

# Gender mainstreaming for sustainable development of cooperatives

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## Outline of the presentation

What do we mean by gender mainstreaming in cooperatives?

Why do we need to consider gender issues in cooperatives?

How do we gender mainstream in cooperatives?

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What is gender mainstreaming?

# What is gender mainstreaming

The Economic and social council of the UN agreed conclusions 1997/2 defines gender mainstreaming as

The **process** of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes in all areas and at all levels. It is a **strategy** for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the **design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes** in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. **The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality.**

# What is gender equality?

Gender equality as a goal means that all can reach fruit at the same level.



Equality = Sameness

GIVING EVERYONE THE SAME THING → It only works if everyone starts from the same place



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Equity = Fairness

ACCESS TO THE SAME OPPORTUNITIES → We must first ensure equity before we can enjoy equality

Gender equality is a long-term goal that provides **equal access** of both women and men to resources, rights and privileges, as well as to the **power of decision-making** in all aspects of social life (household, the workplace, politics, and the economy).

*--> it is not about being the same*

# What is equal access to resources?

## Gender

- Biological sex, sexual orientation, etc. → normally largely compare between women and men, but it is about how society categorizes people, socially defined roles and expectations, social positions and privileges from the category
- Women/men/LGBTQ/ poor/ young/ single parent/ elderly/ less educated/ disabled → intersectionality

## Gender division of labor

- Socially expected roles of women and men
- Household work/ care work



## Access to resources

- Women make up half of the agriculture work force and important work force for fisheries – but have less access to productive resources and assets.
- Land and other properties
  - Less than 15% of the world's landowners are women
- Financial resources
- Knowledge (technological)
- Information (market)
- Network



# Why decision making is important?

Women and men play different roles and they have access to different resources

Therefore, they have different needs.

Men cannot speak for women and vice versa


Women need to make their voices heard. – respect and influence (being taken seriously)

Decision making in the household, in community, in cooperatives.

Women being able to make their own choice and implement that without worrying about repercussion → empowerment



Why do we need to integrate gender perspectives in cooperatives?



# Why do we need to integrate gender perspectives in cooperatives?

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## Women's role in agriculture

Women make up 41% of the world's agriculture workforce

In South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa 60% of women work in agriculture

## Involving women increases yields

WFP (2021) estimates that if women farmers had the same resources and opportunities as men, they could increase yields by 20-30 % and total agricultural output by 2.5-4% and the number of malnourished people would decrease 12-17% lifting as many as 150 million people out of hunger

## Women have different needs than men

Extension

Finance access

Marketing





- Involving women strengthens cooperatives

- Cooperatives tend to have less women members

- Gender diversity in cooperatives is less than in listed companies (Hansen and Asmild 2023)
- Women as fish processors are not included in fisheries associations – example of Bangladesh
- Increase in the total number of cooperative members

- Reaching out

- If women are marginalized, they cannot internalize the common values.

- Cooperatives made more efficient


- Case of Philippines – alleviating women's household work led to women leadership – higher efficiency





- Women's participation in cooperatives can increase household income
  - Philippines - women's participation in fisheries association lead to women taking lead in eco-tourism and increased household income. (Lowe and Tejada, 2019)
  - Keep financial records
  - Collective savings
- Women's participation in cooperatives can lead to taking agroecological approach
  - Need to improve land fertility and raise yields without expensive chemical inputs

- Cooperatives can empower women: With more women, women's needs can be taken up by cooperatives.
  - In General Santos City, the Philippines, the all-male fishery leadership of tuna processing companies and associations did not introduce childcare and pregnancy care that could benefit women workers (Prieto-Carolino *et al.*, 2021).
  - With women's leadership, fish processors were able to upgrade their production and access higher niche market, increasing their income (case in Philippines by Pedrajas *et al.* 2018).

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How do we mainstream gender in  
cooperatives?



# How do we mainstream gender in cooperatives? – some initial steps

## Gender analysis

- Data
- What are the barriers for women's participation?
- What are gender-differentiated needs?

## Routinize gender integration in the activities

- Reporting
- Monitoring
- Indicators

## Increase women in decision making/ leadership positions

## Participatory and flat governance – building a learning organization

Thank you