Improving Opportunities for Women in Smallholder-based Supply Chains

Business case and practical guidance for international food companies

Appendix: Case Studies

Prepared for the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

By Man-Kwun Chan, with advisory input from Stephanie Barrientos
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Introduction

Background and Purpose of This Document

This document is the appendix to Improving Opportunities for Women in Smallholder-based Supply Chains: Business case and practical guidance for international food companies. It presents detailed case studies of seven projects and initiatives in Africa that have adopted innovative measures to improve opportunities for women in smallholder-based supply chains. These case studies are intended to provide additional and more detailed examples of the recommended actions contained in Sections 3 through 6 of the guide, thereby helping to provide further practical guidance and inspiration to food companies that wish to take action to support women producers in their supply chains.

As part of the guide, Appendix 1 is written for all international food companies that have smallholder producers in their supply chains and that actively engage with these smallholders through either direct sourcing arrangements or other types of smallholder support programs, such as training programs, sustainability certification schemes, and community development projects.

Given the level of detail included in this appendix, it will be most useful for corporate social responsibility (CSR) managers, ethical sourcing and ethical trading managers, outgrower managers, and others who have direct responsibility for implementing some or all of the recommended actions contained in the guide.

For further information about why the guide was developed, and the scope and limitations of the guidance that it contains, please see Section 1.1 (pages 8-11) of the guide.

Where the Information Comes From

Most of the material for the case studies was collected during field visits to Ghana, Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania in December 2009 and January 2010. The field research included interviews with in-country field-level company representatives, staff from eight partner organizations, and over 80 women and 25 men in 20 smallholder communities in the focus countries.

Information for the case studies was also obtained from interviews with U.K.-based project stakeholders, as well as from internal project documents, journal articles, relevant websites, and independent evaluations and impact studies.

For a list of individuals and organizations that were consulted during the study, please see the Acknowledgements section (pages 6-7) in the guide.

Scope of the Case Studies

The seven case studies cover projects and initiatives in Ghana, Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania. Four of them focus on projects and initiatives that have been initiated or are directly supported by international food companies. The remaining three focus on fair trade producer groups that supply mainstream global markets as well as alternative fair trade markets.

Importantly, none of the case study projects and initiatives were set up exclusively as “women’s projects.” All were established with broader aims, but for one reason or another saw the need to adopt proactive measures to ensure women’s full participation in project and group activities. Their experiences are therefore directly relevant to food companies that are seeking to incorporate gender issues into existing smallholder sourcing and support programs that have broader commercial or social responsibility aims.
How the Case Studies Were Selected

The case study projects and initiatives were selected on the basis that they:

- Provided lessons that are relevant and applicable to mainstream international food companies.
- Have adopted innovative practices that demonstrate how one or more of the recommended actions in the guide can be put into practice on the ground.
- Collectively cover a range of commodities and sectors.
- Collectively illustrate most types of interventions that are recommended in Sections 3 through 6 of the guide.

What Each Case Study Covers

Each case study addresses the following questions:

- What constraints faced by women producers did the case study initiatives seek to address?
- Where relevant, why was the company interested in supporting women or increasing women’s participation?
- What specific measures and activities were undertaken to support women or increase women’s participation?
- What have been the impacts of these activities on women producers?
- Where relevant, what have been the commercial benefits for the companies involved?
- What challenges did the project or group encounter in supporting women’s participation, and how were they overcome?
- What are the lessons and opportunities for other companies?
- Where can further information about the case study project or initiative be obtained?

Case Study Summaries

This section presents a brief description of each case study.

Case Study 1: Video Viewing Clubs (VVCs), Ghana

The Sustainable Tree Crops Program (STCP) has developed and piloted Video Viewing Clubs (VVCs) with women cocoa smallholders in Ghana and Côte d’Ivoire since 2006. VVCs are an innovative training approach that combines the use of videos, discussion sessions, and practical fieldwork to teach smallholders how to improve cocoa productivity and quality. Although developed equally for male as well as female farmers, the teaching materials and methods are accessible to illiterate learners and so are particularly well suited to women farmers in Africa. The VVC program offers free training materials as well as useful lessons for all multinational companies that source cocoa either directly or indirectly from West Africa.

Case Study 2: Kuapa Kokoo, Ghana

Kuapa Kokoo, the only Fairtrade certified cocoa farmers’ cooperative in Ghana, adopted gender equality principles from the outset, establishing quotas for women’s participation in its various governance bodies when it was formed in 1993. It also set up a specific Gender Programme that has provided capacity-building, credit facilities, and other support to women members. Although not a company initiative,
Kuapa Kokoo’s experience provides useful lessons for food companies that are sourcing directly from smallholders, as well as for companies that support smallholder community development projects and sustainability certification initiatives.

**Case Study 3: EPK Outgrower Empowerment Project, Kenya**

EPK Outgrower Empowerment Project (EKP-OEP) is a smallholder-owned company that was set up in 2005/6 by a group of outgrowers who supply the tea company Eastern Produce Kenya. It was established to manage and disburse funds that are received from Fairtrade premiums following Fairtrade certification. EKP-OEP uses these funds to upgrade production skills and capacity as well as to provide social services to its members. From the outset, EPK-OEP has made efforts to ensure that women as well as men benefit from the training, extension services, and social projects it provides. It has also encouraged male outgrowers to give a portion of their tea farms to their wives, thus facilitating more women to become outgrowers in their own right. Although the EPK-OEP structure is atypical, this case study nevertheless provides useful lessons for all food companies that have smallholder contract farming schemes.

**Case Study 4: Finlays FRICH Project, Kenya**

Finlays, in collaboration with the Co-operative Group (U.K.) and other noncorporate partners, is supporting a project that aims to secure long-term sustainable livelihoods for Finlays’ 8,000 smallholder tea outgrowers in Kenya, through improving their market access and self-sufficiency. Specifically, the FRICH project supports the outgrowers to form cooperatives, diversify into other (non-tea) cash crops, and work towards Fairtrade certification. From the outset, the project has encouraged women’s membership and participation in the new cooperatives, including taking measures to ensure equal representation of women and men in the cooperative governance structures. The project is also supporting the development of alternative income generating opportunities for women and other household members of outgrowers. The FRICH project provides useful lessons for all food companies that are sourcing directly from smallholders.

**Case Study 5: Gumutindo, Uganda**

Twin, a U.K.-based fair trade membership organization that includes both trading and capacity-building operations, was centrally involved in the formation of Gumutindo Coffee Cooperative Enterprise Ltd. (GCCE) in 2003, and has been buying coffee from and supporting the development of the cooperative union ever since. When GCCE was formed, Twin successfully negotiated with the founding farmers to put in place quotas for women’s representation in GCCE’s governance structures, as well as policies for proactively recruiting female staff members. More recently, Twin has been supporting GCCE to develop a separate supply chain and market for women’s coffee, and is also exploring how to increase women’s membership in the organization overall. This case study provides useful lessons for all food companies that operate contract farming schemes or that source directly from smallholder producer organizations.

**Case Study 6: Karagwe District Cooperative Union (KDCU), Tanzania**

Twin has been buying coffee from the Karagwe District Cooperative Union (KDCU) in Tanzania since 1995. Alongside the trading relationship, Twin has also provided training and support to KDCU on leadership, quality, and other issues. Twin has used its existing relationship with KDCU to push for increased participation of women in the cooperative union’s membership, governance, and training activities, for example by highlighting gender issues at general training workshops. This case study provides useful lessons for all food companies that operate contract farming schemes or source directly from producer organizations, showing how they can leverage their commercial relationship with these groups to promote gender equality.
Case Study 7: Bettys & Taylors’ Nyeri Training Project, Kenya

Bettys & Taylors of Harrogate is working with a U.K.-based charity and a Kenyan training institute to develop and deliver training about marketing and business skills to two smallholder coffee cooperatives and their members in Nyeri district, Kenya. Through research that they had previously conducted on the sector, Bettys & Taylors had become aware not only of the important role played by women on smallholder coffee farms but also of their lack of visibility in cooperative membership and governance structures. As a result, Bettys & Taylors, together with project partners, is taking various measures to ensure that gender issues will be prioritized in project design and implementation, and that women and men farmers will benefit in equal measure from the training. Although the project remains in very early stages, this case study nevertheless provides useful insights for all food companies that support community development projects in key smallholder sourcing regions.
Case Study 1: Video Viewing Clubs (VVCs), Ghana

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“I started pruning my cocoa trees after learning how to do this at the VVC. As a result, I have doubled my yields, from one bag to over two bags.”

Female VVC graduate, Praaso village, Ghana

Background Information

Geographic Focus: Ghana (and Côte d’Ivoire)

Commodity or Crop Focus: Cocoa

About the Video Viewing Clubs (VVC) Program

The VVC program was set up to improve the knowledge and skills of small-scale cocoa farmers in West Africa, in recognition that the majority of cocoa farmers in the region do not receive adequate extension support for cocoa production. For example, in a survey conducted by STCP in 2003, only 13 percent of the farmers surveyed in Ghana named the government extension services as their main source of advice on cocoa production techniques. Because farmers prioritized pests and diseases as key production constraints, the pilot training to date has focused on teaching farmers integrated crop and pest management (ICPM) techniques.

The VVC methodology was designed to cater to the low literacy levels and time constraints (particularly during peak labor periods) that are faced by small-scale cocoa farmers in West Africa.

Until 2009, the pilot VVC training was delivered exclusively to women smallholders in response to the priorities of the initial donor, the Chocolate Manufacturers’ Association (CMA), in the United States. However, VVC was not specifically designed to be a women-specific training methodology—it is equally applicable to both male and female smallholders. Indeed, since 2009 the VVC program has started delivering training to mixed groups that involve men as well as women farmers.

The VVC pilot activities have been running in both Ghana and Côte d’Ivoire. However, although the two country programs share similar principles, there has been one key difference between them: the videos developed and used in Côte d’Ivoire were made solely by film professionals, whereas

A video (on postharvest practices) being shown at a VVC training session in Ghana. Given low literacy levels among women smallholders in Africa, film is an effective way of getting the message across.
Improving Opportunities for Women in Smallholder-based Supply Chains

APPENDIX 1: CASE STUDY NO. 1 (VVCs)

The VVC program has been developed and piloted by the Sustainable Tree Crops Program (STCP). Managed by the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), STCP is a public-private partnership initiative that seeks to generate growth in rural income among tree crop farmers in West and Central Africa in an environmentally and socially responsible manner (see www.treecrops.org).

The VVC activities conducted in Ghana between 2006 and 2008 were funded by the CMA, Mars Incorporated, Nestlé, Sunspire, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and the World Cocoa Foundation. Current VVC training in Ghana (from 2009 onward) is being funded by the European Union under the Cocoa Sector Support Program Phase II and by the Cocoa Livelihoods Program as implemented by the World Cocoa Foundation.

The following organizations have also been involved in the VVC program in Ghana:

- **ANS Media**, a Ghanaian consultancy organization that has expertise in participatory filmmaking, has played a lead role in making the 11 VVC videos, including training the farmers about basic filmmaking techniques and coordinating the inputs of technical partners.

- **Stratcomm Africa**, an international communications agency that is headquartered in Accra, Ghana, was brought on board between 2006 and 2007 to help ensure that the communication techniques that were used in the films and picture guide were suitable for the target farmers.

- **The Cocoa Research Institute of Ghana (CRIG)**, the research division of the Ghana Cocoa Board, has provided technical support in the development of the film content and trained the facilitators about the technical aspects of cocoa production.

- **The Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MOFA)** of Ghana has also provided support to VVC activities throughout the pilot phase.

The VVC Training Approach

A Video Viewing Club delivers training on up to 11 ICPM topics over a four-to-seven–month period, depending on the number of topics covered, with weekly or fortnightly sessions, each lasting approximately two to three hours. Each club comprises a facilitator and 20 to 25 trainees, all from the same community or village. Club sessions take place at a meeting place chosen by and within the community. For each topic, three teaching steps are used:

- **Step 1**: A short (10-to-15 minute) video is shown, which introduces the topic and the key production techniques involved. (The video is shown at least twice.)

- **Step 2**: The facilitator uses guide questions to stimulate discussion about the key techniques that are introduced in the video. A specially developed picture guide is also used to assist discussion. (The picture guide covers the same techniques and key points as the video.)

- **Step 3**: Trainees visit a demonstration plot on one of the trainee's farms, where the techniques are demonstrated and participants have the chance to practice some of the techniques themselves.

The VVC facilitators all attend an intensive, two-week residential training course that is run by master trainers, with input from agricultural resource professionals. The training covers facilitation skills, how to operate and use the video equipment, and training on the relevant ICPM cocoa production techniques.

How the Training Materials Were Developed

The videos that are being used in Ghana have been developed using a participatory filmmaking approach. A group of eight cocoa farmers have been trained in basic filmmaking techniques and are responsible for developing the initial storyboard (outline) for each film. A professional filmmaker and crop specialists from the Cocoa Research Institute of Ghana (CRIG), together with communications specialists from Stratcomm Africa, then critique and provide input to improve the film. Afterward, the farmers shoot the agreed footage and compile an initial rough cut, which is then edited and finalized by professional film editors and producers.

The picture guide has also been developed with direct input from farmers, who, together with Stratcomm and STCP staff, have helped ensure that the messages are conveyed in a way that cocoa farmers trust and understand.

