programmatic understanding and capacity of the team.

FORMING THE FOUNDATION FOR SUCCESSFUL TEAM BUILDING

An important aspect however of being able to carry out the above and to increase the probability of a favourable outcome is by minimizing bias and optimizing gender equity in team construction and organisational ethos from the beginning of the programme. New programmes often inherit at their inception organisational methods of office set up and recruitment in environments which do not predispose them to being able to generate these enabling conditions. It is unrealistic to expect nuanced programming when programme set up has merely followed the norm or been implemented by those with no exposure to the ethos of a programme. Box 2 below contains a practical description of how the ALCP experienced and dealt with this in Georgia.

Costing gender sensitized operations: Concerning costs as will be seen below, the measures taken required mindfulness and changes in implementation and expenditures in time rather than money. The main overt cost was the gender training, in the ALCP this was done in house with costs related to air fares for training and hiring venues for carrying out the training. Both head office and field offices believe that gender sensitized operations are a fundamental part of programme implementation and therefore part of the normal costs of programme implementation. The donor is also fully supportive. In relation to team capacity building in implementation, results measurement and evaluation this would also be theoretically costed in management time for in house capacity building.

BOX 2: SETTING A FAVOURABLE OUTCOME: SOME PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE FROM THE ALCP

Customized methods are required for flexible, sensitive and successful programming. Office set up, recruitment and team construction are often undertaken by members of implementing agencies such as HR/logistics in local in country offices routinely applying procedures to all programmes they administer. Many of which are programmes more traditional in nature such as direct delivery and have not yet entered into the global development community of practice which has adopted adaptive management, low visibility, facilitation, women's economic empowerment, systemic change and results measurement which are characteristic of (though not limited to) market systems development programmes and increasingly recognized as necessary and good practice. Though nothing is wrong with these procedures per se they do not usually allow for the flexibility required in MSD programmes and in being routinely applied are often unquestioning of cultural and social mores which have significant impacts on gender equity of team composition and subsequent programme implementation.

Organisational Culture and Negotiating the Norm: In order to predispose ALCP team building and subsequent programming to success in what was then the new concept of M4P and moreover M4P which was fully gendered to empower women it was necessary to take a clear eyed look at the functions undertaken routinely by the implementing agency, including those of office set up and recruitment but also including logistics such as driving, maternity and paternity leave and flexible working. In Mercy Corps (MC) Georgia these functions were primarily determined by a head office in Tbilisi and a regular feature of the first few years of implementation was a negotiation between field and head office to develop mechanisms acceptable to both. It meant challenging some accepted practices which was not easy as this can be seen as rejecting procedures and being difficult. One key element of helping negotiate between MC Head and ALCP field office was undertaking a MC wide *gender training* by a certified MC gender trainer. The trainer who had already trained Alliances staff also trained Mercy Corps Georgia head office finance, administration and operations staff. The Mercy Corps training which contained all elements of basic gender training took the trainees through basic gender theory and the use basic gender tools

and analysis. It also required self-reflection, group work and application of a gender lens to their own lives and work. One of the key issues to emerge among head office staff was the team composition, why procurement staff are men and finance HR women, why male staff members drive and women do not. It was not a wholly comfortable experience but it made subsequent negotiation between field and head office easier in being able to explain the need for procedures different from the norm.

Recruiting Outside the Expected: The ALCP in Georgia began its operations in an environment where agricultural programmes were staffed almost solely by men apart from HR and admin staff, many of whom were part of a well-connected pool of experience recycled from one project to the next. The ALCP required flexible thinkers with open minds, the thinking around M4P had already at the time posited that long term development workers might not necessarily be the best options²¹ in recruiting for M4P many opined that people with private sector experience were preferable. MC had adopted and endorsed M4P therefore this provided the window for Alliances to broaden its job advertisements, job descriptions and recruiting procedures. This included interviews and scoring which weighted attributes such as flexibility, open mindedness, diverse experience and motivation to learn above or at least equal to classic development experience. Interview techniques included asking questions concerning programme related issues which did not require a set answer but were looking more at perceptions and type of thinking. This necessarily allowed more women to apply for and be considered for the positions on offer. The diverse backgrounds from which many female members were recruited included the media, local government and education.

