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The Gender Dimension
of Rural Producer
Organisations in Tanzania

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Abstract: This report is one of four reports in the series of policy reports from the Business Experience Exchange Programme. It analyses the gender dimension of producer organisations in national policy development and the influence of RPO gender policy on the development of the rural institutions in Tanzania.

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Preface

The Business Experience Exchange Programme - BEEP – is a collaborative effort of African rural producers' organisations and research institutions to develop small scale commercial agriculture within the national and international economic framework.

The overall objective of BEEP is to enable the participating rural producers' organisations (RPOs) in Malawi, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia to exchange business experiences between them, enhance their business performance and thereby contribute to increase income and reduce poverty at farmer level.

A key component of BEEP is to document success stories and failures of the RPOs through applied research and thereby enhance the exchange of information qualitatively and quantitatively. Another objective of BEEP is to strengthen the national research and training capacity in the fields related to commercial agriculture. This can result in improved supply of relevant candidates for the agricultural sector in general and agro-business in particular.

The regional research programme for the period 2003-2006 was designed in collaboration with national RPOs during the first workshops held in 2003. The 2003 research programme focus on gender and policy issues facing the RPOs.

The programme is financed by Norges Vel and NORAD. NIBR is the co-ordinating research institution. More information about BEEP, the involved institutions and research reports can be found and downloaded from the programme web site www.beepafrica.com.

Arvid Strand

Research Director
The Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research

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Acronyms

AMCOS:	Agricultural Marketing Cooperative Societies
AKSCG:	Association of Kilimanjaro special Coffee Growers
KNCU:	Kilimanjaro Native Cooperative Union
ILO:	International Labour Organisation
MEMCOP:	Member Empowerment Programme
MVIWATA:	Tanzania Farmers Network
TFC:	Tanzania Federation of Cooperatives
TCB:	Tanzania Coffee Board
RPOs:	Rural Producer Organizations
SACCOS:	Savings and Credit Cooperative Societies
TAMWA:	Tanzania Women Media Association
TGNP:	Tanzania Gender Network Programme
TAWLA:	Tanzania Women Legal Aid
URT:	United Republic of Tanzania

Acknowledgements

Many have contributed to the success of this study. First of all we are grateful for Norgesvel and NORAD for funding the BEEP project that enabled us to do this challenging study, which followed formative research process. Secondly, to the Cooperative College for providing us the opportunity to conduct this study.

Notwithstanding the helpful collaboration we got from KNCU, AKSCG, TCB, TFC, KNCU officials and members of Mamsera AMCoS, Legho AMCos, Legho SACCOS, Nkoanrua AMCoS and Mrimbo-Uuwo Farmers Group. Without their dedicated efforts and time the field survey could not have been successful and yielded such high quality results.

Finally, we thank all those who have not been mentioned but had extremely meaningful contributions to this study.

Executive summary

The study covered Rural Producer Organisations (RPOs) in three regions that is Morogoro, Arusha and Kilimanjaro in Tanzania. To have a variation in the findings, four types of RPOs were covered which include:

- Member based Cooperative Societies - covered the Federation down to primary societies;
- A network of farmers groups represented by MVIWATA;
- Member based farmers group represented by the Association of Kilimanjaro Special coffee Growers that has farmers groups who are members; and,
- Independent Farmers groups that sell coffee directly to the coffee auction at the Tanzania Coffee Board.

The major objective of this study was to explore gender equity and mainstreaming in RPOs. Three methodologies used in this study were; focus group discussions that were mainly used for the RPOs in the villages, guided discussions with officials at higher levels and gathering and reviewing of secondary information. The major findings include:

- Most of the RPOs do not have any policy and have not mainstreamed gender in any of their activities
- The word gender is unpopular to most of the groups
- RPOs do not have gender disaggregated data that can facilitate in monitoring of its activities, decision making and policy formulation
- RPOs that are in export crop producing areas, in this case coffee are male dominated. There are a few women members who are mostly widows
- RPO members/leaders lack lobbying and advocacy skills that can enable them to participate in various forums and expand their outreach
- RPOs lack training or sensitization programmes that can empower the members, men and women
- RPOs that have gender training/sensitization of their members, like MVIWATA; the members see the importance of streamlining gender and eventually having gender equity in their organisations
- Less than two percent of women have leadership positions in the Coffee Rural Producer Organisations. This is the opposite case with Savings and Credit Cooperative Societies such as Lego Mullo Savings and Credit society that provides financial services to its members and MVIWATA whose members have different activities and are involved in producing non-traditional export crops. In these two cases there are both female and male leaders in the RPOs and even the national management board

- Where women have been leaders like the village chairperson of Legho village, women seem to have confidence that they can even be democratically elected by both men and women to become leaders.
- Less than ten percent of women participate in meetings especially in the coffee growing areas. One of the reasons may be due to the workload which they have domestically and secondly the cultural background of people in these areas may be it is cultural.
- Women who attend meetings are shy to contribute own ideas.
- Membership in Primary Cooperative societies that are dealing with export cash crops tied to land ownership

Generally this study reveals that gender equity and mainstreaming in RPOs is minimal though the government has a conducive policy and legal framework. The gendering process in rural producer organisations is slow and it varies from one society to another due to cultural differences and access to training. Mainstreaming Gender in budgets, training, exchanging experiences with other rural producer cooperatives and advocacy are fair alternatives though they need financial commitment from the rural producer organisations. But the participation of both men and women is vital as it will bring to life different set of values and will create a more caring, pluralist and compassionate rural society and thus create sustainable rural producer organisations.