Companies and Organizations Involved

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The Case Study

Scope of the Case Study

This case study focuses on the specific measures taken by the VVC program in Ghana to ensure that women cocoa farmers could attend and benefit fully from the training provided by the program.

Women’s Constraints Addressed by the Case Study Initiatives

In West Africa, cocoa is generally perceived as a man’s crop, yet in fact women play an important role in smallholder cocoa production, both as independent farmers and as family labor on men’s cocoa farms. STCP and the VVC donors recognized that improving the cocoa production skills of women as well as men cocoa farmers was therefore crucial for improving the quality, productivity, and sustainability of cocoa practices, as well as for improving household welfare.

Specific constraints faced by women cocoa farmers include:

- The majority (74 percent) of women in rural areas of Ghana are illiterate.
- Women have even lower access to extension services than men and consider lack of extension services and training as key production constraints.
- Women have smaller farms than men and rely heavily on male labor for many tasks.
- Women farmers identified soil and site selection, nursery management, disease and pest management, and post-harvest activities as priority areas for training.

STCP and the donors that supported the project hoped that by developing and delivering the VVC training to women cocoa farmers, they could help combat women’s poor access to extension services, improve their cocoa training to women cocoa farmers, they could help combat women’s low literacy levels by using appropriately designed training methods and materials.

Measures Undertaken to Ensure that Women Would Attend and Benefit Fully from the Training

The following measures were implemented in the initial pilot phase (2006 through 2008), during which the VVCs were delivered exclusively to women farmers.

Measures Taken to Ensure that the Training Materials Are Appropriate for Women

- The initial needs assessment included female as well as male cocoa farmers. The topics covered by the VVC videos were decided following an initial needs assessment exercise, where both women and men cocoa farmers were invited to identify and rank their key production constraints.
- The three key training methods that are used are suitable for illiterate and semi-literate farmers. The three training and communications methods used in VVCs—film, facilitated discussions, and field demonstration and practice—rely primarily on visual images and verbal communication rather than written information and are hence accessible to illiterate and semi-literate learners. This has been important to ensure that women farmers can fully understand the training content.
- The training materials have been tailored to suit the learning styles of women farmers. As well as relying primarily on audio and visual information, the films and picture guide have other characteristics that make them particularly suitable to women farmers. For example, both the films and the picture guide deliver information at a slow pace, with repetition of key points and testimonials from farmers to validate key messages. Feedback shows that these elements are necessary to ensure that women farmers fully absorb the content. The newer films also use docudramas to introduce new topics, a technique that has helped to improve the credibility of the training content for women farmers.
- Three out of the eight farmers who were taught filmmaking were female. Because these farmers were responsible for developing the initial storyboard for each
video, the inclusion of women helped to ensure that specific issues and constraints that are faced by women farmers were incorporated into the videos.

- **Women farmers have also been included as actors and narrators in the actual videos.**

**Measures Taken to Ensure that the Delivery of the Training Is Effective for Female Trainees**

- **Women from local communities were used as facilitators.** Use of women rather than men helped to ensure effective communication with the all-female trainees. Using local farmers as facilitators has also worked well because women farmers tend to have a higher level of trust in their fellow farmers than in external “experts” (such as male government extension officers) and are therefore more likely to adopt practices they recommend.

- **Female trainees were involved in choosing the venue** for the training sessions. STCP’s experience was that the correct choice of venue was very important to ensure maximum attendance. For example, in one community the training was initially conducted in the buying shed that belonged to a particular farmers’ cooperative (Kuapa Kokoo). As a result, some women farmers did not want to attend the training because they were not members of Kuapa Kokoo.

- **STCP made efforts to restrict the training sessions to women only.** From the outset, the VVCs were advertised in the target communities as an activity for women only. Although inevitably one or two men seem to have participated in some of the training sessions, STCP appears to have been largely successful at restricting participation to women. This has been important because women trainees prefer to attend women-only clubs, fearing that if men were allowed to join in, they would “hijack” the program.

**Measures Taken to Ensure Women’s Participation in the New Mixed-Gender Clubs**

At the time of the field research (December 2009), the first mixed-gender clubs had only just started to operate. It is therefore too early to say how effective these will be for women farmers as compared to the women-only clubs. However, one specific measure that has been taken to help encourage women’s participation at the sessions is to ensure that all facilitators receive training on inclusive facilitation techniques as part of their two-week training course. Facilitators are taught specifically to encourage quieter participants—including women—to contribute to the sessions.

**Impacts on Women in Smallholder Communities**

There are a number of positive impacts to date of the VVC program in Ghana.

- **Significant number of women trained:** Over 864 women cocoa farmers have completed VVC training in Ghana (2006 through 2009).

- **Improved knowledge of cocoa ICPM techniques:** In a study conducted by STCP in 2007, female VVC graduates obtained an average score of 68 percent in a knowledge test on cocoa ICPM, as compared to an average score of 46 percent for non-participants. Women VVC graduates interviewed in December 2009 also confirmed that the VVC training had taught them new techniques, including how to prune cocoa trees, how to control black pod disease, and the importance of good drainage of cocoa farms.

- **Dissemination of knowledge to non-participants:** All 32 participants who were interviewed in the 2007 STCP study reported that they had shared knowledge and information that they acquired from the VVCs with other farmers, reaching approximately 240 additional non-participant farmers.

- **Improved yields:** VVC participants in the 2007 STCP study increased their cocoa yields by an average of 59 percent between 2006 and 2007 (one year after the training), compared with a yield increase of 47 percent for non-VVC participants for the same period.

- **Promotion of group formation.** Although the VVC methodology does not specifically set out to promote group formation, about a third of the 32 VVC participants surveyed in 2007 had continued to meet two years after the completion of the training, mainly to exchange and share information on cocoa production practices.
Cost of Developing and Running VVCs

- It costs approximately $1,000 (U.S.) to run one full seven-month VVC course. This includes the cost of training and remunerating the facilitators, provision of all equipment and training materials (including generator, TV, VCR, and one copy of the picture guide per trainee), but does not include video development costs.36
- This is equivalent to $50 per participant, assuming 20 participants per course.
- The cost of developing the participatory videos in Ghana has been between $10,000 and $12,000 per video. STCP staff and partners recognize that the participatory approach is undoubtedly time-consuming and therefore expensive. However, they believe that farmers’ participation in the filmmaking process has been very important in ensuring that (a) farmers actually have confidence and trust in the films’ content, and (b) the messages are framed and delivered in a way that farmers understand. So although the cost per video could be reduced to a limited extent by streamlining certain aspects of production, for example by changing how films are pretested with cocoa farmers,37 it would be difficult to significantly reduce the cost without compromising the quality and effectiveness of the films.

Challenges Encountered in Reaching Women Farmers, and How They Have Been Overcome

The VVC pilot program in Ghana has encountered a number of general challenges, including technology-related constraints (such as breakdown of audiovisual equipment) and finding suitable training venues; however, most of these challenges appear to have been effectively managed.38 The program has also encountered several specific challenges in reaching women farmers.

- Women’s time constraints. The commitment to attend sessions on a weekly basis can be difficult for many women, but the fact that the facilitators live in the same community as the trainees seems to have meant that the length, timing, and frequency of training has been successfully adapted to suit women’s needs; for example, agreeing to meet on a fortnightly rather than weekly basis, having shorter sessions, and holding training sessions on taboo days.39
- Difficulty in finding enough female facilitators that meet the selection criteria. To become a facilitator, the women had to be cocoa farmers in their own right, be able to read and write English, and have attended secondary school. In some communities it was difficult to find women who fit these criteria, given low education levels among rural women in Ghana and small numbers of female cocoa farmers in some communities. Given that only one facilitator is needed per community, during the pilot phase the VVC team did eventually manage to identify appropriate facilitators for all target communities. However, this might prove more difficult if the approach is scaled up.40
- Limited access to inputs and equipment, which restricts uptake of production techniques. The 2007 evaluation found that although knowledge had improved significantly as a result of the VVCs, actual uptake of practices was more mixed, because many women could not afford recommended inputs (for example, pesticides and fertilizers) or equipment (sprayers, pruning tools) that was needed to implement recommended practices. Limited access to labor can also be a problem for labor-intensive cultural techniques, such as burying diseased pods on field perimeters.41 STCP recognizes these constraints to uptake, pointing to the need for other stakeholders to be involved in ensuring that smallholders have better access to other necessary production inputs as well as to training.42

Relevance, Lessons, and Opportunities for Other Companies

This case study is highly relevant for all companies that buy cocoa either directly or indirectly from Ghana or Côte d’Ivoire. The VVC pilot program in Ghana provides many useful lessons about how such companies can ensure that the technical training they provide to smallholders effectively reaches and benefits female as well as male cocoa farmers (see Section 4.2 of the guide).

Specifically, relevant cocoa companies have the opportunity to use the existing videos and training materials to develop and run their own VVC programs in Ghana and Côte d’Ivoire, potentially in collaboration with national partners. The VVC methodology is highly suitable for replication, because the use of standard videos and picture guides ensures that key training messages are consistent and accurate. Moreover, the approach relies on farmers rather than professional trainers as facilitators, a distinct advantage in many African countries where recruiting highly qualified staff can be difficult and expensive. Finally, the training materials have already been developed and are readily available from STCP (see “Further Information”).

In addition, the existing VVC training materials can also be adapted for use in other developing regions at relatively low cost. The videos and picture guides could be translated into other languages for use in other West African countries and potentially even further afield. For example, Technoserve Tanzania is planning to translate the videos into Kiswahili for use with cocoa farmers in Tanzania, and Rainforest Alliance is interested in translating and using the videos in Costa Rica.43
Further Information

Interested companies and organizations can obtain copies of the following VVC training materials for noncommercial use:

- **11 training videos** on key aspects of cocoa integrated pest management (in English and Twi)
- **A picture guide** covering key points from the videos (in French, English, and Twi)
- **An implementation** manual and a **Training of Trainers** manual

All the materials can be downloaded for free from www.treecrops.org. Alternatively, copies can be obtained from STCP (see contact details below), in which case STCP will charge for the costs of reproducing the requested materials.

For further information about the VVC methodology, training materials, and future plans for the program, please contact **Dr. Sonii David**, Regional Participatory Extension Specialist, STCP, by sending an email message to: s.david@cgiar.org.

References

2. Source: Dr. Sonii David interview, Regional Participatory Extension Specialist, STCP, 7 December 2009, Accra.
3. When the first VVCs ran in 2006, there were only five videos available, and the training lasted about four months overall. Between 2006 and 2009, a further six videos were made, so by 2009 the training period was extended to six to seven months, to accommodate the full 11 ICPM videos/topics.
25. Source: interviews conducted with 16 VVC graduates (15 female, one male) in Praaso village, Asante Akim North District, Ashanti Region, 8 December 2009.
28. Source: Fact sheet on Video Viewing Clubs in Ghana, 2009, STCP.
29. Source: STCP study (2007), which evaluated the impact of VVCs on participants in Ghana. It compared 32 VVC graduates in three communities with a control group (women in the same or nearby communities who had not attended VVCs). Information obtained from Fact sheet on Video Viewing Clubs in Ghana, 2009, STCP; and interview with Dr. Sonii David, STCP, 7 December 2009, Accra.
30. Source: 16 VVC graduates interview, 8 December 2009.
33. The difference was, however, not statistically significant due to the difficulty in controlling for a large number of variables.
34. One bag of cocoa is approximately 64 kilograms.
35. Source: 16 VVC graduates interview, 8 December 2009.
37. Source: Dr. Sonii David, 12 May 2010, personal communication.
40. “Taboo days” are weekly rest days that vary among villages, and are commonly observed in the Ashanti and Brong Ahafo regions in Ghana. Farmers typically do not work on their farms on taboo days.
41. Source: Sonii David interview, 7 December 2009.
42. Source: 16 VVC graduates interview, 8 December 2009.
43. Source: Sonii David interview, 7 December 2009.
44. Source: Sonii David interview, 7 December 2009.
Case Study 2: Kuapa Kokoo, Ghana

Kuapa Kokoo, the only Fairtrade certified cocoa farmers’ cooperative in Ghana, adopted gender equality principles from the outset, establishing quotas for women’s participation in its various governance bodies when it was formed in 1993. It also set up a specific Gender Programme that has provided capacity-building, credit facilities, and other support to women members. Although not a company initiative, Kuapa Kokoo’s experience provides useful lessons for food companies that have outgrower or other contract farming schemes, as well as for companies that support smallholder community development projects or sustainability certification initiatives.

Background Information

**Geographic Focus:** Ghana

**Commodity or Crop Focus:** Cocoa

**Organizations and Companies Involved**

Kuapa Kokoo was set up in 1993 by a group of farmers following partial liberalization of the Ghanaian cocoa sector, with financial and technical support from Twin, a U.K.–based fair trade organization. Kuapa Kokoo currently has about 62,000 members, organized into over 1,350 village societies across five regions of Ghana. As of 2000/01, Kuapa Kokoo produced about 35,000 metric tons of cocoa, of which 19.3 percent was sold as fair trade; the remainder was sold into international mainstream markets via the Ghanaian government’s Cocoa Marketing Company.