Recruiting locally: Alliances had always recruited locally from 2008, in accordance with MC Georgia practice. It is one of the key elements of the success of the programme, particularly in ethnically diverse contexts with local knowledge, networks and culture and language informing programming. Programme officers were located in the programme area and expatriate Team Leaders were required to live or spend the majority of their time there. This was in contrast to many programmes which were run from the capital with skeleton staff in situ and key members making visits to the region. Local recruitment meant that women could apply as well as men as even if they had children as they would not be required to live away from home or travel for extended periods of time. It also increased the probability of women applying for agriculture related positions as many of the local candidates who had gone on to attend university had come from agricultural backgrounds locally or were familiar with the local agricultural and market context.

KEY WEE TOOLS AND PROCESSES IN DETAIL

GENDER SENSITIZED INTERVENTIONS

Alliances focuses on developing *gender sensitized interventions (GSI's)* which reflects the fact that to impact both men and women interventions must take into account that they perform different roles as market players, face different constraints and are able to exploit different market opportunities. Each intervention results chain contains within it the steps (*GSI boxes*) necessary to ensure that an intervention is calibrated in a way to reach women as well as men and ensure equitable impact. Depending on the nature of the intervention it may mean as little as ensuring that women are targeted in advertising or that information dissemination reaches them, or in others designing the intervention to take into account that finding the correct entry points with women will be pivotal to the success of the

²¹ The first Alliances project dating from 2008 had already found this, fighting a resistance to the implementation method itself in team members used to direct delivery which wasted valuable programme energy.

intervention e.g. reaching women raw milk suppliers with specifically tailored information for the supply of quality milk. Specifically the following steps are observed:

- Gendered market analysis and gender analysis conducted prior to the intervention study the specifics of women's role in the market: the difficulties and most importantly the opportunities they might face in the market. The knowledge gained is reflected in investment plans and intervention rationale, and is used for planning GSI activities.
- The gender sensitized activities are incorporated in the Results Chains as GSI boxes and describe activities specific to women and the outputs and sometimes outcomes that are expected specific to women²², these are included in qualitative Monitoring Plans (MP2's).
- Quantitative and qualitative indicators for key changes are disaggregated by gender and assumptions (based on research) are applied to the data to allow for its meaningful interpretation. E.g.: *#/% of female vet pharmacy customers, annually* – might reflect: *#/% of women in charge of budgeting livestock related expenditure within their households*²³.

Making Business Sense

The GSI method enables the better targeting of interventions to achieve equitable sustainable impact which means better business for clients. The involvement of *programme clients* (i.e. businesses) in elements of the facilitation process that includes gender sensitized intervention design, enables clients to differentiate among their male and female customers, shows them the differing roles women and men play as suppliers and allows for intervention design which builds in more sustainability for the business as well as sustainability of an intervention.

GENDER OVERT INTERVENTIONS

As well as gender sensitizing all market development interventions the programme has included (to date one) *Gender Overt Intervention (GOI)* as part of the programme strategy. Under Outcome 3, which deals with transversal themes and governance²⁴, the programme is addressing women's access to decision making. This intervention focuses entirely on women as a target group and reflects a programmatic focus on a strategic cross cutting constraint in the operating environment for women i.e. a constraint for women in particular which is operating across every intervention. This constraint was diagnosed in the gender/market analysis. It was assessed as having the potential to unlock pro poor opportunity for change across all interventions through an entry point which exploited new gender laws being in place but not being enacted in local municipalities. Box 3 below describes the intervention.

²² In many results chains GSI boxes stop at the output level having ensured that in carrying out these steps that certain constraints are overcome and women are able to benefit from the intervention. In others where the role of women is more pivotal for the success of the interventions impact the GSI boxes may reach the outcome level.

²³ This assumption seems to be borne out by existing research in the WEE Survey. Please see Chapter 7 Alliances M&E Manual for more details www.alcp.ge

²⁴ And in which local and regional government are facilitated as the key market players.