1 Introduction

Agriculture plays an important role in Sub-Saharan African economies and will continue to do so for some time. In Tanzania rural areas still provide a large proportion of employment as shown in the table below:

Table 1.1 *Percentage Distribution of Employment by Sector in Tanzania; 2000/01*

SECTOR	% Employment
Government	2.04
Parastatals	0.46
Informal Sector	80.96
Traditional Agriculture	8.51
Other Private	4.41
Housework	3.55
TOTAL	100

Source: Poverty and Human Development Report. Tanzania 2002

In 2000/01, 82.9% of the employed proportion were in the rural areas of whom 40.7% were male and 42.0% were female (URTa, 2002). In spite of this large proportion there has also been a relative decline compared to 1991/92 because the proportion of rural employment was 84.4% (URTa, 2002). Thus the rural areas still have a vital role to play in the development process whereby a majority of the people reside.

It is argued that in Tanzania the estimated ratio of males to females in the agricultural sector in the rural areas is 1:1.5 (Semboja et al. 2001). According to the population census of 2002, Tanzania has a population of 33,584,607 people of whom 16,427,702 are male and 17,156,905 are female. Out of this population 76.9% is in the rural areas while 23.1% is in the urban areas. The distribution of population in the rural areas is 12,932,679 males while females are 13,567,363. In the urban areas male are 3,897,182 while female are 4,046,379.

Women in Tanzania, like any other women in Sub-Saharan economies, bear substantial responsibilities in the rural areas. They produce about 70% of food crops but their access to productive resources is limited.

Therefore from both an efficiency and equity perspectives, the development of the rural areas propagates the need for women to participate with men in rural producer organizations¹ in order to improve their livelihoods.

¹ A rural producer organization in this context shall mean any form of formal organization that exists in the rural areas e.g cooperative societies, farmers groups, farmers associations, NGOs, and Community based organizations. This study shall only focus on registered farmers groups, associations and cooperatives.

2 The rural gender context

In a matter of view rural development does not leave behind gender, whereby we are looking at a process that is socially structured by the society though the roles are changing over time. Gender itself has several conceptions but this study will have a reflection on gender equity that is often used interchangeably with the concept of gender equality. Gender equity refers to fairness and justice in the distribution of benefits and responsibilities between women and men. It recognizes that women and men have different needs and power and that these differences should be identified and addressed in a manner that rectifies the imbalance between sexes. Imbalances between men and women are reflected in their contribution to rural production activities and access to productive resources.

Though the proportion of women employed in the agricultural sector is relatively higher, than men, women are the main producers of food. They earn 70 – 80% of all subsistence farming output in Africa (Macha, 2002). Women are responsible for 60% of all harvesting, 70% of all weeding and 90% of processing activities. Men's labour exceeds women's only in turning the soil and clearing the fields although they are exceptions in some tribes (Rhodda, 1991). Apart from these activities, women are also responsible for household chores and animal husbandry. Men's interest in agriculture is mainly management and marketing.

The fact that women have a large role to play in the rural areas in production they however lack control of productive resources, especially land which is a major source of rural livelihood. Thus the rights which the married women continue to enjoy on land are inadequate. They have usufructuary rights on land that do not give them full control over the crops and the production process (Koda, 1996).

The globalized changes in the societies have resulted into the increase of the women's and men's workload and stress in the rural areas. Such changes have changed the roles of men and women in the rural areas. Some of these changes include progressive deforestation that has made it more difficult to find firewood and water sources making it difficult to collect firewood and water for domestic use. (Sachs 1996).

Land degradation has also led to loss of soil fertility. Thus more inputs are required to increase soil fertility. This has also made the agricultural task to become more difficult. The following poem sends message of how land is degraded.

Land degradation
 Because you can die of overwork,
 Because you can die of the fire that melts rock
 Because you can die of the poison that kills the beetle and the slug,
 We must come again to worship
 You are our tees,
 The common living dirt Merge, Peircy 1991(in Sachs 1996)

The collaborative production in African societies has significantly collapsed. Previously both men and women used to participate in production activities. This form of production had different names, depending on tribes for example; they are called “silaqwe” among the Iraq of Tanzania, “songolela” among the Gogo, “Ifo’ngo’ngo” among the Sukuma and “migowe among the Pangwa. Such informal groups, family and friendship networks have historically provided security but they have often been inadequate because of pressures in breaking down of these institutions. Networks and collective actions are recognized as group’s assets. Social capital is thus one asset in which gender equity can be pronounced. Thus, formation of groups is one of the safety nets where women and men can participate in order to reduce vulnerability and unexpected changes in the economy. Thus the formation of formal groups and institutions has been necessitated by the collapse of the informal networks and collective actions. As a result they are trying to offer an alternative solution to the failure of social and economic networks that existed.

