

# RLDC Gender Assessment Study for the Central Corridor Regions



## Summary

**A** gender assessment commissioned by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) in 2010 identified various gender specific shortcomings in its programmes in Tanzania, including the Rural Livelihood Development Programme (RLDP). In the aftermath of the evaluation the Rural Livelihood Development Company (RLDC), which is implementing RLDP, launched gender trainings for its staff and assigned gender focal persons amongst its partners. In addition, since 2011 one business analyst is specifically in charge of gender issues.

However, as RLDP is following a Making Markets Work for the Poor (M4P) approach which is, by nature, gender blind the progresses with regard to gender remained moderate. M4P obliges RLDC to minimise their interference with the market and thus restrains its activities to the role as a facilitator of public and private actors. As a consequence the approach followed requires all partners to act gender sensitively from an informed basis.

In the light of these realities RLDC engaged Dr. Magdalena K. Ngaiza, gender consultant at the Gender Centre of the University of Dar Es Salaam, to undertake a gender study that would focus on RLDC's rice and cotton sectors. The assessment has been conducted in september 2012 in six villages in Tabora, Manyara and Morogoro regions. 177 respondents were interviewed, including 97 men and 80 women. Methodologically the analysis concentrated on qualitative approaches such as literature reviews, group discussions and household case studies. Hereafter the key findings of this evaluation are presented.

**I**t is common knowledge that women's subordination in society has been institutionalised through structures which organise social life in ways that marginalise women. This happens in various settings, within the family, in schools, in commercial and political institutions. As a consequence, the priorities of such institutions reflect those of men, and in particular, of men of powerful and privileged social groups. This is valid also for the market. However, changing the market alone doesn't help, yet, it's unpracticable. The market as an institution reflects gender inequalities rooted in household an community relations. In order to improve the gender responsiveness of its interventions RLDC needs to penetrate these gender sensitive spheres. As Ngaiza emphasises, numerous tools for household and community level gender analysis are available, including awareness raising, community self challenge and exposure.



So far RLDC has made considerable efforts in facing this challenge, e.g. through the collection of gender disaggregated monitoring data, the creation of gender focal points, the sensitisation of staff members, gender budgeting and contracts with partners. At the same time RLDP is far from doing transformative gender negotiations in the communities. Its efforts in facilitating partners to do business with farmers with a gender perspective are insufficient. It is recommended that RLDC should strengthen their collaboration with partners who are „willing and able“.

**T**he current phase of RLDP singles out poultry for women. According to Ngaiza the concentration on one product ignoring others could have a self-defeating effect. While rice remains predominantly a male crop, women should be left to choose their preferred cash crop. It is here that male and female interests will be articulated and negotiation will take place in terms of who owns and controls money.

**F**indings of the analysis identify gender pre-market discriminations<sup>1</sup> as conservators of existing gender inequalities. In both sectors, rice and cotton, a gender gap in production exists due to women's chore activities before and after work. Mainly „free“ women (who are head of households) are entering the market although with difficulty. RLDP should address these issues with augmented efforts in gender sensitisation negotiation and counseling. Moreover child care arrangements that may include school breakfast and lunch should be taken into account. In view of the high illiteracy rate especially for women, adult literacy centres should be established for the purpose of improving skills and marketing.

In order to improve productivity in male dominated crops technologies are introduced to which women have



less or no access. This leads to a technological gender gap in the production process. In fact, in female headed and divided households technology is hardly available. The relevant trainings do not reach women. According to the author loan programmes, women's crops and machines designed for women could reduce such inequalities. Another issue to consider when it comes to production is the use of pesticides. Poor herbicides – while they affect all – have different effects on the health of women and men. Seminars on the effects of herbicides and on spring machines should be organised. Furthermore, trainings for farmer

associations on rights and obligations, land rights and gender may alleviate the difficulties female headed households face as they lack protection.

Another area where gender inequalities have been detected is the market. Especially in the rice sector women are often cheated by husbands and buyers. Godowns, women's poultry, organised markets, gender seminars and women only farms are the proposed programme responses. Similarly, as transportation for both crops is difficult for women, men take advantage of women's work and where possible report low returns in order to earn more money. Loans to hire labour and transport, low interest rates and bookkeeping may help in this context.

**A** key issue of RLDC regarding gender is its facilitator role which doesn't allow for getting involved or outsourcing gender partners due to costs and sustainability reasons. However, so as to tackle the issues mentioned above RLDC needs to open up and be innovative in approach with regard to gender. Collaboration with other institutions with experience and systemic results should be taken into consideration.

In order to overcome the identified gender gaps Magdalena Ngaiza proposes a variety of tasks to attend. First, the findings should be condensed into three categories and for each class goals should be set: gender unfriendly communities, gender insensitive partners and the issues mentioned above. With reference to the communities RLDC needs to assess who should deal with communities' gender sensitisation and bargaining. One single gender agency could possibly serve all sectors and be facilitated by RLDC. For insensitive partners, on the other hand, RLDC itself should be the key facilitator and develop a brief toolkit to help them know that they are serving men and women together, to come to know gender equality as a pre-condition for market efficiency. Further recommendations are the spreading of good practices, the inclusion of gender elements of the National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty (MKUKUTA) in partner meetings as well as the accentuation of gender in partner's evaluation. Last but not least, the issues identified in the field can be clustered into „social“, „economic“ and „education and training“. These should be dealt with by relevant authorities.

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<sup>1</sup> According to the study's author premarket discrimination is a total condition that places women unequally with men before engaging with markets, e.g. with regards to social relations with men, comparative education, limited networks and information, reproduction, access and control of income, lack of transport etc.