Box 3: GENDER OVERT INTERVENTION: FACILITATING WOMEN'S ACCESS TO DECISION MAKING

The local government is a key market player²⁵. Gender analysis revealed that women lacked access to decision making fora at both community and municipal level. Furthermore, Gender Laws brought into effect in 2010 for municipalities, which included measures such as gender sensitive budgeting, were not being enacted at the municipal level. Women are key actors in the livestock value chain in a wide range of roles and responsibilities in livestock husbandry. Mobility is restricted, unpaid care burdens are high and access to basic amenities such as child care, pre schooling and running water are low. At municipal level women felt unable to access the municipal government in the very literal sense of entering the building and gaining access to available services and information. At the annual community meetings chaired by village representatives where budget spending priorities for the next year were decided by the community, women were barely present, either by not being encouraged to attend, not being invited, feeling that the male HH head represented them, that it was not their place or simply feeling that they were not welcome.

However, fully inclusive and representational decisions cannot be made without their voices, perspectives and experiences. Lack of access to public goods in the form of information, resources and amenities limited their inclusion in the market system. Lack of access to decision making formed a programme wide cross cutting constraint, potentially limiting WEE in every intervention. Therefore a *gender overt intervention* was structured based on a *gender overt results chain* in which women were the sole target group, to address this.

Initial approaches to the three municipality governments of the programme area found that they were open to beginning a series of gender meetings in which mainstreaming the 2010 Gender Laws into municipal practice and improving women's access to decision making at all levels of the municipality were discussed. The final plan centred on simplifying the law into easily understandable guidelines for action, the training of key members of staff who would in turn train the village representatives, and developing a focal point in the form of a 'Women's Room' (co-financed by the programme) situated within the municipal building as a resource centre, and space for women coming into the town.

Do No Harm: the publically mandated nature of the intervention has avoided a negative backlash to changes in gender norms within the communities or within families. It also avoids placing too much responsibility on individual women to lead or shoulder the responsibility of change. The village representative represents the voice of local government and is responsible, using the official government guidelines to ensure the participation of women in the community meetings. The Women's Room itself is a public municipal service with costs allocated to the municipal budget and staffed by a salaried municipal staff member.

Exploiting Incentives: That doing something about gender would be good political capital was the main incentive exploited in the intervention. With the first three pilot women's rooms now into their third year of operation the local mayors now openly see the benefit of the rooms with more community based initiatives and ideas for community development being generated, enthusiastic staff and more voting from women for male candidates who openly address women's needs.

²⁵ Is this M4P? The rules influence the market system, and in this instance the local government, holds the key to leveraging systemic change to a major constraint. The face of the intervention is local government and the focal point, a municipally employed Women's Room Manager. It leverages an existing entry point in the 2010 gender law, has a strong incentive, i.e. good PR for local government and links to embassies and other Women's NGO's and is based on the findings of the gender analysis. It is co-financed by each municipality and has excellent opportunities for scale in that key parliamentarians have recognized that it is an initiative that could be copied for each municipality in Georgia.

Going to Scale: The Guidelines have been officially adopted by the Ministry of Rural Development and Infrastructure (MRDI) and with 19 rooms now open across the Lesser Caucasus. MRDI regional representatives have been trained to introduce the guidelines nationally. The MRDI is responsible to report back in 2016 as signatories of UNCEDAW. The report will now contain detailed data and results on the enfranchisement of rural women an area noted as needing significant improvement by the commission in the last report. National media networks are being exploited to disseminate information before this year's annual community meetings and a conference will be held for key stakeholders to ultimately advocate for the national institution of women's rooms.

Use of the Women's Rooms: 12,669 visits by 6089 visitors of whom 4,186 were women and 1,767 receiving formal training in business planning, language and computer skills. Of the services provided; 28% of services provided are consultation (83% women), to rural women who need information on public services, benefits and laws, help in filling forms and writing official letters including applying for government schemes such as tax exemption for citizens in mountainous areas and small grant schemes for rural producers. 12% of visitors used the library and 11% of Children's Corner users. The library was used by pupils, and teachers. The Children's Corner was used by customers of local banks, who could leave their children in the WRs, when lengthy consultations are required. 28% of visitors used internet services (71% were women) to look for a job, send CVs, teachers checking resources and curricula and communication Women often come from remote villages in the morning, conduct their business and as they wait for the evening transport back home they use the WRs as a waiting area. There they can have a coffee, tea, free internet, and use of the restrooms not available in town and other services which are provided by the WRs. Local mayors and administrations are recognizing the political capital of the rooms and are customizing their usage for their local needs one mayor now holds weekly meet the people sessions in the room. 20 local and international NGO' have used the rooms for outreach with six signing MOU' s for ongoing outreach.