In terms of its organizational structure, Kuapa Kokoo Farmers Union (KKFU) is a registered organization that in turn owns a number of specialist companies that make up the Kuapa Kokoo Group:

- **Kuapa Kokoo Limited (KKL):** The sixth largest and only farmer-owned licensed buying company in Ghana’s cocoa sector. It serves as the trading wing for the cooperative.
- **Kuapa Kokoo Credit Union (KKCU):** Serves as a bank to the farmer members and aims to inculcate the habit of saving among members. It also facilitates members’ access to credit for farm inputs.
- **Divine Chocolate Company Ltd. and Divine Chocolate Inc.:** A premium fair trade chocolate marketing company in the U.K. and the United States. Kuapa Kokoo owns 45 percent of the shares in Divine U.K. and 33 percent of the shares in Divine USA.

In addition, the Kuapa Kokoo Farmers Trust (KKFT), which is registered as a separate non-profit company, receives all Fairtrade premiums and other project or private donations on behalf of the Kuapa Kokoo Group. The trust has a board that comprises elected farmers, professionals, and a representative from international partners. The board oversees the judicious use of the trust’s funds for the benefit of Kuapa Kokoo’s membership, based on the mandate agreed by members at the annual general meeting each year.

Activities under Kuapa Kokoo’s Gender Programme were supported by external funds from Women’s Vision International (U.S.).

“It’s important to support any woman who is able to take on a key role in the cooperative. Investing in her will yield a good return for the cooperative as well as the community.”

Regina Corletsey, Gender Officer, Kuapa Kokoo

Women cocoa farmers discussing the benefits they have received from participating in Kuapa Kokoo’s Gender Programme. The Programme has helped many women to increase their incomes and improve their children’s education.

![Women cocoa farmers discussing the benefits they have received from participating in Kuapa Kokoo’s Gender Programme. The Programme has helped many women to increase their incomes and improve their children’s education.](image-url)
The Case Study

Scope of the Case Study

This case study covers the following policies and activities of Kuapa Kokoo since its establishment in 1993:

- Policies and mechanisms established to ensure women’s representation in the organization’s governance
- Policies and mechanisms established to ensure that women and men benefit equally from the full range of Kuapa Kokoo’s membership services and facilities
- Project activities aimed specifically at supporting women (that is, the activities implemented under the Gender Programme).

Ensuring Women’s Representation in Governance

Kuapa Kokoo has introduced the following policies and mechanisms to encourage and ensure women’s representation in all levels of governance of the organization:

- The enhancement of women’s participation in governance is embedded as one of the three top-level objectives of the organization.
- Quotas to ensure women’s representation in all primary society executive committees were established from the outset when Kuapa was formed. Initially, the quotas specified that at least two of the seven committee members must be women. This quota has since been increased: now three out of the seven committee members must be female.
- Similar quotas also exist for the 52 district-level or area-level committees: three out of the seven representatives in each area committee must be women.
- In addition, quotas are enforced for participation at the annual general meeting (AGM), which constitutes the main decision-making forum of KKFU. All primary societies must send two AGM delegates, one of which must be a woman.
- Kuapa Kokoo has also encouraged the inclusion of women in delegations that are sent overseas to represent the organization internationally.

Ensuring Women’s Access to General Membership Services

An equal opportunities approach seems to have been well embedded across most of Kuapa’s general membership services, as reflected in the following:

- Membership eligibility criteria. Kuapa’s membership dues are currently 0.20 Ghana cedis (approximately $0.14 [U.S.]) per member, a fee that even the poorest farmers can easily afford. Moreover, although one must be a cocoa farmer to become a member, it is not necessary to have formal or even traditional land ownership rights over the farm. Anyone who has control of the produce from a cocoa farm can join (including sharecroppers who have control over only a portion of it).
- Selection process for KKFT-supported projects. Any primary society can submit a funding application to the Farmers Trust for social projects that benefit the community, such as construction of sanitary facilities, schools, or boreholes. To be submitted, the application must be approved by all members of the primary society executive committee, at least three of whom must be women. Moreover, the community-level committee...
that is appointed to oversee implementation of an approved project must also have female as well as male representatives.11

- Eligibility for loans from KKCU. No collateral is required to secure a loan from KKCU; the applicant must instead be approved as credit-worthy by the person's primary society executive committee.12

Providing Targeted Support to Women Members (via the KK Gender Programme)

The KK Gender Programme targets and benefits wives and other female relatives of male Kuapa members, as well as women who are cocoa farmers and members of Kuapa in their own right. The program has provided three main types of support to these women:

- Training and capacity building, including development of personal leadership and management skills

- Skills training, focusing on teaching women the practical skills they need to develop collective income-generating activities during the cocoa off-season, such as farming of other (non-cocoa) crops, soap-making, palm and palm kernel oil production, and bread making

- Provision of micro-credit, that is, providing loans of between $20 and $600 to individual women to develop their own micro-enterprises, with the loans managed through a group guarantee system13,14

Impacts on Women in Smallholder Communities

Impact of Governance Measures

- Although not fully effective in the initial years, the quotas for female representation on committees at primary society and district levels are now largely being met: as of 2006, 32 percent of primary society committee representatives were female (2,079 women out of a total of 6,524 representatives), and 45 percent of district-level representatives were female (81 women out of a total of 182 representatives).15

- Despite the absence of gender quotas at the National Executive Committee (NEC) level, 60 percent (12 out of 20) of the current NEC Board members are female.16 A number of these women have also taken on key roles on the boards of Kuapa Kokoo’s various subsidiaries. For example, Comfort Kumeah, a woman farmer member from Antoakrom District, Ashanti Region, has been the chairperson of KKFT since 2005, managing an annual budget that has grown to over $1 million and ensuring that the Kuapa Kokoo Farmers Trust successfully passed a FLO-CERT full systems inspection in 2009.17

- In a survey of three Kuapa communities, the vast majority of (female and male) interviewees felt that women and men were given an equal platform to speak at Kuapa Kokoo meetings and had equal input into decision-making.18

- Including women in overseas delegations has had a huge impact, not only on the self-confidence of the individual women involved, but also on other women members of the cooperative, who now see these women as role models.19

Impact of Measures to Ensure Women’s Access to General Membership Services

In the Integrated Social Development Centre (ISODEC) study,20 the vast majority of interviewees in all three communities confirmed that women and men have equal access to all Kuapa’s membership training and support services.21 Field research conducted in December 2009 also supported these findings.

- Evidence: Women benefit from general membership services as well as men.
  - One woman in the village of Bipoa confirmed that she had benefited from Kuapa Kokoo’s training on cocoa quality. After implementing techniques that she learned at the training, she is now fetching a better price for her cocoa due to its improved quality.
  - Women in Bipoa and Asasua Kokote villages confirmed that they have received credit from KKCU and used it to meet medical costs and help fund their children’s education.22,23

Impact of Gender Programme Activities

- Most of the current female NEC Board members were beneficiaries of the Gender Programme, indicating that the program has been successful at building women’s confidence and leadership skills.24,25

- Between 2000 and 2008, the program supported 800 women in 35 communities to develop viable income-generating activities.26

- Specifically, both the skills-training and micro-credit components of the program have supported women to develop income-generating activities that have led to significant increases in their incomes. Some women have as a result been able to keep their children in education for longer.27,28
Evidence: Women have increased their income as a result of receiving micro-credit or skills training.

- One woman in Bipoa used her loan to buy cassava locally and sell it in town for a higher price, which has allowed her to make a profit.
- Another woman used her loan to hire labor for her cocoa farms, which she had previously struggled to manage on her own. As a result, she was able to harvest 10 bags of cocoa—her largest harvest ever.
- Three other women said that being taught how to make soap from cocoa by-products allowed them to make extra income from selling it.
- One woman, a single parent, said that the Gender Programme’s support allowed her to diversify her income-earning activities to include soap-making and sale of kenkey (a local staple), as well as farming cocoa; as a result she no longer struggles to feed her family.

Challenges Met by Kuapa’s Gender Initiatives, and How They Have Been Overcome

Unsurprisingly, Kuapa Kokoo has met with some challenges in implementing the various gender initiatives outlined above. These have included:

- Men’s resistance to gender quotas. Initially, some male members were resistant to the quotas for women’s representation on the primary society and area committees. Men felt the system was unfair because there are more male than female cocoa farmers, and because men have larger farms and are also better educated. However, because all members have to sign up to Kuapa’s gender equality principles as a condition of membership, men now understand that they have to accept the quotas, whether they like the system or not.
- Men’s perception of the Gender Programme as biased. Although most men do now accept the principle of equal opportunities in governance, many continue to feel aggrieved about the Gender Programme because it offers credit and support for women only. They feel this is unfair, and that there should be a parallel program of support for men.
- Free-rider and corruption problems associated with collective income-generating activities. In some communities, there has been ill-feeling caused by women not putting equal effort into the communal income-generating activities, or by the income from these activities not being fairly distributed or accounted for. Kuapa Kokoo has responded to these problems by introducing the micro-credit program, which offers women the option of taking out individual loans for their own micro-enterprises.

Relevance, Lessons, and Opportunities for Other Companies

This case study provides useful lessons for:

- Companies that support the development of smallholder producer groups, whether as part of smallholder outgrower schemes or as part of sustainability certification initiatives.
- Companies that support community development projects in smallholder sourcing regions.

Companies that support the development of producer groups could consider replicating or adapting the various measures that Kuapa Kokoo has taken to ensure (a) women’s representation in their governance structures, and (b) women’s equal access to their full range of membership services. Kuapa’s particular success in promoting women’s representation in all levels of their governance structure demonstrates what can be achieved with strong commitment...
and sustained enforcement over a period of time. The experience also indicates the importance of:

- Enshrining gender equality principles and policies in the early stages of group formation.
- Presenting these principles as an explicit and nonnegotiable condition of membership.

Companies that support community development projects in smallholder sourcing areas could consider incorporating the types of women-specific support activities that have been implemented by the Kuapa Gender Programme in their existing projects, such as capacity building, skills training for collective income generation, and providing credit for individual micro-enterprise development. In doing so, however, such companies must ensure that the implementing organizations effectively manage the following risks:

- Ill-feeling and resistance from men in the target communities, who may feel excluded by the provision of women-specific services and support
- The risk of free-rider problems, lack of transparency, and corruption that can arise from collective income-generating activities

Further Information

For further information about Kuapa Kokoo’s work on gender issues, please contact Regina Corletey, Gender Officer, Kuapa Kokoo, by sending an email message to: corletey1@yahoo.com.

References

1 Source: Kuapa Kokoo, 26 May 2010, personal communication.
3 Kuapa Kokoo, 26 May 2010.
5 Source: interview with Regina Corletey, Gender Officer, Kuapa Kokoo, 10 December 2009.
6 Regina Corletley interview, 10 December 2009.
8 Regina Corletley interview, 10 December 2009.
9 Source: interview with Chris Penrose-Buckley, Producer Partnership Programme Manager, Twin, 8 October 2009.
10 Regina Corletley interview, 10 December 2009.
12 Regina Corletley interview, 10 December 2009.
13 Kuapa Maa – “Emaa PaPa Paa” (2009?).
14 Regina Corletley interview, 10 December 2009.
16 Regina Corletley interview, 10 December 2009.
17 Kuapa Kokoo, 26 May 2010.
20 ISODEC, An impact assessment of the Kuapa Kokoo (2007)
21 With the exception of activities supported by the Gender Programme: see “Challenges Met by Kuapa’s Gender Initiatives, and How They Have Been Overcome” in this case study.
22 Source: interview with women at Asasua Kokote village, Offinso District, Ashanti Region, 10 December 2009.
23 Source: interview with members of women’s group at Bipoa village, Ashanti Region, 11 December 2009.
24 Kuapa Maa – “Emaa PaPa Paa” (2009?).
25 Regina Corletley interview, 10 December 2009.
26 Kuapa Maa – “Emaa PaPa Paa” (2009?).
28 Women’s group interview, Bipoa, 11 December 2009.
29 Women’s group interview, Bipoa, 11 December 2009.
30 Kuapa Kokoo, 26 May 2010.
31 Regina Corletley interview, 10 December 2009.
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33 Asasua Kokote village interview, 10 December 2009.
34 This benefit was also mentioned by women members interviewed at Asasua Kokote village, Offinso District, 10 December 2009.
35 Regina Corletley interview, 10 December 2009.
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Case Study 3:  
EPK Outgrower Empowerment Project, Kenya

“To improve productivity and quality, we make sure we train the women as well as the men. Why? Because female family members play a key role in plucking the tea.”

Leah Kibii, EPK General Manager, Client Operations (responsible for management of the EPK outgrower scheme)

The Eastern Produce Kenya Outgrower Empowerment Project (EKP-OEP) is a smallholder-owned company that was set up in 2005/6 by a group of outgrowers who supply the tea company Eastern Produce Kenya. EKP-OEP was established to manage and disburse funds that are received from Fairtrade premiums following Fairtrade certification. The project uses these funds to upgrade production skills and capacity, as well as provide social services to its members. From the outset, EPK-OEP has made efforts to ensure that women as well as men benefit from the training, extension services, and social projects that it provides. It has also encouraged male outgrowers to give a portion of their tea farms to their wives, thus facilitating more women to become outgrowers in their own right. Although the EPK-OEP structure is atypical, this case study nevertheless provides useful lessons for all food companies that have smallholder contract farming schemes. It shows what such companies can do to ensure that the opportunities and services that are provided by these schemes benefit women as well as men smallholders.