In Tanzania formal rural producer organizations have existed since the colonial period, but they have been changing due to social, political and economic dynamics. Participation of women in these groups has been minimal mainly due to the fact that membership was based on households and who owns the land and output. The most prominent groups were Agricultural Marketing Cooperative Societies that were mainly dealing with the marketing of cash crops that were for export only. Currently there has been a changing social scenario whereby women together with men have formed groups that sell non-traditional export crops in the rural areas. Women have also of recent been participating together with men in groups that facilitate agricultural production like microfinance groups (Saving and credit organizations, NGOs etc.). Leadership scenario is also changing whereby leadership positions in such rural producer organizations are being held by both men and women.

Thus, generally there have been deliberate efforts to mainstream gender in rural producer organisations by formulation of policies and having a non-discriminative legal framework. Whether this applies in practice this remains the major question in this study.

2.1 Policy context

The government has set conducive policies which enforce gender equity that have been based on international framework on gender.

2.1.1 International policy environment

The government of Tanzania has assented, ratified and is a party to several conventions, international declarations and organizations that advocate gender equity and human rights. These include the:

- The 1975 World Conference of the International Women’s Year in Mexico;
- Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action of 1995;
- Universal declaration of human rights;
- The 1985 Convention on the elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women ;
- The SADC Declaration on Gender and development of 1997; and
- African Conferences on Women held in 1975, 1980, 1984, 1994 and 1999.

Given these commitment we expect the same to be translated into action at national level for the benefit of both men and women of Tanzania.

2.1.2 The National policy context:

The government has taken affirmative actions in formulating national policy guidelines that advocate on gender equity in response and as a commitment towards achieving the international Conventions on gender equity.

At the national level, women's rights have been conceptualized in the Tanzanian Constitution that was reviewed in 1984. This constitution bans discrimination on whatever grounds. At national level there are key policies that have been formulated which have a gender commitment in development include the The National Development Vision of 2025, the National Poverty Eradication Strategy (NPES) of 1996 and the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP).

The Vision 2025 has identified in one of its attributes that division in society must be equitable and free from inequalities and effective democratic and popular participation of all social groups. While the PRSP articulates several indicators of poverty reduction that are to be measured on a 3 - year basis, it also commits itself to gender equity and encourages farmers to organize themselves in Cooperatives or groups. The main objective of the National poverty Eradication Strategy (NPES) is to eradicate poverty by the year 2025. Other specific objectives include promoting equal opportunities for men and women to lead a decent productive life and to ensure full participation of women initiatives in poverty eradication

2.1.3 Sector Policies.

Gender equity is addressed in most sector policies and development programmes of which most of the concerns contained in International conventions on gender are also reflected. These policies include the Women Development and Gender policy, Agricultural Development policy, Cooperative Development Policy and the National Land Policy as explained below:-

The Women Development and Gender

The National policy on Women Development and Gender is the key policy document that is responsible to other sectors on how to achieve gender equity. Policy aims at empowering women and men to utilize available resources for their development, on an equitable basis. This envisages the need for mainstreaming gender issues in all development plans.

Some of the attributes of the policy includes:-

- enhancing gender equality by giving women and men equal opportunities , equal rights and equal obligations in all spheres of life;
- to improve the participation of women at all levels of development; and
- men and women to participate effectively in identifying their problems and assess their practical means of solving them so as to alleviate poverty.

The Poverty Reduction Strategy Review

The Poverty Reduction Strategy Review held in 2001/2002 indicated the following progress from the Gender Policy:

- A draft national strategy for gender development and a framework for implementation of the Women and Gender development policy have been developed;
- Secondly mainstreaming gender in the Public Expenditure Review; and
- The Inheritance and Marriage Act and laws relating to children are in a process of being reviewed to address key gender concerns.

The Agricultural Development Policy

An important policy that is related to rural development is the Agricultural development policy of 1997. Aspects that reflect Rural producer organisations and gender in this document are:

- The Ministry through extension and cooperatives will encourage and support farmers to form groups and associations for participatory and collective action;
- Extension services will be provided to women farmers in recognition of their critical role they play in family household management and food production.

Cooperative Development Policy

Cooperatives have been regarded as the major players in rural development and poverty alleviation in the country. The importance of this sector led to the formulation of the Cooperative Development Policy of 1997 and thereafter its review in 2002. Some of the attributes that reflect gender are indicated in the mission statement and some of its objectives are that:

- Cooperatives to become economic empowerment tool of the vulnerable members of the society such as small producers/ farmers, women and youth who otherwise cannot compete as individual players in the field;
- To encourage sustainable operation and development of cooperatives by ensuring that they carry out activities that respect gender equality and environmental protection;
- To ensure effective participation of women, by encouraging them to become members in line with the cooperative principle of voluntary and open membership. Women will be encouraged to take up leadership positions and employment in the cooperative society.

