WOMEN’S ECONOMIC LEADERSHIP IN AGRICULTURAL MARKETS

Asking questions to gain support from stakeholders for Women’s Economic Leadership

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HOW TO?
PROMOTE GENDER AND ASK ABOUT WOMEN WITH PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SECTOR STAKEHOLDERS

GROW.SELL.THRIVE.
GENDERED ENTERPRISE AND MARKETS PROGRAMME
OXFAM
The purpose of the conversation? Is it...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evidence gathering?</th>
<th>Building a relationship?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Set questions</strong></td>
<td><strong>Open questions</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Numbers, steps, products</td>
<td>Exploring issues… less facts?</td>
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<tr>
<td>More focus on our own interests</td>
<td>Priorities, motivations of their business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less concern about ‘next time’</td>
<td>Leave some for next time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Common problems...

- **Responses to questions** about ‘women’ and ‘gender equality’ may
  - Be superficial or general
  - Tell us what they think *we want to hear*
  - **Anecdotes** that ‘tick the gender-equality box’
  - Shows that *question isn’t understood* or considered disconnected from business model
  - ‘**Not me**’ – other actors should answer, others have responsibility for women’s involvement
An approach of ‘Developing a Relationship’* may get us better evidence…

* Why?

• If we Understand the business operation
• And Understand their priorities and concerns… profits, and quality or scale, assured supply, environment or sustainability etc
• We can Ask the questions about ‘women’ in the context of their priorities
• Locate ‘changes for women’ questions in the logic of ‘addressing a business or markets problem together’…

* Even in an hour’s meeting…
Arguments based on Women’s Rights and on Efficiency

Rationale – arguments?

- Equity – women’s rights
- Efficiency – gender roles are economically inefficient!
  - Argue on their terms, compelling, business case
Thinking about questions in your recent conversations with stakeholders...

A question that someone asked…that I hadn’t thought of before…!

New content? New way of asking?
Thinking about questions…

What questions could we use to get evidence about private companies’ approach / attitude to women producers?

…or possible new practices to promote women?
Thinking about questions…

What do you think about the (companies’) responses to the questions?

Does a response indicate what to ask next? Is there an opportunity for more dialogue?
Exercise in 3s

• Questions to **understand the business operation**, market requirements and opportunities
• Questions about **women and gender equality:**
  • make it clear that your question is linked to their interests
• **Approach:** What business opportunities or efficiencies is the company **missing** by not recognizing …
  • women’s current role and contribution to production and value chain
  • the barriers women face to engage in markets
  • How new practices/policies potentially facilitate women’s engagement (and improve business)
• **Role play! One questioner, one respondent, one observer**
• **5 minutes with one questioner, 5 minutes with another**
• **Discussion in small group** – observers comment; what works best on content and ways of asking questions?
• **Discussion in plenary** – brilliant questions! main learning?
Other issues?
in asking questions about women/gender equality to private and public sector stakeholders…

• Responses may clarify to us that WE don’t know how to make the ‘business case’ for new policies & practices to promote women’s econ leadership

• What evidence are WE missing to make the ‘efficiency argument’?

• Who do we need to have in the room to demonstrate that current (PS, govt) policies are inefficient or missing potential growth opportunities
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