Background Information

Geographic Focus: Kenya

Commodity or Crop Focus: Tea

Companies and Organizations Involved

Eastern Produce Kenya Ltd. (EPK)

Eastern Produce Kenya Ltd. (EPK) is part of Camellia Plc, a U.K.-registered international company with wide-ranging business interests. Camellia has tea operations in four countries including Kenya and is currently one of the largest tea producers in the world.

EPK has been operating in the Nandi district, Western Highlands, in Kenya since 1957, producing and exporting high-quality black tea through auction and direct sales. EPK sources its tea primarily from its own plantations, but since the 1980s has also been buying green leaf from smallholder outgrowers. In 2005/6, EPK assisted its outgrowers to set
up the Outgrower Empowerment Project and continues to provide ongoing technical advice and support to the project.³

**EPK Outgrower Empowerment Project (EPK-OEP)**

EPK-OEP was set up by EPK outgrowers in 2005/6 following its certification by Fairtrade Labelling Organizations International (FLO) as a Fairtrade producer. It currently has 5,200 members, all of whom are outgrowers to EPK (although not all EPK outgrowers are members of OEP). Since 2006, 70 percent of its Fairtrade premiums have been set aside for the purchase of the Siret factory, one of the factories that is currently owned by EPK.⁴ The remaining premium funds are spent on a range of social projects (25 percent) and administration (5 percent).

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**Women's Constraints Addressed by the Case Study Initiatives**

Women tend not to own or inherit land under the traditional land tenure practices of the local Nandi communities. This has prevented most women from formally registering as tea farmers and outgrowers in their own right.⁵ At the same time, women play a key role in smallholder tea farming as family labor: female household members of male outgrowers do much of the work on the tea farms, including the plucking (harvesting) and transporting of the tea leaves to the collection sheds.⁶,⁷

**Measures and Activities Undertaken to Support Women and Increase Women’s Participation**

**Encouraging and Supporting Women to Become Members of EPK-OEP**

EPK-OEP has implemented the following activities to encourage more women to become members in their own right:

- EPK-OEP has clearly communicated to smallholders that it welcomes female as well as male outgrower members.⁸
- During its education meeting with smallholders, EPK-OEP directors have encouraged male members to swear affidavits to give some of their land to their wives. This allows the wives to register formally as tea farmers and has been a key factor leading to the increase in women's membership of both OEP and the EPK outgrower scheme in recent years.⁹

**Supporting Women’s Representation in Governance Structures**

EPK-OEP currently specifies that at least one of the five representatives on each of their six zonal committees is female. EPK-OEP plans to further strengthen women’s representation on their committees.¹⁰,¹¹

**Ensuring that Women Benefit from Training as Well as Men**

EPK-OEP has made the following efforts to ensure that women as well as men can benefit from its training programs:

- EPK-OEP proactively invites women as well as men to attend its training sessions, welcoming wives of male members as well as women who are members in their own right.
- For its recent integrated training program for members, EPK-OEP adopted specific measures to ensure that a proportion of the farmer-trainers were female. For example, to take account of women’s lower education levels, EPK-OEP adapted the trainer selection criteria for women, lowering the education and academic requirements and placing greater emphasis on women’s level of community participation instead.¹²
Supporting Women to Enhance Food Security and Income-Earning Opportunities

As part of its integrated training program for members, EPK-OEP is training and supporting women to establish kitchen gardens. These mixed vegetable gardens, which can be established on small plots of land and require no external inputs, have been introduced as a means to improve household nutrition and food security as well as provide extra income for these women.13,14

Impacts on Women in Smallholder Communities

The activities described above have led to the following positive impacts for women in the EPK outgrower communities:

• **An increase in women who own tea farms in their own right.** Women’s membership in OEP has grown from 2 percent of OEP membership in 2005/6, to 13 percent in 2009.15 This has largely been a result of OEP encouraging its male members to give a portion of their land to their wives,16 which has in turn allowed the wives to register as members in their own names.

• **Eight out of 30 farmer-trainers are women.** Of the 30 farmer-trainers who were selected to train smallholder members about tea husbandry and other skills, eight of the trainers are women.

• **At least 2,200 women farmers have received OEP training on tea husbandry, record-keeping, and other skills.**17

• **Women farmers have benefited from training on record-keeping.** Women who attended OEP training sessions particularly valued the training that they received about record-keeping, because it helps them assess which of their multiple income-earning activities are most profitable, allowing them to concentrate their efforts.18

• **Women farmers have increased productivity after receiving training on plucking.**

• **Kitchen gardens have generated multiple benefits for women and their families.** 100 smallholders have adopted kitchen gardens so far, with a target to support a further 200 farmers to establish gardens by the end of 2010.19 Women trainers who were interviewed verified that women receive multiple benefits from the gardens. They no longer need to worry about buying vegetables for the family, which is a bonus, especially during the dry season. The use of mulch decreases the need for irrigation, which means less time spent fetching water; and the fact that no agricultural inputs are needed saves them money. Moreover, some of the women have been able to earn extra income from selling surplus vegetables that they produce.20,21

Commercial Benefits for EPK-OEP

Women’s active participation in training sessions has led to increased productivity. A woman farmer reported that taking part in training on tea husbandry had helped her and other women better understand the importance of quality and of good planning. In the past they plucked only once a month, but after receiving the training they learned that they can pluck up to three times a month. This has led to significant increases in productivity on their farms.22

Moreover, EPK-OEP has found that women tend to be more committed members than men, and are less likely to renege on their membership obligations. As Wilson Tuwei, Chair of EPK-OEP, reports, “At EPK-OEP, only men request a reduction or temporary stoppage of their monthly share deductions. [In contrast,] we have never encountered women either withdrawing from membership, or suspending or reducing their monthly contributions.”
APPENDIX 1: Case Study No. 3 (EPK OEP)

Relevance, Lessons, and Opportunities for Other Companies

This case study is relevant to all food companies that have smallholder outgrower schemes in Africa. Although the EPK-OEP structure is unusual, all of the measures that the company has taken to encourage women's participation could be replicated by outgrower management teams in other food production companies. Specifically, the EPK-OEP experiences provide useful practical guidance about how companies can:

- Increase women's membership and participation in mixed producer groups (see Section 3 of the guide).
- Ensure that training and extension services provided by the company will benefit women as well as men (see Section 4.2 of the guide).
- Support alternative income-generating activities for women (see Section 6.5 of the guide).

In particular, this case study demonstrates that it is quite possible for companies and organizations that have no specific gender or development skills to devise and implement effective measures to support women's participation. The approach and activities that are described here were initiated and led internally; no external partner organizations (other than Eastern Produce Kenya) have been involved in their design or implementation. 23

Further Information

For further information about the EPK Outgrower Empowerment Project, contact Mr. Wilson Tuwei, Chair, EPK-OEP, by sending an email message to: epkoep@hotmail.com

References

2. Sources: interview with Robert Goose (Operations Director), Leah Kibii (General Manager – Clients Operations), and Jacob Katah, Eastern Produce Kenya Limited, 20 January 2010, Nandi Hills.
4. EPK agreed that OEP could pay for the factory in installments over a seven-year period; currently OEP owns 41 percent of the factory.
5. However, practices are slowly changing with modernization and more women are now able to own, and in some cases inherit, land.
11. Source: email from Wilson Tuwei, Chair, EPK-OEP, 10 November 2009.
15. Source: figures provided by Wilson Tuwei, Chairman of OEP.
16. Interviews with women members of OEP revealed that women had received land from their husbands due to encouragement from OEP. Leah Kibii confirmed that this trend was largely responsible for the increase in female membership of OEP.
17. Source: figures quoted by OEP accountant at meeting with OEP, 20 January 2010, Nandi Hills. Women represented 20 percent of the total 11,000 farmers trained by OEP.
19. EPK, Corporate Social Responsibility report.
23. The exception is the kitchen gardens, where an expert consultant has been used to train farmer-trainers.
Case Study 4: Finlays FRICH Project, Kenya

“From our experience, female committee representatives tend to be better leaders than the men. For example, if there is a dispute with one of the outgrowers, female representatives are more likely to be transparent about the source of the problem and to help resolve the dispute.”

David Kirui, Outgrower Manager, Finlays Kenya

Finlays, in collaboration with the Co-operative Group (U.K.) and other noncorporate partners, is supporting a project that aims to secure long-term sustainable livelihoods for Finlays’ 8,000 smallholder tea outgrowers in Kenya, through improving their market access and self-sufficiency. Specifically, the FRICH project will support the outgrowers to form cooperatives, diversify into other (non-tea) cash crops, and work toward Fairtrade certification. From the outset, the project has encouraged women’s membership and participation in the new cooperatives, including taking measures to ensure equal representation of women and men in the cooperative governance structures. The project is also supporting the development of alternative income-generating opportunities for women and other household members of outgrowers. The FRICH project provides useful lessons for all food companies that source directly from smallholders, including those that have outgrower or other contract farming schemes.

Background Information

Geographic Focus: Kenya

Commodity or Crop Focus: Tea

About the FRICH Project

This two-year project is funded jointly by Finlays, the Co-operative Group (of the U.K.), and the Food Retail Industry Challenge Fund (“FRICH”) of the U.K. government’s Department for International Development (www.dfid.gov.uk), with additional support from three other organizations. The FRICH project was officially launched in October 2009, so it is still in the early stages of implementation. Nevertheless, at the time of the field research (January 2010) the following steps had already been taken:1,2

- A dedicated local project manager had recently been appointed.
- The Co-operative College (of the U.K.) had worked with the Co-operative College of Kenya (CCK) to develop draft training materials for the new cooperatives. Topics covered by the training include the roles and responsibilities of...
the management committee, good governance, financial management, the functioning of the global tea market, and new market opportunities.

- CCK had also made progress on supporting the development of the first cooperative. They had delivered initial awareness-raising and training to the outgrowers, overseen the election of an interim committee to spearhead the cooperative registration process, worked with the smallholders to develop the cooperative bylaws, and submitted the application for registration of the cooperative to the Kenyan government.

Companies and Organizations Involved

Finlays

Founded in 1750, Finlays is a wholly owned subsidiary of the Swire Group. It has extensive tea and horticultural interests in East Africa and Sri Lanka as well as global trading, packaging, and extraction activities, with primary markets in the U.K. and the United States. Finlays employ over 50,000 people worldwide.

Finlays’ Kenyan operations are based in Kericho, in southwest Kenya. In Kenya, the company employs over 15,000 people on their estates and produces 23 million kilograms (kgs) of made tea per year. For some time Finlays in Kenya has been sourcing indirectly from smallholders via middlemen, but two years ago it established a formal outgrower scheme and started buying directly from smallholders; it also increased the scale of smallholder sourcing. The company now has 8,000 smallholder outgrowers who are organized into 139 buying centers in six regions around their estates. The outgrower scheme currently supplies approximately 32 percent of their green leaf. Finlays decided to support the FRICH project in order to promote good relations with the local communities, and to help secure long-term supply of smallholder tea. With the backdrop of the recent civil unrest in Kericho and other parts of Kenya, Finlays believed that the FRICH project would help give local communities a sense of ownership in the company’s outgrower scheme, and so discourage them from disrupting company operations. Moreover, Finlays was concerned that the smallholders’ increasing concentration on tea at the expense of other crops would ultimately threaten Finlays’ future supply of green leaf, because an overreliance on one crop makes the smallholders extremely vulnerable to pests and diseases, tea price fluctuations, and other external shocks. Finlays could therefore see potential business benefits from investing in crop and income diversification for their outgrower communities.

Finlays’ roles and contribution to the FRICH project include the provision of in-kind support (such as provision of office space and facilities for the project manager, coordination of meetings with outgrowers, and supply of accommodation and travel for project partners), as well as the delivery of specific training components (for example training on tea quality, good agricultural practice, food security, and energy-saving techniques).

Co-operative Group (U.K.)

The Co-operative Group is a group of U.K. businesses that are owned and run by their members, with a long-standing history of supporting fair trade. The business interests of the Co-operative Group include food retail, financial and legal services, travel, and healthcare (see www.co-operative.coop). The group has an international development fund that it uses to support community and cooperative development projects in its overseas supply chains. In addition to providing financial support to the FRICH project through this fund, the group’s supermarkets also provide a potential market for the outgrowers’ tea and other products after Fairtrade certification is achieved.

Co-operative College (U.K.)

The Co-operative College (U.K.) is an educational charity founded in 1919 (see www.co-op.ac.uk). It serves the cooperative sector globally as well as in the U.K. The college was instrumental in developing the concept for the FRICH project, because the project in part grew out of discussions between the college and the Co-operative Group about establishing a cooperative-to-cooperative trading and development project with one of the group’s fair trade suppliers. The college is now providing technical support to the Co-operative College of Kenya, by helping the Kenyan college to develop the training for the new farmer cooperatives; it has also played a key role in ensuring women’s representation in the cooperatives’ governance structures.

Africa Now

Africa Now is an international development nongovernmental organization (NGO) that supports smallholder producers in Africa through helping them access finance, produce better products, and access new and better markets. A key part of their approach is to develop partnerships with the private sector, in recognition that linking small-scale producers to appropriate companies can be an effective route to improving their economic well-being.