The National Land Policy (1995)

National Land policy of 1995 has envisaged the need of women to have access to productive resources like land, water etc

Apart from the policies discussed above, other policies that reflect gender issues and rural producer organisations include the NGO policy of 2002, the National Trade policy of 2003, the Microfinance policy of 2000 and the Small and Medium Enterprise Development policy of 2003. All these policies provide an equal opportunity to both men & women in development endeavours.

2.1.4 Sector strategies

One of the sector strategies that advocate rural development is the Rural development strategy which is a framework of the draft Rural Development policy of 2001. The objective of this strategy is to provide a strategic framework for coordination of strategies concerned with the development of rural communities. It envisages the need for both men and women to participate in rural development so as to alleviate poverty in a holistic manner. It has linkages with major policy related initiatives.

These policies have made progress in the gender mainstreaming process that is continuous though it is slow and it also has a low impact. The process of gendering and its outcome is legitimated by religion, law, science and the society's entire set of values. As these values change so do the gender roles. Lober (1994) sees gender as changing but without deliberate restructuring it will not change towards the direction of men and women.

2.2 Legal and regulatory framework

This section reviews the evolution of the legal and regulatory framework regarding land which is a key component of membership in rural producer organizations that are dealing with export oriented cash crops. A legal and regulatory framework has been established since the colonial era to accede gender equity in the rural sector and access to productive resources.

There are various ways in which both men and women can access land in Tanzania. Generally, land is vested in the President. In the rural areas, land is accessible through customary law, particularly that relating to inheritance. Inheritance of land in most cases is discriminatory against women with the exception of the areas where marriage is uxorilocal. The customary laws of inheritance which adopted after independence in 1963 were codified as the Law of Persons by Government notice of 1963. This law bars women from inheriting clan land. Rule 20 is specific on this and it says:-

Box 1: Rule 20 of the Law of Persons

Women can inherit, except clan land, which they may receive in usufructul, but cannot sell.

These rules therefore gives to women lifelong rights to use only and enjoy what is derived from land but not otherwise.

With respect to widows, customary laws say that they have no right of inheritance in the case where the deceased left behind male children or male relatives.

The governing legislation since the colonial is the *Land Ordinance* of 1923 which, declares all land in Tanzania to be "Public Land". This ordinance is not discriminatory in that it enjoins the President to give due regard to the native laws and customs whenever he is exercising his powers over land. Customary or native laws are by their nature discriminatory.

This law has been replaced by the Land Act of 1999 and the Village Act of 1999 which at least are not discriminatory and have aspects on women rights over land.

In spite of the existence of the customary law that is discriminatory, the general laws of inheritance are not. The Law of marriage Act of 1971 is not discriminatory. This laws has a provision of allowing both men and women to inherit land and own any other productive property. On the other hand, The Indian Succession Act of 1865 that applied only to foreigners is also not discriminatory.

The Village Land Act of 1999 which is a framework of the Land Policy makes sure that women and other disadvantaged groups acquired the right to own and access land.

Statutory laws in Tanzania have provisions that wives should be regarded as joint owners of properties acquired during marriage life but they are not often accessible due to costs, difficulties in understanding the legal system, interpretation of laws and lack of awareness of legal rights.

There government has also taken initiatives in encouraging women to hold leadership positions. The local government Act of 1982 provides for a minimum of 25% women representation in governing bodies. Thus it encourages women to hold leadership positions at various levels in the local government administration.

The Cooperative Act of 2003 has a provision that a cooperative is a democratic organization controlled by the members who actively participate in setting their policies and making decisions. Men and women serving as elected representatives are accountable to the membership. The only shortcoming is that it does not have a provision for minimum percentage of women representation in the management committees of cooperative societies.

Groups and Civil society organizations such as Tanzania Gender Network Programme(TGNP), Tanzania Women Legal Aid (TAWLA) and Tanzania Women's Media Association (TAMWA) advocate and support against discriminatory practices but their activities are concentrated in the urban areas.

3 Analytical framework

The major objective of this study was to explore gender mainstreaming in rural producer organisations (RPOs).

The study had the following research questions:

- How do the national policies influence the position of women in RPOs
- How do RPOs participate in policy formulation
- How do the RPOs operationalise its gender policy
- To what extent and how do women participate in RPO
- What are the main reasons for lack of gender awareness in RPOs
- Is statistics and monitoring gender biased and is the management able to act on the information
- To what extent are women represented in RPOs leadership and what are their main challenges

3.1 Coverage

The study covered RPOs in three regions of Morogoro, Arusha and Kilimanjaro. In order to have a variation in the finding three types of RPOs were covered which include:

- Cooperative Societies- Covered the Federation upto primary society so as to see the policy formulation process;
- Farmers Network in Tanzania(MVIWATA) which is a network of farmers groups; and
- The Association of Kilimanjaro Special coffee Growers that has farmers groups who are members.

3.2 Analytical Methods

There is no single method which will be applied in analyzing the above research questions. In this study three methodologies were utilized to collect data. One was focus group discussions that were mainly used for the RPOs in the villages so as to encourage participation and the members to have a sense of ownership of the information they provided. The second one was guided discussions with officials at higher levels. And lastly secondary information obtained from various relevant sources.