Results 2013-2016: The results have justified the intervention with clear correlations between constraints in market development interventions and the solutions to these constraints brought about by women voting on their own and on their family's behalf. Women have consistently voted for running water and kindergartens to address constraints such as a lack of running water to ensure clean milk or lack of child care limiting time and access to exploit livelihood opportunities. 68 such initiatives such as these have been instigated in three regions worth \$260,000 USD. 16 additional initiatives have been instigated and five funded to date independently of the community meetings. 10,981 women or 27% out of a total of 41,016 people attended community meetings in three regions from a baseline of 3%.

ISSUES RELATED TO GENDER DISAGGREGATION

Making gender meaningful both in terms of programme implementation and monitoring and evaluation is challenging. The only widely recognized and established requirement for gender performance monitoring presently is the disaggregation of results based on gender. The problem with gender disaggregated data, although a vital basic measure of the impact a programme is having on women, is that it has varying levels of efficacy in providing *a true picture of the impact of an intervention on women*. This is particularly true when based solely on scalable quantitative indicators that cannot reflect the complexity of gender relations at the household and community level. It is essential therefore that this type of gender disaggregated data be backed up by qualitative data that allows for an interpretation

of the figures beyond face value²⁶. The following examples highlight some of the issues found within the Alliances programme which hinder gender disaggregated data from showing the true level and nature of impact on women in relation to programme interventions. The programme response is in italics:

Scale: Presenting the gender disaggregated beneficiaries of programme interventions *actually* shows us the number of customers and suppliers of the programme supported enterprises rather than who is really benefitting and how these benefits are distributed within the households. *Therefore extra gender analysis is required to answer how the income is distributed within the family.*

Data Collection: Women often sign their husband's name, i.e. the family or household name when accessing services facilitated by the programme or supplying to programme facilitated entities. *This leads the programme to have to devise ways of data collection which somehow shows the sex of the purchaser.*

Decision Making/ End User: Men often do the marketing in town with women being left at home, yet women are for example in the case of veterinary medicine often responsible for diagnosing and requesting the drugs from the vet pharmacy which they will then administer. The data will show a prevalence of male customers although in many ways the decision maker and end user is the woman in the HH responsible for livestock husbandry in the home. *This issue therefore needs more emphasis on the development of indicators which will capture the complexity of decision making and roles at the HH level and going beyond the issue of mobility.*

Income: Women are the main producers in the dairy value chain, responsible for livestock husbandry in the home and milking and processing. They are responsible for dealing with intermediaries from the home where they handle cash. However, payment from more formalized entities is conducted from the milk collection centre to which mostly men go and therefore again men's names are used and cash is handed to them. *The issue here is finding out what level of access and control women have to this income. When analyzing data to find out whether women's livelihoods have been improved in relation to NAIC, gender disaggregated data can present a bleak picture and tell us little, as often income becomes household income and the decision making related to its use and control over its use is complex.*

GENERATING AND USING WEE INDICATORS

Much current debate is centred on the need to incorporate WEE indicators to ascertain if programmatic impact has benefitted women. As stated hitherto the use of WEE indicators require the appropriate level of preliminary research, additional surveying at the HH level and throws up potential issues around visibility. Success in measuring WEE indicators will be improved by using indicators *that are within the scope and experience of the programme remit* as they will be easier to attribute to the programme. In the ALCP they correspond to:

- *Access to services, markets, time saved and public goods.*

²⁶ Bearing in mind that qualitative data is itself often comprised of data sets which are often very limited and based on very small sample sizes that offer no statistical heft to the findings.

- *Agency over* HH budgeting and expenditure related to livestock, time saved and public decision making.

BOX 3: GENERATING WEE INDICATORS THE THREE STEP PROCESS:

1. Clearly transcribe the GDD (Gender Disaggregated) indicator.
2. Clearly expound the assumption that is being made in terms of the impact of the particular GDD indicator on WEE.
3. Convert the assumption into the relevant WEE indicator.