Africa Now also played a key role in developing the FRICH project in its early stages and is now the lead implementing organization in Kenya. Their Kenya office is coordinating in-country project activities, recruiting and managing the project manager, and conducting monitoring and evaluation activities. Africa Now is also responsible for supporting the cooperatives to achieve Fairtrade certification, as well as for delivering training to the outgrowers on livelihood diversification.
Co-operative College of Kenya

Established initially in 1952 to provide training to government cooperative inspectors, the Co-operative College now provides cooperative education, training, and information to the cooperative movement and other stakeholders, both nationally and internationally.¹⁷

In terms of the FRICH project, the Co-operative College Kenya (CCK) is responsible for providing training and support to Finlays' outgrowers on the formation and initial running of the new cooperatives, with advice and support from the Co-operative College in the U.K.¹⁸

The Case Study

Scope of the Case Study

This case study focuses primarily on the specific measures and activities that are being undertaken by the FRICH project to help ensure that women benefit fully from its services and activities. The case study also covers certain policies that have been adopted by the Finlays outgrower management team in Kenya, independently of (and prior to) the FRICH project—measures that have helped ensure that women can participate in and benefit from their wider outgrower scheme.

Women’s Constraints Addressed by the Case Study Initiatives

Both corporate and noncorporate stakeholders that are involved in the FRICH project recognized that women in the outgrower communities generally faced greater constraints than men and that therefore the FRICH project should take specific measures to ensure that women and men have equal access to the project’s services and benefits. Outgrowers and project stakeholders identified the following specific constraints faced by women in Finlays' outgrower communities:

- Women typically provide a substantial proportion of the labor on tea outgrower farms. However, few women own land, and women typically have little say in how the income derived from crop sales is allocated or spent.¹⁹,²⁰
- Specifically, a third of the households that are involved in the outgrower scheme are effectively female-headed households, where men have migrated to work off the farm and have left their wives to tend the tea crops. However, these farms still are often registered in the man’s name, and often the contracts with Finlays are also drawn up in the husband’s name. As a result, the income from tea sales is typically paid to the husband rather than to the female farmer.²¹
- Across Kenya, a significant proportion of cooperative members are female, but few women tend to be represented on cooperative committees or boards. For example, one survey of agricultural cooperatives in Kenya showed that women made up only 9 percent of management.²²

Company Interest in Supporting Women and Increasing Women’s Participation

Finlays representatives identified the following business reasons for supporting women’s participation both in the project and in its wider outgrower scheme:

- Because a significant proportion of their outgrower members are women, it is important to have female representatives on the outgrower committees to ensure that women members’ voices are heard.
- Because Finlays has a policy of non-discrimination on its Kenya estate, this policy should also be extended to its treatment of outgrowers.²³
- Finlays’ experience in Kenya is that although women tend to spend their money on their family and community, men are more likely to spend money on alcohol and other personal entertainment. Therefore, if more of the income from tea goes to women, there will be benefits in terms of increased social stability, and this in turn will benefit Finlays as well as the local communities.²⁴

Female outgrowers packing green leaf (fresh tea leaves) for transportation to Finlay's collection sheds. A third of the 8,000 households involved in Finlays' outgrower scheme are effectively headed by women.
Measures and Activities Undertaken to Support Women

Finlays Activities Prior to (and Independent of) the FRICH Project

Prior to the establishment of the FRICH project, Finlays in Kenya had already adopted certain general measures to encourage women’s participation across all areas of their outgrower scheme.

- In all of their 139 outgrower buying centers, Finlays specified from the outset that at least one out of the three buying center committee representatives must be female.25,26

- In terms of membership eligibility, any farmers who have control over the land they are farming can register as outgrowers. They do not need to have formal land rights, so women farmers who have been informally allocated land by their husband or other male relative can join the scheme.27

FRICH Project Activities

This section describes the measures that have been taken within the FRICH project to encourage women’s participation in the new cooperatives and in other project activities.

Encouraging Women’s Membership And Active Participation In The New Cooperatives

- For the initial cooperative awareness-raising sessions that were carried out with outgrowers from 16 buying centers in the first outgrower area, the Co-operative College of Kenya (CCK) divided smallholders into the following four focus groups for all discussions: young women, young men, older women, and older men. Based on 20 years’ experience of working with farmer cooperatives in Kenya, the CCK representative who was responsible for the work has found that dividing farmers into age and gender groups is essential to ensure that everyone’s views get heard, because women do not tend to express their views freely in a mixed-gender group.28

- For similar reasons, further training on cooperatives to be conducted by CCK will also be delivered in age- and gender-specific groups. For example, CCK will first train all young female buying center representatives in one group; these representatives will then be responsible for training all young women members within their respective buying centers.29

- The membership eligibility criteria for the cooperatives will be such that anyone who has been assigned land where they have control of the produce can join the cooperative in his or her own right. Possession of land title is not necessary. This should mean that most adults, including women, can join in their own right.30

- For each household that is effectively headed by a woman, the project will insist that the woman registers with the cooperative in her own name, and not in the name of an “absentee” husband or male relative. If the husband or male relative does not consent to this, the project will try to ensure that the household is not accepted as a cooperative member.31

Ensuring That Women Are Represented In Cooperative Governance Structures

For the first cooperative, the following structures and quotas have been agreed to ensure fair representation of women (and youth) in all levels of the cooperative’s governance:

- The first cooperative will be made up of 16 buying centers, each of which in turn comprises about 100 outgrowers. Each buying center will have four elected representatives, of which one must be a young woman (under 25 years of age), one a young man (under 25), one an older woman, and one an older man. Finlays has agreed to modify the existing buying center committee structures to meet these new requirements.32,33

- The buying centers will then be clustered into four “electoral zones,” each of which will elect one woman and one man to the cooperative management committee. The management committee will consist of nine representatives overall: the four men and four women elected by the four electoral zones, plus one additional place reserved for a youth representative (either male or female).34

Other Support For Women In Outgrower Communities

Building on Eastern Produce Kenya’s success in this area (see Appendix 1, Case Study 3), the FRICH project will also be training and supporting women in their outgrower communities to establish kitchen gardens. These mixed vegetable gardens, which can be established on small pieces of land and with no external inputs, are being introduced as a means to improve household nutrition and food security, as well as to provide extra income for these women.35

Impacts on Women in Smallholder Communities

Because the project started in October 2009 (only four months before the field research was conducted), as yet few project impacts could be identified. Nevertheless, the following concrete achievements of the FRICH project and the wider Finlays outgrower scheme can be reported:

- Nearly a third (29 percent) of Finlays’ outgrowers are female, indicating that the membership eligibility criteria for Finlays’ outgrower scheme are flexible enough to allow a significant number of women to participate.36

- The draft bylaws prepared by CCK for the first cooperative, which stipulate equal representation of women and men on
buying center committees and on the overall cooperative management committee, have been accepted and approved by the prospective cooperative membership.  

- The current interim committee, which has been formed to oversee the cooperative registration process and the election of the first full management committee, has significant female representation (two out of the six committee members are women).

Challenges Encountered in Supporting Women’s Participation, and How They Have Been Overcome

When CCK introduced the draft cooperative bylaws to the prospective membership of the first cooperative, CCK met with some resistance to the proposed quotas for representation of women and youth on the cooperative governance bodies. Some outgrowers (older men) felt that they should not have quotas and should instead be able to choose whomever they wanted without any restrictions.

CCK managed to overcome this resistance and get the bylaws approved, by convincing the detractors that it was in their interests to allow women and youth onto the cooperative committees. CCK persuaded them that it was necessary to have young people involved to ensure the long-term survival of the committees—if all the committee members are old, who will take over when they are gone? CCK also convinced the men that it was important to have female representatives, because many of the members are women and their views need to be represented.

Commercial Benefits of Promoting Women’s Participation

In terms of measures taken by the FRICH project to support women’s participation, it was also too early in the process for Finlays to be able to identify any potential commercial benefits involved. However, Finlays’ outgrower management team reported the following commercial benefits from ensuring women’s participation in their wider outgrower scheme:

- Women members have played a key role in helping Finlays establish and expand its outgrower scheme. When Finlays first set up the scheme, women were the first to sign up, recognizing the longer-term benefits of supplying Finlays. In contrast, male smallholders were reluctant to join: rather than making an upfront commitment to supply Finlays, they preferred instead to continue selling to the middlemen who buy green leaf on a more ad hoc basis. It was the women who eventually persuaded the men to join the scheme, convincing them of the benefits to be gained from membership, including higher price, accurate weighing, and prompt collection of green leaf.

- In the experience of Finlays’ outgrower management team, it is “very noticeable” that women outgrowers supply better-quality tea (green leaf) than the men. In their opinion, this is because women are in general more diligent and committed.

- Also based on their experience, female representatives on committees tend to be better at “leadership” than the men. For example, if there is a problem or dispute with an outgrower member, female representatives are more likely to reveal the sources of the problem and to help resolve the dispute. In contrast, male representatives are often reluctant to share too much information with “a company.”

Relevance, Lessons, and Opportunities for Other Companies

This case study provides relevant lessons for all food companies that source directly from smallholders, including those that have outgrower or other contract farming schemes. In particular, it provides useful guidance on how to:

- Encourage more women to join outgrower and contract farming schemes (see Section 3.2 of the guide).
• Increase women’s participation in the governance of outgrower schemes and producer groups (see Section 3.3 of the guide).

In particular, the project’s success in enforcing and gaining acceptance for the gender (and age) quotas in buying center and cooperative management committees demonstrates what can be achieved when a new scheme or producer group is being established.

Moreover, the product quality, leadership, and membership recruitment gains reported by Finlays’ outgrower team in Kenya clearly demonstrate the potential commercial benefits of encouraging female membership and participation in a company’s outgrower scheme.

Finally, the FRICH project provides an interesting example of how multiple corporate and noncorporate partners can be brought together to deliver a smallholder support project with gender equality components. As the project progresses, it will undoubtedly provide useful lessons about how to ensure effective implementation of such complex, multistakeholder projects.

Further Information

For further information about the FRICH Project, contact Dr. Samantha Lacey, Researcher, Co-operative College (U.K.), by sending an email message to: sam@co-op.ac.uk.

For further information about the Finlays Kenya outgrower scheme, please contact Mr. David Kirui, Outgrower Manager, at: david.kkirui@finlays.co.ke.

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3 Source: www.finlays.net.

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18 Dismus Orodi interview, 19 January 2010.

19 David Otieno interview, 19 January 2010.


21 Michael Pennant-Jones interview, 4 July 2009.


23 David Kirui et al. interview, 21 January 2010.

24 Michael Pennant-Jones interview, 4 July 2009.

25 Dr. Samantha Lacey interview, 23 December 2009.

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32 Dr. Samantha Lacey interview, 23 December 2009.

33 Dismus Orodi interview, 19 January 2010.

34 Dismus Orodi interview, 19 January 2010.

35 Dr. Samantha Lacey interview, 23 December 2009.

36 However, as Finlays and other project partners recognize, there is room for improvement in terms of ensuring that all of these women are registered in their own names and are the ones who sign the contracts and receive payments.

37 Dismus Orodi interview, 19 January 2010.

38 Dr. Samantha Lacey interview, 23 December 2009.

39 Dr. Samantha Lacey interview, 23 December 2009.

40 Finlays outgrowers interview, 22 January 2010.

41 Dismus Orodi interview, 19 January 2010.
Twin, a U.K.-based fair trade membership organization that encompasses both trading and capacity-building operations, was centrally involved in the formation of Gumutindo Coffee Cooperative Enterprise Ltd. (GCCE) in 2003. Twin has been buying coffee from and supporting the development of the GCCE cooperative union ever since. When GCCE was formed, Twin successfully negotiated with the founding farmers to put in place quotas for women’s representation in GCCE’s governance structures, as well as policies for proactively recruiting female staff members. More recently, Twin has been supporting GCCE to develop a separate supply chain and market for women’s coffee, and is also exploring how to increase women’s membership in the organization overall. This case study provides useful lessons for all food companies that source from or support smallholder producer organizations and outgrower schemes.

**Background Information**

**Geographic Focus:** Uganda

**Commodity or Crop Focus:** Coffee

**Organizations and Companies Involved**

**Gumutindo Coffee Cooperative Enterprise Ltd. (GCCE)**

GCCE is a cooperative union of 10 primary societies located in the Mount Elgon area in Eastern Uganda, with a total membership of just under 7,000 producer members. They currently produce about 500 tonnes (approximately $2 million [U.S.]) of clean coffee a year (2008/9 figures). 95 percent of their coffee is exported, mainly to Europe and the United States, all of which is sold as fair trade. A large proportion of the coffee is also certified and sold as organic. The remaining 5 percent of the (lower-grade) coffee is sold to the domestic market (not fair trade). Aside from Twin, GCCE receives funding and support from a number of other external organizations; for example, Lutheran World Relief is sponsoring Coffee Quality Promoters to work with farmers to improve productivity and quality.¹

**Gumutindo Management Agency Ltd. (GMA)**

GMA is an employee-owned limited company contracted by GCCE to perform most of the central operational services that are required to run the cooperative union's trading activities (for example, farmer extension, sorting, quality control, and accounting). Currently employing around 40 permanent staff, GMA was set up as a separate legal entity when GCCE was

¹ Lutheran World Relief is sponsoring Coffee Quality Promoters to work with farmers to improve productivity and quality.
formed, in a bid to guard against the management weaknesses that have typically plagued larger cooperatives in Uganda. GMA is paid a fixed fee by GCCE to deliver a predetermined set of services that are reviewed on an annual basis. GMA also receives a margin on the value of GCCE export contracts, and therefore has a financial incentive to maximize GCCE’s performance.2

Twin
Established in 1985, Twin is a producer-owned membership organization that is dedicated to developing the fair trade supply chain for coffee and other products, with an emphasis on establishing long-term trading relationships with marginalized producers. As well as actually buying product from member producers through their trading arm (Twin Trading), Twin also provides training and capacity-building to the producer organizations. In addition, Twin conducts broader policy and awareness-raising work in the U.K.3

Twin’s Engagement with Gumutindo
Twin has played a central role throughout Gumutindo’s history. Twin had been buying fair trade coffee from Bugisu Cooperative Union Ltd. (BCU), which also operates in the Mount Elgon area, since the mid-1990s. However, following a visit to BCU in 1997 that highlighted a number of problems, including poor traceability and quality standards, Twin negotiated with BCU to set up the Gumutindo Project. The aim of the project was to work with a selective group of farmers to produce higher-quality coffee,4 while ensuring that fair trade premiums were traceable and used for legitimate purposes. In 2003, BCU lost its Fairtrade certification, which left the Gumutindo Project unable to sell its coffee as Fairtrade. This prompted Twin and the project members to set up GCCE as a new cooperative union and legal entity in its own right, with a license to export coffee directly. Twin has since continued to source from and support GCCE.