4 Findings

This section is divided into four parts that include Cooperatives, MVIWATA and NGOs and thereafter a summary of the findings.

4.1 Cooperative Societies

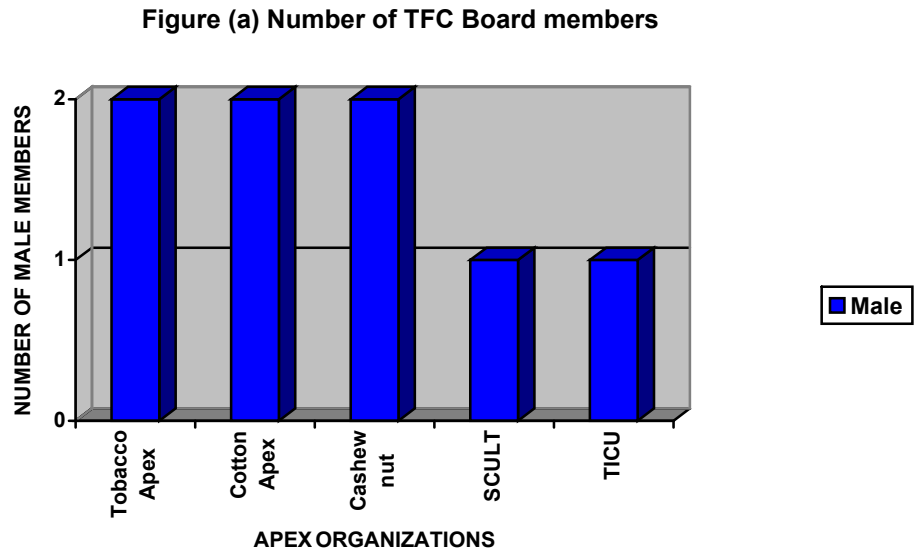
Cooperative societies in Tanzania follow the Rochdale values which are guided by six principles adopted by the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA). They became popular in the colonial era as one way of facilitating marketing of cash crops that were meant for export. The interests of the colonialists were to produce export oriented crops. Cash crops were dominant in virilocal societies as a result men became the members of the cooperatives societies as they were owners of productive resources particularly land.

According to the 1991 Cooperative Act, Cooperatives in Tanzania are democratic institutions. This Act has been repealed, so presently we have the 2003 Cooperative Act. The 2003 Cooperative Act has provided for freedom of association but the existing cooperative structure is four tyre. It consists of primary societies that may form cooperative societies and secondary societies may form Apex societies. A federation may be formed by Apex Societies. A primary society or a secondary society that is unable to join into a Secondary or Apex society it may be allowed to become a member of the Federation. The Federation is known as the Tanzania Federation of Cooperatives(TFC). The Federation is the Umbrella organization of all the cooperative societies.

4.1.1 Tanzania Federation of Cooperatives.

The Tanzania Federation of Cooperatives was formed in 1992 in line with the 1991 Cooperative Act². The federation does not have a gender policy nor any form of guidelines advocating gender issues. It consists of members from various Cooperative Unions or secondary societies that are in operation. It is led by a board of 10 members from five Apex organizations as shown in Figure 4.1 below: Note there are only eight members at present because the Coffee Apex is no longer on the records.

² The federation of Cooperatives has existed since the establishment of cooperatives in Tanzania but in changing scenerios. See Oda Van Cranenburg, The Widening Gyre.

Figure 4.1 *Number of TFC Board members*

Source: Tanzania federation of cooperatives - 2004

Tanzania federation of Cooperatives Executive Committee is divided into two committees. These are the Planning and Finance Committee,(5 members) and Cooperative Education and Training(5 members).

All the members of the committees are male as shown in the figure above. At the time of the study they were in a process of the by-laws in accordance with the Cooperative Act 2003 so that at least 1/3 of the members are female.

Gender Policy

TFC does not have a gender policy or any gender guidelines and neither is gender streamlined in the annual budget. The organization is currently making attempts to streamline gender in various activities that are reflected in its Corporate Plan.

Participation in meetings

Participation of members is mainly through the annual general meeting (AGM) that consists of representatives from active Unions. This meeting is usually held once per year. Representation of members is one from each Apex organization and three from each Union and an ex-officio from each Union. By February 2003 there were thirty members of whom only two are women.

In these meetings they discuss various issues that are based on the development of cooperatives, formulation of policies and they are usually presentations on cross cutting issues such as gender and HIV/AIDS. In 2002 they was a discussion on gender and that had a great impact to the members at the meeting. The paper was presented by a gender expert from the Cooperative College. What happened after the meeting is yet to be researched because of the existing communication gap between the Federation, Unions Apex and the Primary Cooperative Societies.

Gender Unit

To activate gender issues the federation has a training manager who is also dealing with gender issues. They have been able to run a programme financed by ILO that is dealing

with gender participation through a project called ILO- SYNDCOOP that covers Dar- es- Salaam .