Please see the example below as with all indicators these should be SMART²⁷:

Aim: To measure the increase in decision making over the use of income by women through their increased income from improved market access.

Step 1: Gender Disaggregated Indicator

women who have access to a stable daily market for raw milk have increased NAIC.

Step 2: WEE Assumption

women who have access to and bring money into the HH through sale of milk are empowered through having a measure of control over it in relation to dairy activities and HH related expenditure.

Step 3: WEE Indicator

of women who make decisions regarding HH expenditure in relation to dairy activities and HH related expenditure.

As with all indicators the impact will be made much more meaningful by the addition of appropriate qualitative data which should be collected from informants on an annual basis as shown below:

‘Of the XXX women who gained access to stable daily sales of raw milk and had increased NAIC as a result, X% have reported that they have far more control over the use of the income from the commodity which they produce and supply themselves now that the factory they supply is buying daily/weekly/monthly and they are sure of a sale. % Women have reported that it is easier for them now that they have more respect within the HH as the factory is well respected in the community. % Women have reported that they have been able to invest in better equipment (empowered to invest in livelihood) they have been able to pay for extra tuition for their children and pay for health and dental treatment for children previously too expensive (empowered to invest in family). Some women have also reported a reduction in conflict within the HH as the income derived from dairy has regularized and increased with their dairy activities now being more respected.’

GETTING THE FIELD WORK RIGHT

WEE indicators and the research required to generate baselines and test assumptions will require field work at the HH level. Thus team members must be able to navigate local contexts with both sensitivity and tact. They must also be able to persuade communities, households and market actors to understand the importance of and benefits of gender-equitable impact. In the field the team can face problems

²⁷ Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time bound.

related to interviewing women as it brings women into the spotlight of attention in connection to an outside agency, one from outside the HH and community.

Depending on context and constraints such as women's mobility, norms related to the amount of contact women may have with individuals from outside the family or unpaid care burdens, reactions such as shame, reluctance, lack of time, fear of potential repercussions or women thinking that their opinion and response is of no value can be encountered.

The following rules have been generated by and are followed by team members to create a safe space for interview:

Establishing trust: find community female or male leaders to help gain trust.

Make sure to speak with the husbands/HH heads of women farmers: Try to talk with a male family member to get respect and trust; the aim of the interview should be explained and the benefits of the survey for his family. The team/interviewer will explain that the benefit is not just about women, but about family and community including men. Topics and activities related to women's economic empowerment should be presented in relation to the benefits for family and community.

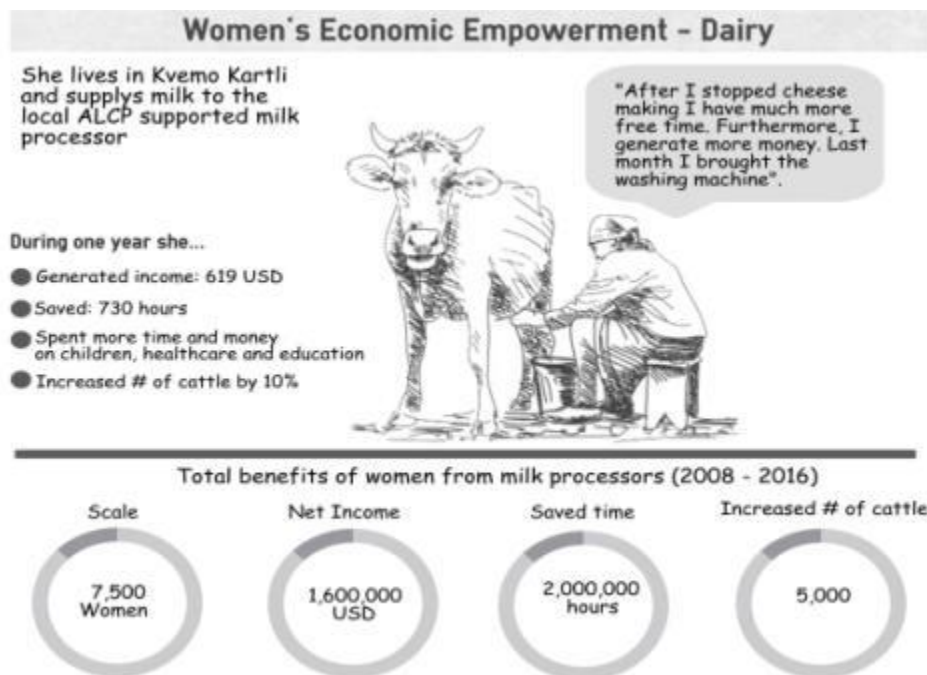
Team members should be confident and knowledgeable, and show respect: The community/individual interviewed should feel confidence in the interviewer and that the interviewer is familiar with and sympathetic to the community including their problems, life style, rules and traditions and that these are respected. This should include appropriate modulation of language, speech, references, topics introduced and dress. The HH or community should be able to feel a connection with the interviewer in seeking to find solutions in tandem rather than interference from an outsider with superior advantages.

