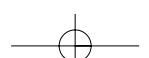


WORKSHEET N°5: PRIORITY STRATEGIC AREAS DEFINED BY THE ASSOCIATIONS OF AGBODJÉDO (BÉNIN)

On the basis of the strengths and weaknesses of the association, each association determines its priorities and after defining them, the associations align their priorities to the constraints and opportunities of the context. The priority strategic areas, based on these priorities are presented in the following table

MEN'S ASSOCIATION	WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION (1)	WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION (2)
<p>I. Equity of workload to enable women participate in community life</p> <p>1. Sensitize men to increase their current level of participation in household activities</p> <p>II. Equity in the capacity to diversify IGA and finance through credit</p> <p>1. To this end, increase the access of men to credit and to training opportunities at the same time as women: develop equitable strategies for access to credit for both women and men.</p> <p>III. Sustainable and equitable management of organizations and resources.</p> <p>1. Develop the equitable management of fisheries resources.</p> <p>2. Build up the gender sensitivity of men that are in management and decision-making committees where women are still barely represented</p>	<p>I. Sustainable and equitable management of organizations and resources (physical and natural)</p> <p>1. Build up the technical and organizational capacities of the association</p> <p>2. Training for women fish processors in improved smoking technologies ending with a store for stocking fish</p> <p>3. Construction of a store for the sale of fishing equipment.</p> <p>4. Preservation of the resource (lake)</p> <p>II. Equity in access to credit services</p> <p>1. Negotiate the increment of the amount of credit and subsidies with a partner to support alternative IGA for fishermen</p>	<p>I. Equity in the support to organizations and the access of the associations to infrastructures</p> <p>1. Support MAs to finalize the legislation process</p> <p>2. Sensitize local authorities through the training structures to obtain documents for the land donated</p> <p>3. Review or update statutory documents in General Assembly (GA)</p> <p>4. Build up organizational capacities (Training on organization)</p> <p>II. Equity in access to savings and loan services</p> <p>1. Introduce regular workshops or meetings for men and women to come together under the watchful eyes of training structures, to brainstorm on joint guarantee for savings and loans facilities.</p> <p>III. Sustainable management of the resource</p> <p>1. Diversify activities</p> <p>2. Set up a participatory co-management strategy</p>





The priorities of the gender strategy retained by mutual agreement of the two WA and the MA in Agbodjédo (to be integrated by each association in its action plan): they identified these priorities by jointly analyzing the organizational gender profile and its constraints and opportunities at household level, vulnerability context and PIP.

- 1. Equitable strengthening of the intervention capacities of MA and WA.**
- 2. Equitable access of the 3 associations to a global credit fund of 10 millions to be jointly sourced, to support the diversification of the IGA of women and men.**
- 3. Equitable and sustainable management of the fish smoking centre and community toilets and the dissemination of the improved ovens.**
- 4. Equitable participation in a participatory gender-sensitive monitoring-evaluation system.**

TRAP :

- The desire of the men's association to have an impact on poverty at household level is fully justified. The only problem is that the men's association (organizational level) may find it difficult to be responsible for a result, the control of which depends on actions to be taken unilaterally by its male members in their households, and which will only be successful if their relatives, church, colleagues and even wives ... do not ridicule and discourage them.

Move forward by respecting the stages agreed on : You must first prioritize your strategic areas. To do this, present your strategic area No.1 in plenary just as you did with the other organizations and support partners. **Jointly evaluate** the respective potential of the different priority areas presented in plenary so you can **all agree** on a common strategy. It is only when each organization has agreed on the common strategy to be integrated in each action plan that you can **now refer to the practical and strategic needs perceived and prioritized by your members, to plan your actions**, rather than the strategic areas that you arrived at through analysis.

TRAP :

- At this stage, make sure you avoid making any direct commitment on planning the objectives and actions of each organization to implement the strategic area that it has retained. You run the risk, not only of working in isolation, but also of planning in an abstract manner, and to which the community will only pay lip service. You will encounter serious problems with harmonizing them during the joint implementation and particularly, the participatory monitoring.

ADVICE :

- To increase your chances of successfully evaluating the contribution of each association's interventions to this result, it would be better if the men's association defined the activities it will undertake as a group to target the impact. For example: review policies on credit, training and social division of labour to identify more equitable opportunities for women and men; raise men's awareness and train them, raise women's awareness and train them, raise awareness and inform public opinion and partners of the institutions The association should express the possible results in terms of obligation of diligence and not strictly results, because if it raises awareness, sensitizes and trains but there is no change. It should not be blamed for the undesirable result. It is very dangerous for an association to set results to be achieved on levels and factors it has no control over. It is better to avoid starting gender mainstreaming on the basis of such ambitious programmes whose chances of success are very uncertain. This can lead to the total demise of the project as the communities may consider it unrealistic or too risky after the first experience. It is better to start with modest objectives that will enable the association (especially if, as in this case, it is a social association that would hate to lose its privileges in the operation), record a successful experience with the gender approach in the area of practical needs, so as to really inspire them to go further still by including the strategic issues that had been linked to it right from the beginning !