Gender disaggregated data

TFC does not have any gender disaggregated data of its member societies nor the total number of members in each society. Therefore it is quite difficult to monitor and use such information for mainstreaming gender in its activities and making decision.

Training

A training programme was organized by the Gender Department of Cooperative College, for officials from Cooperative Unions. The officials came out with very good action plans on gender but up to now none has been able to put the action plan into practice including TFC itself. Apart from this training programme TFC has not been able to organize any training programme for its representatives and members in primary cooperative societies.

Participation in Policy formulation at national level

TFC lacks lobbying and advocacy skills that have resulted into none participation in any policy formulation process with the exception of the Cooperative Policy only. This year they have been able to participate in the Review of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP)

4.1.2 The kilimanjaro cooperative union

Kilimanjaro Cooperative Union (KNCU) is a secondary society that has member primary cooperative societies from Rombo, Hai and Moshi Rural districts. The members are agricultural marketing societies dealing with marketing of coffee. Thus KNCU facilitates the marketing of coffee from these primary societies by collecting and sending the coffee to the auction that is coordinated by the Tanzania Coffee Board (TCB). The Union is one of the members of the Tanzania Federation of Cooperatives and was re-established in 1984³.

Participation in policy formulation

The Union is governed by representatives from the primary cooperative societies. Each primary society has at least three representatives who attend the Union's Annual general meeting (AGM). The AGM is a very important forum for members to deliberate on policies and other issues that are related to the development of the AMCOS and improvement of member's livelihood. They have an executive committee that consists of 10 members of whom all are male. There has been a fluctuation in members who are attending the meeting due to unsatisfactory performance of the Union in terms of management and the drastic fall in coffee prices. Some of the primary cooperative societies are moving to other organizations or selling coffee directly to the auction.

There are only two female members who attend the Annual General meeting (AGM) out of 200 members. About 99% of the members are male. The representation is so because in Kilimanjaro region the export crops are mainly marketed by men leaving food crops under the control of women though the scenario is now changing due to the fall in coffee prices. The area that is served by KNCU is a patrilinear society so men own land and customary laws are dominant. There has been a changing trend in the last five years

³ Cooperatives societies were re-established in the 1980s' after the enactment of the 1982 Cooperative Act. Cooperatives were dissolved by the government in the 1970s.

whereby women now own land especially widows. From this synthesis men are the members of the AMCOS and the owners of land. Therefore it is imperative to link membership of the AMCOS with ownership of land.

Gender Policy

KNCU does not have any gender policy nor are they advocating gender issues. It seems the only interest is marketing of coffee. They lack lobbying and advocacy skills which is reason why they are not involved in any policy formulation process both at national and regional levels.

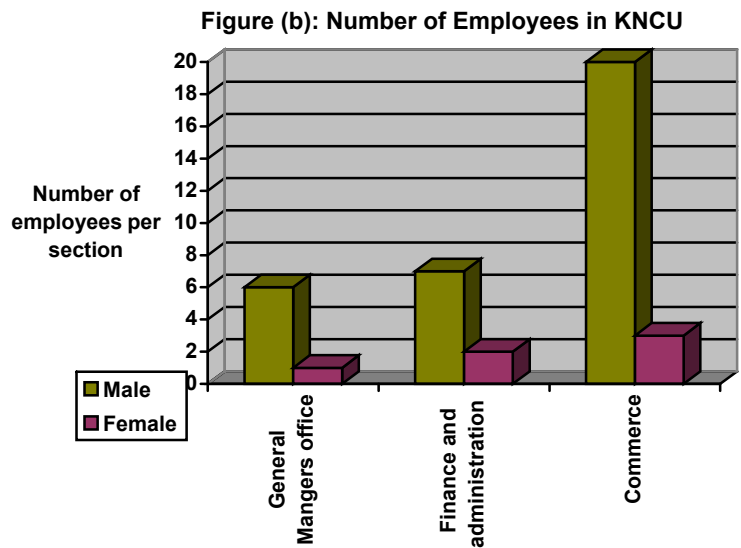
Staff Employed

The Union has employed 40 staff of whom 17.5% are women. These women are not holding any senior positions. An official who responded on this had the following to say:

BOX 2: Employment in KNCU
I have been employed in this Union for more than 20 years but there are more males than females this might be due to the fact that traditionally coffee was a male owned crop. There has never been anything nor have we ever heard of the issue of gender here even HIV/ AIDS. The interest is marketing only. But I think the other reason is that few women are educated to hold senior positions

The employee positions are as shown in Figure 4.2 below:-

Figure 4.2 *Number of Employees in KNCU*



Source: KNCU 2004

Senior positions are all held by men. The General Manager, Director of Finance, Chief Internal Auditor, Administrative manager, Chief educational and publicity officer are all male. There is neither gender unit nor any one who is dealing with gender. Women are employed in junior positions. There are less women because of their level of education although most of them are long term employees.

Training

They have not conducted any training on gender or any gender sensitization programme at the Union level neither is there any plan of conducting one.

4.1.3 Legho Mullo agricultural marketing cooperative society.

Legho is located in Kilema South Ward that has a population of 8,045 male and 8,268 females. Legho Mullo is located in a village that is estimated to have a population of 3,000 people . The village is not easily accessible during the rainy season.