Helping a female respondent: It may be difficult to get the female respondent to expound on her answers. When this occurs try asking the same question phrased differently or open the question to a wider group of women where the interviewee may be more comfortable in voicing her opinion. The interview should be in depth when trying to ascertain information on the existence of and reasons for behaviour changes. Reasons to explore include changed attitudes, expectations, motivations, practices and knowledge as well as access to resources. Observation and interpretation is very important during interviewing and analysing answers

DESCRIBING AND PRESENTING WEE IMPACT

Nowhere is the synthesis of quantitative and qualitative WEE information available to the programme through the monitoring system and the tools described hitherto more important than in describing and presenting WEE impact. Narratives combining the changes in agency observable at the household level must be meaningfully aligned with quantitative data which has been scrutinized to take into account the

issues pertaining to GDD. The programme is currently working on innovative ways to improve its presentation of this kind of quantifiable narrative.



CONCLUSION: A STORY

The overall aim of the drive to operationalize gender and WEE in the ALCP stemmed from a belief in the power of M4P, done well, to effect change. We wanted to see how we could ensure that this power could impact both the women and men of the target group. It also stemmed from a belief that all people should have the opportunity to access and enjoy the normal benefits of a developing economy. An externally conducted outcome harvesting trial²⁸ was recently done (July 2016), in an area where the programme has operated fairly intensively from 2012, to research the viability of outcome harvesting for detecting unexpected outcomes in a wider system and capturing some of the complexity of systemic change. The study focused on changes wrought in the dairy sector.

The sixteen outcomes detected in the trial, broadened, deepened and added to the story of the quantifiable outcomes depicted in the info graphic above. There were deep changes relating to agency over income and spending habits. In the male farmer statements no negativity was detected in response to these changes as they benefitted the household as a whole. There was a discernable theme of moving from necessity to choice and items of growth, pleasure and leisure; from supporting travel and tuition fees, to buying and securing land for hay making and buying more milking cows from adding to dowries and marriage ceremonies, from 4 lari cakes to 8 lari cakes from hand washing detergent to detergent for

²⁸ USAID Leveraging Economic Opportunities (LEO) Report No. 43 (2016) *Testing tools for Assessing Systemic Change: Outcome Harvesting: ALCP in the Georgia Dairy Industry*. USAID & BEAM Exchange

machines, to ready-made meals and a move to branded well packed and pleasing products, rather than raw staples. There was a new ability of women to take credit based on their secure daily income which was being spent on a diverse range of larger durable items in a more diverse range of shops opened in response to the growing market; from phones, washing machines and refrigerators to weighing scales. Beauty parlours were being frequented by more rural clientele. There was a reduction in drudgery and an expansion of choice. This all added up to Outcome 15: Time for leisure and a general sense of well-being. As the report states:

‘Interestingly, this outcome speaks to a broader change in expectations, owing to a fundamental shift in quality of life. As stated above, many survey respondents said they thought cheese making was “drudgery” and “torture,” and far preferred not only the increased income from milk sales, but also the additional free time. Many women use this time to take public buses into Tsalka town to shop, have their hair done at the salon, and even receive cosmetic treatment for their teeth at one of Tsalka’s new dentists. It is likely that a return to cheese making, with lower income and the requirement that women work at home all day, each day, would be fiercely resisted by the newly empowered women among the village’s dairy producing households.

As this marks a fundamental shift in women’s expectations of what their lives should include, it fairly qualifies as a systemic change – but what type of systemic change?

In response to the final question, the right kind.