In 2007/8, Twin also entered into a formal marketing agreement with Gumutindo, whereby Twin has undertaken to find the best markets for GCCE in return for a percentage commission on each successful contract. This agreement has allowed GCCE to access new markets and secure significant increases in average prices.5

The Case Study

Scope of the Case Study
This case study covers measures and activities that have been implemented by Twin and GCCE staff and members to:

- Support women’s representation in Gumutindo’s governance structures.

- Encourage recruitment of female staff members to GMA.

- Increase women’s membership of GCCE primary societies.

- Help access new markets and secure higher prices for women farmers, by marketing women’s coffee as a separate product.

Women’s Constraints Addressed by the Case Study Initiatives

The gender initiatives that were implemented by Twin and GCCE have sought to address the following constraints:

- Women do the majority of the work on coffee farms, but receive few of the benefits. For example, male as well as female members of the Nasufwa primary society (a GCCE member society) reported that 90 percent of the work on members’ coffee farms is done by women. However, men often don’t share the coffee income with their wives, nor do they consult the women about how the money is spent.6

- Few women are members of GCCE. Less than 12 percent of GCCE members (725) are women. This is largely because few women own coffee trees in their own right. (Ownership of coffee trees is a prerequisite for becoming a member of a GCCE primary society.)

- Women are typically underrepresented in the governance structures of African cash crop cooperatives.7

Measures and Activities Undertaken to Support Women and Increase Women’s Participation

Encouraging Women’s Participation in Governance
When GCCE was established, Twin successfully negotiated with the founding members to incorporate the following gender policies into the organization’s rules of operation:

- Primary society boards must have at least two female members (out of a total of between five and nine board members).8

- Half of the GCCE Board members must be women: four of the eight members of the cooperative union’s board must be female.9

- Female staff members should be recruited wherever possible (for GMA).10

Increasing Women’s Membership in GCCE Primary Societies
As yet, Twin and GCCE have not made any systematic attempts to increase women’s membership in GCCE societies.11 However, the Nasufwa primary society has set up its own initiative to recruit female members, following encouragement from the society’s ex-chairman after he
Improving Opportunities for Women in Smallholder-based Supply Chains

APPENDIX 1: CASE STUDY NO. 5 (GUMUTINDO)

Case Study No. 5 (Gumutindo): Improving Opportunities for Women in Smallholder-based Supply Chains

Farmer gets paid and resolves that she will not give the money to her husband: after all, they represent the fruits of her own labor!

Scene 4: Later, the woman is talking to her husband. To her surprise, her husband tells her to keep the money: “You can decide how to spend it. If you let me decide, I will spend it all on alcohol!”

Marketing Women’s Coffee

Twin recently started working with existing women’s groups, such as micro-credit groups and AIDS awareness groups, in several African countries to develop and market women’s coffee, aiming to sell the product into the high-value end of the market including the specialty coffees, fair trade, and organic sectors. This work had been prompted by Twin’s previous experience in Rwanda, where they separated out women’s coffee and succeeded in selling 20 bags (1,200 kilograms) at a premium of 20 cents per pound—twice the standard Fairtrade premium.

Gumutindo is part of this women’s coffee initiative. Based on market interest and with encouragement from Twin, Gumutindo has started to collect, process, store, and market women’s coffee separately—and has already met with some success.

Impacts on Women in Smallholder Communities

Impacts of Governance and Staffing Measures

- Quotas for women’s participation in governance have been effective. All of the 10 primary society boards have two women representatives, and the GCCE Board has equal representation of men and women (four men and four women).
- Women are well represented on the GMA management team. Until January 2010, three members of the GMA management team—the deputy managing director, coffee quality officer, and accountant—were young women. This is very unusual for an African cash crop organization. Moreover, two other GMA management positions have also previously been held by women (the coffee manager and organic supervisor posts).
- Over a third of GMA’s certification officers (field staff) are female. Six of the 14 current certification officers are women. Certification officers provide the basic link between GCCE and farmer members of the primary societies, with responsibility for recruiting new members, mobilizing farmers for training workshops, providing training on organic farming techniques, and implementing internal control systems.

Nasufwa Women’s Drama Group: A sketch of their play

Scene 1: A woman coffee farmer bewails her poor coffee harvest, despairing at how little income she has received from its sale. Enter her husband, who is clearly drunk. He complains about the poor coffee income, berating his wife.

Scene 2: Enter Jennifer, board member of their GCCE society, who comforts the woman and suggests that she should try organic farming. She takes the woman to visit the farms of several other women who are already practicing organic techniques and shows her how to use cow manure, how to intercrop coffee with fodder crops, and how to dry and ferment the harvested cherries.

Scene 3: The women farmers deliver the organic coffee they have just harvested to the quality controller/collector for their GCCE society. He says that the coffee is very good quality, so he will pay a high price, well above the average market price. The women are happy and surprised, saying they didn’t know there was a cooperative that paid such a good price. The woman organic farmer gets paid and resolves that she will not give the money to her husband: after all, they represent the fruits of her own labor!

Scene 4: Later, the woman is talking to her husband. To her surprise, her husband tells her to keep the money: “You can decide how to spend it. If you let me decide, I will spend it all on alcohol!”

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Impacts of the Nasufwa Women’s Drama Group

The Nasufwa Women’s Drama Group has made significant progress in changing men’s behavior, encouraging more women to join the society and increasing women’s confidence to participate in society activities, as the following examples show.

• One of the women members of the drama group recounted that her husband used to sell all the coffee and pocket all the income himself. Now, he gives her some of the coffee and she keeps the income. The Gumutindo organic certification officer for Nasufwa reported that she had seen this happening more widely: now, more women are coming with their husbands to sell their own coffee.

• A male member of the Nasufwa society (the community’s pastor) reported that, after seeing the drama group’s play, he decided to give a portion of his coffee farm to his wife. When asked why he had done this, he replied, “If she knows she will get the income from it, she will work harder.”

• Other women farmers recounted how some of the men in the village had started drinking less and working harder on their farms.

• Women also reported that becoming involved in the drama group had made them become less shy. As a result, more women are participating in the society meetings.

• Finally, board member Jennifer Wetaka reported that more women have joined the Nasufwa primary society since the drama group has been operational. Women now make up 19 percent of the society’s membership, whereas women represented less than 13 percent of the membership before the drama group was set up. Women confirmed that membership conferred a number of benefits, including a better price, more income, and greater cooperation: women are now helping each other on their farms, for example sharing harvesting. This has saved on costs of hiring labor.\textsuperscript{19,20}

Impacts of Women’s Coffee Initiative

Although it is too early to assess the actual impacts on women’s livelihoods, the success of the women’s coffee initiative in Gumutindo and elsewhere has exceeded Twin’s expectations, and there is growing interest from customers. At Gumutindo, by March 2010 they had already sold 50 bags of the women’s coffee at a premium of 40 cents (U.S.) per pound—four times the standard Fairtrade premium,\textsuperscript{21} and women’s groups in Twin’s partner cooperatives in Rwanda and Congo have sold significantly more coffee than expected.\textsuperscript{22}

Commercial Benefits of Promoting Women’s Participation

The active promotion of women within GCCE is one of a number of innovative characteristics that help to distinguish GCCE from its competitors. GCCE’s activities to support women farmers and promote women’s products help to create a highly differentiated, unique, interesting, and high-quality product, with the people and stories to back them up. These are the qualities that appeal to buyers in the specialty coffee markets.

Challenges in Implementing the Gender Initiatives at GCCE, and How They Have Been Overcome

The challenges that have been encountered in implementing these gender initiatives have included the following:

• Initially, some of the male founders of GCCE tried to dilute the measures that were proposed to ensure equal representation of women on the GCCE Board. They attempted to modify the clause that specifies that four board places should be reserved for women, trying to replace it with a more general clause that would allow...
these positions to be occupied by "women and young people" (thus potentially allowing young men to occupy all four reserved positions). However, Twin was able to persuade the founders to reinstate the initial clause—a situation made easier by the fact that Twin was GCCE’s only major buyer at the time.23

- At the beginning, it was difficult to get women involved in the Nasufwa Drama Group because of their busy schedules. However, women’s interest grew over time as they saw the benefits of involvement and the achievements of the group.24

Relevance, Lessons, and Opportunities for Other Companies

This case study is relevant to:

- All companies that buy directly from smallholder producer organizations or that have their own contract farming schemes.
- Companies that support sustainability certification initiatives that involve smallholder producer groups.

In particular, the Twin/Gumutindo experience provides useful insights on how to:

- Increase women’s membership in producer groups and outgrower schemes (see Section 3.2 of the guide).
- Increase women’s participation in the governance of producer groups (see Section 3.3 of the guide).

Moreover, the use of drama groups could be considered in other producer groups or outgrower schemes as a means of promoting women’s membership and encouraging men to share crops, land, or income with their wives. The Nasufwa Drama Group is planning to perform its play in other Gumutindo societies, to catalyze change more widely within GCCE. It is also keen to film its performance so that the film can be used to raise awareness further afield. Both avenues provide potential ways of scaling up the impact of successful community-level drama groups without having to form and run a drama group in every primary society.

Twin/Gumutindo’s move to include the positive recruitment of female staff as part of GMA’s formal organization policy is also worthy of note. This step, taken early on in the organization’s history, may well pay dividends when Twin/GCCE starts implementing a more systematic women’s membership drive: having a significant number of female staff both at the senior management level and at the field level could prove very helpful in dispersing and sustaining impacts.

Finally, while it remains too early to judge the potential of Twin’s concept of marketing women’s coffee as a separate product, the idea deserves further consideration and will undoubtedly be followed with interest.

Further Information

For further information about Twin and GCCE’s work on gender issues, please contact Andy Carlton, Producer Partnership Programme Manager, Anglophone Africa, Coffee, TWIN, by sending an email message to: aecarlton@gmail.com.

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3 Source: www.twin.org.uk.
4 Gumutindo means “excellent quality” in the local language, Lugisu.
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10 Source: email correspondence from Andy Carlton, 23 October 2009.
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16 Unfortunately, the female accountant has since been replaced.
17 Andy Carlton, 23 October 2009.
19 Source: Nasufwa primary society meeting, 25 January 2010.
20 Source: society data provided by Andy Carlton, 24 May 2010.
21 Note, however, that the price premium obtained here is not directly comparable to the standard Fairtrade premium, in the sense that is was negotiated with an individual buyer and does not carry any restrictions on its use. In contrast, the standard Fairtrade premium is mandated by a globally certified trading system, and is supposed to be used only for development projects that benefit the community.
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Case Study 6: Karagwe District Cooperative Union (KDCU), Tanzania

Twin, a U.K.–based fair trade membership organization that encompasses both trading and capacity-building operations, has been buying coffee from the Karagwe District Cooperative Union (KDCU) in Tanzania since 1995. Alongside the trading relationship, Twin has also provided training and support to KDCU on leadership, quality, and other issues. Twin has used its existing relationship with KDCU to push for increased participation of women in the cooperative union’s membership, governance, and training activities, for example by highlighting gender issues at general training workshops. This case study provides useful lessons for all food companies that source from or support producer organizations or outgrower schemes, showing how they can leverage their commercial relationship with these groups to promote gender equality.

“We do a lot of the work on the farm, but we don’t get any of the benefit. So we steal a small amount of the coffee from our husbands and sell it to get some income.”

Women farmer members of KDCU, Twin/KDCU workshop, December 2004

“We now that I give my wife an equal share of our coffee harvest, we are producing more coffee from the farm. She is working harder now that she knows she will receive half of the proceeds.”

Male farmer, Rwéle village, Karagwe District, Tanzania

Background Information

**Geographic Focus:** Tanzania

**Commodity or Crop Focus:** Coffee

**Organizations and Companies Involved**

*Karagwe District Cooperative Union (KDCU)*

Established in 1990, KDCU comprises 74 primary societies in Karagwe District, Northwest Tanzania. Its 20,000 members mainly produce Robusta coffee, with the remaining 5 percent of output being natural Arabica.

KDCU produces up to 9,000 tonnes of clean coffee per year, which is sold via the Tanzanian Coffee Board auctions in Moshi. 5 to 10 percent of the coffee is sold as fair trade.