About 30% of the land in this village is owned by women few of them being widows and some of them inherited pieces of land. This is an exceptional case in such an area where land is traditionally owned by men . This is a divergence from the traditional practice and thus it has an impact on the membership of the AMCOS.

This divergence is due to the formation of Christian Communities in the 1960s at ten cell level whereby men and women used to discuss social issues relating to their daily livelihood.

Apart from the AMCOS there are 33 women groups dealing with different activities that include livestock, sewing, and poultry projects. A few groups have both female and male members but there is no group that has male members only.

Leadership

The AMCOS is governed by a committee of 12 members of which three are women(only one owns a farm). The Chair ,Vice and Secretary are all male. In Legho they have a tradition whereby women are provided a portion of land by the husbands to sell coffee produced from there so as to meet their own needs.

One man remarked:

“ My mother was a member of the AMCOS because she was given a portion of the coffee farm my father so that she could get her own income. If that is the case then why not do the same to my wife. So my wife is also a member of the AMCOS”

This is the only village in Moshi Rural District whereby the village chairperson is a woman who was elected in 2002. It has been a challenge to other women and one of them remarked:

“ woman in Legho at least have been able to be recognized because their village chairperson is a woman so at least they can be seen and heard in the society”.

While a man who was also happy supported this move by saying that:

BOX 3: Women as elected as leaders

We are happy that this time we have elected a woman and we hope this will be the trend in our institutions. We are sure that women have the capacity to be leaders only that they are shy and lack confidence

Gender disaggregated data

The society does not have any gender disaggregated data. The data available had to take some time to be prepared. This reflects that the society has not seen the importance of keeping such data and therefore it has no influence on any policies of the society.

The number of female members in the AMCOS is also relatively good as shown in the Table 4.1

Table 4.1 *Members and amount of coffee sold at Legho AMCOS from 1998 to 2002.*

	Male	Female	GROUPS	Amount of money received in Tshs
1998/1999	344	87	23	600 per Kilo kg
Amount of coffee in Kgs	15,207	2,530	204	Shs 11,023,800
1999/2000	361	93	28	Shs 750 per Kilo
Amount of coffee in Kgs	75,453	6,248	2,190	Shs.64,350,750
200/2001	384	115	32	Shs 600 per Kilo
Amount of coffee in Kgs	58,110	12,112	2,740	Legho Primary Society 1,450 Shs.44,647,200
2001/2002	7500			Shs.4,500,000
2002/2003	8500			Shs.4,250,000

There has been an increase in female members because of being encouraged and also because of the increase of widows who have known their legal rights.

Participation in policy formulation

The Legho Mullo AMCOS participates in the Unions (KNCU) Annual general meeting that is held once per year where it is a member. Otherwise the chairperson participates in Ward level meetings. The AMCOS itself conducts meetings thrice per year of which one of the meetings is the Annual general meeting and two are normal meetings. Such meetings are normal to cooperative societies as they are envisaged in the Cooperative Act to encourage member participation. Most of the members attend this meeting and at times they come with their spouses. The problem is that most of the women are afraid to speak in meetings and thus they are not able to express their views this is due to cultural

background where women could not participate in meetings with men and whatever women spoke was not considered useful. This was also reflected in the focus group discussions where participation of women was quite low. The women also have a tendency of being late because they have to do domestic chores and ensure that there is adequate fodder for the livestock.

There is neither gender policy nor any guidelines at the AMCOS.

Training

There has been no training conducted by this AMCOS nor have the members attended any form of training. Thus there has been no gender awareness programme that has taken place in this area. But, the people are happy with the existing situation because by comparing themselves with other AMCOS there are a step ahead in gender equity and mainstreaming.

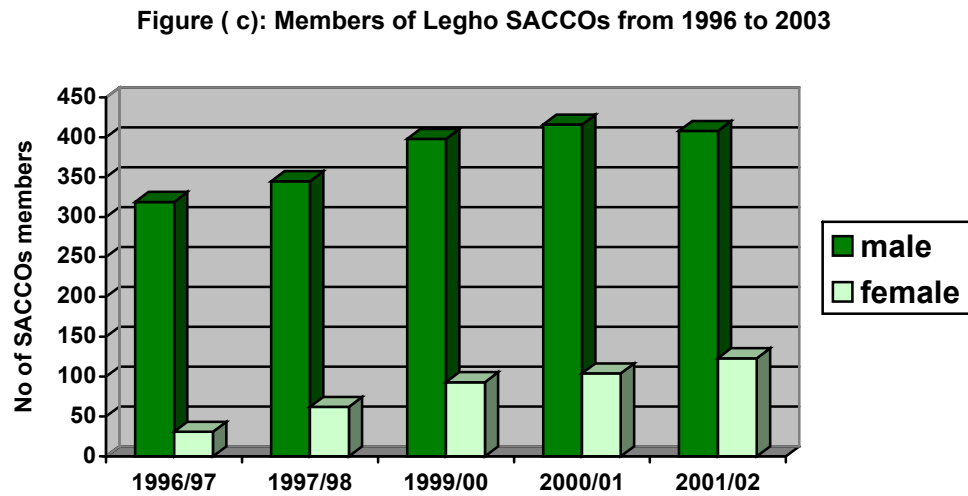
4.1.4 Legho mullo savings and credit cooperative society(saccos)