*TWIN*

Established in 1985, Twin is a producer-owned membership organization that is dedicated to developing the fair trade supply chain for coffee and other products, with an emphasis on establishing long-term trading relationships with marginalized producers. In addition to buying product from member producers through their trading arm (Twin Trading), Twin also provides training and capacity-building to the producer organizations and conducts broader policy and awareness-raising work in the U.K.
**Twin’s Engagement with KDCU**

Twin started buying coffee from KDCU in 1995 and initiated capacity-building work with the cooperative union in 1998. In 2003, additional financial support was secured from Fair Trade Assistance (FTA, Netherlands—now Fair Trade Original), which enabled Twin to scale up its support to KDCU and run a series of organizational strengthening workshops for member societies.⁶

**The Case Study**

**Scope of the Case Study**

This case study covers the measures and activities that have been implemented by Twin and KDCU to:

- Ensure that women can participate in and benefit from training and capacity-building activities that are provided for KDCU members.
- Raise awareness of gender inequalities among KDCU members.
- Increase women’s membership of KDCU, primarily through encouraging male farmers to give coffee trees to their wives so that they are eligible to join KDCU in their own right.
- Support increased representation of women in KDCU governance structures.

**Women’s Constraints Addressed by the Case Study Initiatives**

Several key constraints are faced by women farmers in KDCU communities:⁴⁻⁵

- Few women own coffee trees or land in their own right. Because membership of KDCU is based on coffee tree ownership, most women are consequently unable to become members and cannot therefore enjoy the benefits of membership, such as direct income from the coffee they produce, higher prices, and training on coffee production.
- Few women are represented in KDCU’s governance structures. Due to cultural norms and women’s lower education levels, many women lack the confidence to stand for election, or do not meet the minimum education requirements (as stipulated by government regulations) to become a committee member. Even when women do stand for election, they are often not elected because men make up the majority of membership and are generally reluctant to elect female committee members.
- Although most coffee farms and coffee trees are owned by men, wives (and other female household members) do the majority of the work on the farms, including cultivation, harvesting, and drying of the coffee. Yet, as the examples below show, women often do not receive any of the income from coffee sales, and have little say in how the income is spent.

**Evidence: Women often see little financial return despite doing much of the work on coffee farms.**

- In one of the 2004 cluster workshops organized by KDCU and Twin, figures provided by the primary societies showed that in some societies there were more non-members than members delivering coffee to the society. When asked why this was the case, participants were initially reluctant to answer. Eventually, however, an irate elderly man stood up and exclaimed, “These [non-members] are our wives! They are stealing our coffee!” Women members confirmed that this was true, explaining, “We do a lot of work on the farm, but we don’t get any of the benefit. So we steal and sell a small amount of the coffee to get some income.”⁶
- In the same workshop, a woman farmer with five children told participants that each year, when she had asked her husband what he had done with the money from selling their coffee, he had beaten her for asking. He told her, “It is not your right to ask. When you married me you brought nothing here with you. The coffee is mine.” Eventually, after 10 years of this, she took her husband to court. The court ruled that her husband should share the coffee income with her. Reluctantly, her husband complied. Several years later, she had saved up enough money to buy her own land.⁷⁻⁸

**Measures and Activities Undertaken to Increase Women’s Participation**

Since 2003, KDCU and Twin have organized a series of capacity-building workshops which, taken together, have succeeded in increasing members’ awareness of gender inequalities, increasing women’s membership and improving women’s participation in governance. Each set of workshops, and the specific techniques used to address gender issues, is described below.
The 2004 Cluster Workshops: Raising Awareness of Women’s Constraints

Using a training approach developed by Twin and FTA, KDCU/Twin organized a series of capacity-building workshops for KDCU members in 2004, with the aim of improving members’ understanding of fair trade markets, quality control, product traceability, and cooperative leadership issues. Each of KDCU’s 67 primary societies was invited to attend one of seven “cluster workshops.” Every society was asked to send six representatives; after attending the workshops, these representatives were in turn expected to “cascade” the training down to other farmers in their societies.

Two key mechanisms were used to encourage women’s participation in these workshops:

- **Use of quotas to ensure women’s attendance.** In addition to specifying that the six representatives per society must include the chairman and secretary manager, the workshop invitations also stipulated that three of the six representatives must be women.

- **Dividing participants into different groups according to their position within the society.** For relevant discussion topics at the workshops, participants were split into five different groups according to their position within the society: (1) chairpersons and KDCU AGM delegates (typically 10 to 15 men); (2) secretary/society managers (typically 10 men); (3) committee members who were not chairpersons, society managers, or AGM delegates (typically up to seven men and three women); (4) ordinary (noncommittee) male members (typically about four to five men); and (5) ordinary female members (typically 25 women). Each of the five groups was given an equal chance to report back on its issues to the other groups.

The use of these two mechanisms helped ensure that women’s voices and issues were well-represented at the events, despite the fact that gender issues were not explicitly included in the workshop agenda. Specifically:

- Ordinary women members represented the largest group in each workshop. Therefore, through strength in numbers, women had the confidence to voice their concerns.

- Because each of the five groups was given a platform to report back on its issues, women’s voices could not be shouted down.

- The nature of the groupings made women’s absence in leadership positions highly visible, and therefore impossible to ignore.

- Finally, the session on leadership issues helped highlight specific areas for action. Women’s poor representation in leadership and their lack of financial benefit from coffee farming were highlighted as critical leadership issues by the women’s groups in five out of the seven workshops.

The visibility that was given to gender issues at the workshops was such that KDCU committed to tackling gender inequality in membership and governance in its ensuing strategic planning process. Moreover, these 2004 cluster workshops helped catalyze an increase in the number of women KDCU AGM delegates and primary society committee members elected to office: between 2004 and 2005, the number of female AGM delegates doubled from nine to 18, and the number of female committee members increased from 18 to 56.

The 2007 Women’s Campaigning Workshop: Supporting Women to Campaign for Increased Gender Equality

Following the 2004 cluster workshops, Twin and KDCU organized a workshop in 2007 that focused specifically on how to increase women’s membership in KDCU. One female representative from each society was invited, with over 70 women attending overall. The workshop encouraged and supported each representative to develop an action plan to take back to their societies, focusing on concrete actions to persuade men to give coffee trees to their wives. This workshop was clearly successful in encouraging at least some of the participants to take action: between 2007/8 and 2008/9, women’s membership increased by 22 percent (from 2,930 to 3,573), compared to only a 4-percent increase in men’s membership during the same period.
The 2009 Cluster Workshops: Encouraging Men to Accept Women as Members and Leaders

In 2009, Twin and KDCU organized a second round of cluster workshops for all KDCU primary societies, using a similar approach to that used for the 2004 workshops. However, for the 2009 workshops, gender issues were explicitly placed on the agenda. During the gender sessions (each about two to three hours’ duration), male and female participants were encouraged to identify:

- The advantages of having more women who own coffee in their own names, of women joining societies, and of women being elected to leadership positions.
- The reasons that the market might be interested in women owning coffee and becoming members in their own right.
- Appropriate targets for women’s membership in their own primary societies.
- Personal targets for each participant, especially actions that he or she could personally take to increase women’s membership and increase the number of female committee members.\(^{19,20}\)

At the time the field research was conducted, relevant data was not yet available to assess the impact of the 2009 workshops.

Impacts on Women in Smallholder Communities

Taken together, the activities described above led to the following concrete improvements in gender equality within KDCU:

- **Significant participation of women in capacity-building activities.** Although some primary societies ignored the stipulations, the quotas for women’s participation were largely effective: on average, 40 to 45 percent of participants who attended the cluster workshops were women.

- **Increase in women’s membership.** Women’s membership in KDCU societies increased by 45 percent between 2004 and 2009 (from 2,463 to 3,573 female members), whereas men’s membership increased by only about 12 percent over the same period. Interviews with women farmer members in 2010 confirmed that KDCU membership conveyed concrete benefits to women, including a better and more secure price, accurate weighing of coffee cherries, and access to credit facilities.\(^{21}\) Nevertheless, although significant progress has been made, women still represent only 18 percent of overall membership.\(^{22,23}\)

- **More men giving coffee to their wives.** The increase in women’s membership is at least partly due to male farmers giving some of their coffee to their wives, in response to exhortation from Twin and KDCU staff.\(^{24,25}\)

- **Increase in number and proportion of female committee and board members.** In 2004, there were only 18 women representatives on KDCU primary society committees, out of a total of about 290 representatives (six percent of the total).\(^{26}\) By 2009, 89 out of the 440 committee representatives were women (20.2 percent), which means that KDCU’s female membership (currently 18 percent of overall members) is now more than proportionately represented on primary society committees.\(^{27}\) At the cooperative union level, one woman was elected to the KDCU board in 2005—the first woman representative since 1998. She has remained on the board since then.\(^{28,29}\)

- **Increase in the number and proportion of female AGM delegates.** In 2004, there were only nine women AGM delegates out of a total 195 delegates (less than five percent of the total).\(^{30}\) By 2009, 21 of the 178 AGM delegates were female, making up 12 percent of the total. However, although this demonstrates some improvement, KDCU’s female membership still remains underrepresented in terms of its participation at AGMs.\(^{31}\)

### Commercial Benefits from Increasing Women’s Membership and Participation

Women and men producer members of KDCU reported that having more female members and committee representatives delivered the following benefits to primary societies:

- Women take better care in cultivation and so produce better-quality coffee.
- Farmers trust female more than male committee representatives, which means that more farmers want to sell coffee to the society if there are female committee members.
- Women go out and explain the benefits of membership to others, thus helping to recruit new society members.
Improving Opportunities for Women in Smallholder-based Supply Chains

APPENDIX 1: CASE STUDY NO. 6 (KDCU)

Relevance, Lessons, and Opportunities for Other Companies

This case study is relevant to all food companies that operate contract farming or outgrower schemes or that buy directly from existing smallholder producer groups. It is also relevant to those companies that support smallholder groups to meet Fairtrade or other sustainability certification standards. Specifically, the case study provides insights on how to:

- Increase women's membership in producer groups and outgrower schemes (see Section 3.2 of the guide).
- Increase women's participation in the governance of producer groups (see Section 3.3 of the guide).
- Ensure that women benefit from training provided by the company (see Section 4.2 of the guide).

Overall, the Twin/KDCU experience clearly demonstrates that buying companies (and other external organizations) can effectively challenge and change gender practices within established producer groups. However, the case study also indicates that:

- It takes time and sustained effort to achieve large-scale and deep-rooted change.
- Securing and allocating adequate resources for regular follow-up, monitoring, and evaluation is important. In particular, a more systematic evaluation of what has helped or hindered progress to date may help to accelerate and deepen the impact of future efforts.
- It is more difficult to instill gender equality principles and practice when working with a long-standing (as opposed to newly-established) producer organization. Thus, where companies are in a position to influence the development of new producer groups or contract farming schemes, this suggests the importance of introducing gender equality principles and mechanisms as early as possible in the process.

Further Information

For further information about Twin's work with KDCU on gender issues, please contact Andy Carlton, Producer Partnership Programme Manager, Anglophone Africa, Coffee, TWIN, by sending an email message to: aecarlton@gmail.com.
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2 Source: www.twin.org.uk.
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13 Andy Carlton interview, 27 January 2010.
15 Source: KDCU society data, August 2009 (data collected from cluster workshops in 2004 and 2009).
16 Source: internal report prepared by Anna Michael, Personnel and Administration Manager, KDCU, 2005.
17 Source: interview with Anna Michael, 28 January 2010, Karagwe, Tanzania.
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25 Source: interview with group of men and women producer members of Rwele primary society, 28 January 2010, Rwele, Karagwe District.
27 KDCU society data, August 2009.
30 Because the annual general meeting (AGM) constitutes KDCU’s main decision-making forum, the proportion of female AGM delegates is an important indication of women’s influence over decision-making.
31 KDCU society data, August 2009.
32 KDCU primary societies interview, 28 January 2010.
33 Rwele primary society interview, 28 January 2010.
34 KDCU primary societies interview, 28 January 2010.
35 Rwele primary society interview, 28 January 2010.
Case Study 7: Bettys & Taylors’ Nyeri training project, Kenya

“The youth aren’t interested in being coffee farmers any more—they see it as an ‘old woman’s crop.’ ”
Christina Longden, Director – Operations, Lorna Young Foundation

“If you want your interventions with smallholders to be effective, whether it’s forging strong commercial relationships or improving quality, you have to know who is doing the work. You need to understand the gender and social dynamics within the smallholder communities you are working with.”
Cristina Talens, Ethical Trading Manager, Bettys & Taylors of Harrogate

Betty's & Taylors of Harrogate is working with a U.K.-based charity and a Kenyan training institute to develop and deliver training on marketing and business skills to two smallholder coffee cooperatives and their members in Nyeri district, Kenya. Through research that they had previously conducted on the sector, Betty's & Taylors had become aware not only of the important role played by women on smallholder coffee farms but also of their lack of visibility in cooperative membership and governance structures. As a result, Betty's & Taylors, together with project partners, is taking various measures to ensure that gender issues will be prioritized in project design and implementation and that women and men farmers will benefit in equal measure from the training. Although the project remains in very early stages, this case study nevertheless provides useful insights for all food companies that support community development projects in key smallholder sourcing regions.

Background Information

Geographic Focus: Kenya

Commodity or Crop Focus: Coffee

About the Nyeri Training Project:

The Nyeri training project was set up in response to the recent liberalization of the coffee sector in Kenya, a move that has created new challenges as well as opportunities for smallholders. Recent research undertaken by Betty's & Taylors, which sought to identify the key social and economic constraints that are faced by smallholders and their workers, highlighted smallholders' lack of knowledge of international coffee markets and lack of general business and marketing skills. The research also identified an ageing population of coffee farmers, with young people increasingly uninterested in coffee farming and choosing alternative income-earning activities instead. Concerned by the implications of these trends for their future supply of Kenyan coffee, Betty's & Taylors saw two needs: first, to increase smallholders' understanding of global markets and supply chains; and second, to engage the youth in coffee farming through introducing them to more “modern” and lucrative production and marketing techniques.

The principal aim of the Nyeri training project is therefore to deliver long-term, bespoke training on marketing, business, governance, and enterprise skills to two coffee cooperatives.
and their smallholder members in Nyeri district (Rumukia and Gikanda cooperatives), with the ultimate aim of achieving higher coffee prices through improved business and negotiation skills. The training will use a “cascade” approach, equipping the initial participants with the necessary training skills to train other farmers in their own areas. The project’s strategic aims also include encouraging empowerment and greater inclusion of women and youth in the cooperative membership and governance structures; addressing the impacts of HIV on farming livelihoods; and fostering “South-South” skill-sharing through the partnership between Ambo University (Ethiopia) and the Nyeri Technical Training Institute (Kenya).³

At the time the field research was conducted, the project had not yet officially started. However, the following preparatory work had already been carried out:

- Bettys & Taylors had conducted a smallholder needs analysis with its suppliers and run a series of workshops with women smallholders.
- Lorna Young Foundation had made three visits to Nyeri and had been working with an independent academic researcher to further investigate the issues faced by the smallholders in Nyeri.
- The Nyeri Technical Training Institute had already established links with the cooperatives and provided them with improved coffee drying tables (as an adjunct to the main project activities).³

Companies and Organizations Involved

**Bettys & Taylors of Harrogate**

Bettys & Taylors is a U.K. company that sources and retails quality teas, coffees, cakes, and confectionery (www.taylorsofharrogate.co.uk). The company has been sourcing coffee from Kenya for over 20 years, primarily through Dormans, one of the leading coffee exporting companies in Kenya. Through Dormans, Bettys & Taylors has been buying coffee from Rumukia and Gikanda cooperatives for over five years. Bettys & Taylors has also had direct contact with both cooperatives through conducting yearly social audits and developing improvement plans, as part of their commitment to ethical trading. This relationship was further deepened when Marks & Spencer decided to increase its offer of Fairtrade coffee; Bettys & Taylors, who supply Marks & Spencer, worked with Rumukia and Gikanda to help them attain Fairtrade certification, thus developing the first Fairtrade coffee supply chain in Kenya.⁶

Bettys & Taylors has provided financial support to the Nyeri training project, as well as background training materials on coffee supply chains.

**Rumukia Farmers Cooperative Society Ltd. and Gikanda Farmers Cooperative Society Ltd.**

Rumukia (comprising eight factories) and Gikanda (three factories) are smallholder coffee cooperatives based in the Nyeri District (Central Highlands, Kenya). They produce some of the highest-quality coffee in Kenya; Gikanda in particular is well-known for the quality of its coffee (branded Kangocho). Both cooperatives are Fairtrade certified, and currently sell about 30 percent of their coffee as Fairtrade.⁷

**Lorna Young Foundation**

The Lorna Young Foundation (LYF) is a U.K. charity that helps smallholder producer organizations in Africa and elsewhere make the transition from growers of raw crops to managers of their own businesses and business relations, helping them add value to the commodities they grow (see www.lyf.org.uk). They also support marginalized communities in the U.K. to set up alternative trading initiatives with producers in developing countries, most recently supporting Oromo Ethiopian refugees in the U.K. to set up their own fair trade coffee enterprise (see www.oromocoffee.org).

LYF is the lead organization for the Nyeri training project, responsible for overseeing project design and implementation.

**Nyeri Technical Training Institute**

The Nyeri Technical Training Institute (NTTI) is a national technical learning institute established under Kenya’s Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology. It offers a variety of courses in business (including marketing management, business administration, and cooperative management), technology, health sciences, computing, and other vocational skills. NTTI is the local implementing organization for the Nyeri training project in Kenya and will be responsible for developing the training curriculum and materials in partnership with Ambo University, as well as delivering the actual training to the cooperatives. NTTI is also supporting the cooperatives through fabrication of improved coffee processing tools and equipment, taking advantage of in-house workshop facilities to produce and sell the equipment at a below-market price.⁸⁹

**Ambo University, Ethiopia**

Established in 1939, Ambo University is a recently independent higher learning institution with particular strengths in research and extension of agricultural technologies (see www.ambou.edu.et). The university has been working closely with Bettys & Taylors, LYF, and other partners to develop and deliver business training to coffee smallholders in Ethiopia. Drawing on its experience from this work, the university will work with NTTI to implement two key aspects of the Nyeri training project: first, it will help to develop the training content and materials for the Kenyan cooperatives, and second, it will help to strengthen the level of female participation.¹⁰
APPENDIX 1: CASE STUDY NO. 7 (BETTYS & TAYLORS)

The Case Study

Scope of the Case Study

This case study covers the specific measures that have been adopted by the Nyeri training project to ensure that women will benefit fully from the project’s services and activities. It also touches on some of the gender challenges that were encountered by Bettys & Taylors and other project partners in a similar training project they are supporting in Ethiopia.

Women’s Constraints Addressed by the Case Study Initiatives

From findings of recent research that they conducted, Bettys & Taylors and other project partners recognize that women face serious restrictions to land ownership, and low literacy and education levels compared to men. These and other constraints mean that:

- Women do much of the work on coffee farms, but are frequently unable to benefit from extension services and direct training opportunities. Their role as primary carers within the family makes it difficult for them to take part in formal programs, if these are not structured to fit around their family responsibilities. Evidence of the arduous work that is carried out by women on smallholder coffee farms is provided below.

Evidence: Women do much of the work on smallholder coffee farms in Nyeri District, Kenya.

Women smallholder coffee farmers (members of Rumukia Cooperative) were asked what constraints women face in coffee farming. They replied that fetching water needed for mixing pesticides, as well as carrying the harvested coffee cherries to the factory, were both traditionally seen as women’s tasks and were not done by men. They described in particular the arduousness of women’s work at harvest time: “We have to get up very early in the morning to pick the cherries—this takes three-quarters of the day. We then have to carry the harvested cherries on our backs—it takes about two hours to walk to the factory. We are old, it is hard work. At the factory, we then have to queue to get the cherries weighed; with only one set of scales, we have to wait a long time, and it is dark by the time we leave the factory. We then have to walk home—another two hours, and when we get home we still have to cook for the family!”

Women members of Rumukia cooperative explain the specific constraints faced by female coffee farmers in Kenya. Women do much of the work on coffee farms, yet they seldom benefit from training and extension services.

- Even where women are actually in charge of coffee farms, they are often not registered as cooperative members in their own names: rather, they are registered under the name of a husband or male relative, such as a husband who has migrated to work in the city, because it is the husband who owns the land.

- Women are typically not well represented in cooperative governance structures. For example, even though roughly a third of the members of Rumukia are women (2,358 women out of a total of 6,500 members), not a single one of the 10 board members is female. This is exacerbated by the fact that many older women themselves believe that men are better at being board members than women, and so prefer to leave men to take on these roles.

The Company’s Interest in Supporting Women and Increasing Women’s Participation

The Bettys & Taylors representative interviewed gave the following reasons for paying attention to gender issues and taking proactive measures to ensure the participation of women farmers in their training project:

- The research they conducted identified many constraints faced by smallholders and their workers, but for Bettys & Taylors the disproportionate constraints faced by women producers and their lack of visibility in cooperative structures stood out as a particular challenge. The company was therefore keen to try to address these issues in their future work with coffee smallholders in Kenya.

- In more general terms, the company representative believed that in order to ensure that the company’s interventions with
smallholders are effective, it is essential to know who is doing the work, and to understand the gender and other social dynamics of the smallholder communities in question. This applies whether the company is trying to deliver training on business skills, implement quality standards, or forge a new commercial relationship with the smallholders.18

Measures and Activities Undertaken to Support Women

The following measures have been taken by project partners to help ensure that (a) women's needs and priorities will be addressed in the training design and content, and (b) female as well as male smallholders will participate in and benefit from the actual training:

- The “empowerment and greater inclusion of women” has been incorporated from the outset into the project’s strategic objectives.19
- LYF’s interest in and experience with gender issues was one of the key reasons that Bettys & Taylors chose it as the lead partner organization.20
- LYF is also planning to bring on board a local women’s nongovernmental organization (NGO) to ensure that women’s specific needs and priorities are effectively addressed. LYF recognizes that it will need local expertise and experience to effectively challenge the cultural and practical barriers that it is likely to encounter in attempting to increase women’s participation.
- LYF has established quotas for women’s participation in the initial needs assessment, the outcomes from which will determine the content of the training as well as the manner in which it is delivered (for example, delivered in situ, with provision of child care facilities). In addition to identifying women’s specific training needs, the needs assessment will also include a broader assessment of women’s skills, community roles, and aspirations.21
- LYF has also stipulated gender quotas for participation in the actual training, specifying that over 50 percent of all trainees must be women. The inclusion of younger as well as older women will also be emphasized, to take into account the differing needs and perspectives of the two groups. The establishment of these quotas has been incorporated into the formal outputs of the project and has also been clearly communicated to NTTI from the outset.22,23
- Because the project will be using a “cascade” (or “train the trainers”) approach, inclusion of women in the initial training courses will help build up a cadre of female farmer-trainers who are equipped to train other women farmers in their local areas. The second level of farmer-to-farmer training also provides the flexibility for training to be delivered in situ, thus helping to make the training more accessible to women farmers whose childcare responsibilities typically restrict them from traveling further afield to attend training.

In addition, LYF hopes that by effectively engaging youth in the training program—and incorporating the discussion of gender issues within the training—the project can start encouraging young men and women to challenge the gender norms of previous generations. Consequently, LYF hopes that the younger generation will adopt new business attitudes and methods of coffee farming that are not only more profitable but also more gender equitable.24

Impacts on Women in Smallholder Communities

Given the very early stage of the project, it is too early to expect any measurable impacts on women farmers. However, one achievement that the project has made so far is to ensure that all partner organizations see the gender equality aims as an integral part of the project: all key contacts at Bettys & Taylors, LYF, and NTTI were clearly well aware of the project’s gender aims and appeared committed to achieving them.

Commercial Benefits of Promoting Women’s Participation

It was too early in the project for Bettys & Taylors to be able to identify any potential commercial benefits involved.

Challenges Encountered in Supporting Women’s Participation, and How They Have Been Overcome

The Nyeri project has not as yet faced any specific challenges to addressing women’s participation. However, LYF and Bettys & Taylors both envisage encountering similar challenges to those they are facing in a parallel training program in Ethiopia, where they are delivering business and marketing training to a secondary cooperative and their producer members. LYF had requested that a female board member of one of the primary cooperatives should take part in the training. However, the management of the secondary cooperative told LYF and Bettys & Taylors that it was not possible for the female board member to attend the training. Due to her illiteracy and her family responsibilities, they believed she would not be able to participate properly in the training sessions. Despite various efforts to overcome this resistance, LYF and Bettys & Taylors have not yet been able to convince the secondary cooperative to allow the female board member to participate.

As with the Nyeri project, LYF are hoping to engage a local women’s NGO in Ethiopia to help overcome these barriers and gain acceptance from the secondary cooperative for women’s participation in the training program.25,26
Relevance, Lessons, and Opportunities for Other Companies

This case study provides relevant lessons for all food companies that support community development projects in key smallholder sourcing areas, in particular those that have an interest in providing marketing or general business skills training to target smallholders. Specifically, it offers practical examples of how to:

- Ensure that women’s needs are addressed from early on in the project process, from incorporating gender issues at project design stage and choosing an appropriate partner organization, to ensuring that women are included in the initial needs assessment.

- Apply gender quotas to help ensure significant participation of women in training programs. Although it is yet to be proven whether the quotas will be effective, their stipulation at the start of the project has already helped communicate the importance of women’s participation to partner organizations.

The incorporation of gender equality issues into the project’s general efforts to introduce “modern” coffee farming and agribusiness approaches to the younger generation—linking “modernity” with “gender equality”—is an interesting approach and could potentially be tested and replicated in other community development projects, particularly where there is already an emphasis on engaging young people.

More broadly, the training curriculum to be developed by NTTI and Ambo College could provide a useful model for other companies that are seeking to develop business skills training for women and men smallholders, especially in other countries where trade of key export crops has recently been liberalized (such as cocoa in Ghana). The dual focus on business skills and youth engagement has a clear benefit not only for smallholders themselves, but also for food companies’ commercial interests: engaging and training the future generation of cocoa, coffee, and tea farmers will help secure a high-quality and reliable future supply of key commodities.

Further Information

For further information about this case study, please contact:

- **Lorna Young Foundation:**
  Christina Longden, Director – Operations, or Ian Agnew, Director – Strategy, email: projectmanager@lyf.org.uk.

- **Betty’s & Taylors of Harrogate:**
  Cristina Talens, Ethical Trading Manager, email: Cristina.Talens@bettysandtaylors.co.uk.

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