The society has a long history. It started as a rural savings scheme. In 1995 it was registered as a SACCOS. It is the only financial institution in the area and its office is located at the office of the Agricultural Marketing Cooperative Society. It provides both savings and loans to its members. Members get loans individually or in groups. Otherwise for the people in this area to get a similar service they have to travel for at least 25Km to Moshi town. The sources of funds are from the members themselves which include entrance fees, shares and savings.

Gender disaggregated data

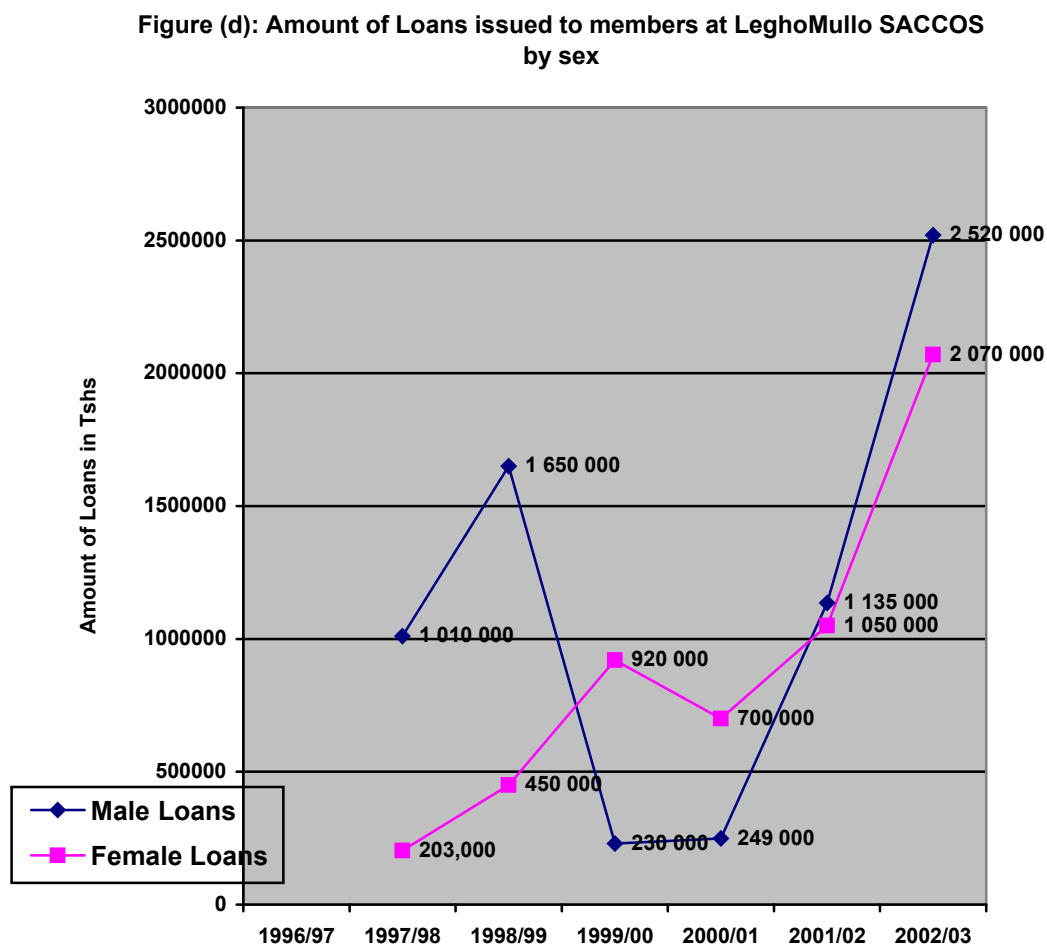
The SACCOS as compared to the AMCOS has gender disaggregated data due to influence of training from the Rural Financial Services Programme. The data is used by the leaders to see the level of participation and it acts as a tool to facilitate them in decision making. This is so because one of the objectives of the SACCOS is to increase members, that is expand outreach.

The figure below shows the distribution of male and female members in the SACCOS. There has been a rapid increase of the female members. They increased from 31 in 1996 to 159 in 2003. While for the male members there has been a gradual increase from 319 to 408.

Figure 4.3 *Members of Legho SACCOs from 1996 to 2003*

Focused on the services provided there has also been a rapid increase in the number of females receiving loans. This is a result of a donor funded programme known as the Rural Financial Services Programme (RFSP) that has an objective of building the capacity of SACCOs in the rural areas. Members of this SACCOs have been trained on gender in 2003, while the treasurer and some of the leaders have undergone several courses on leadership since 2002.

Figure 4.4 Amount of Loans issued to members at LeghoMullo SACCOS by sex



The number of members who received loans are as shown in the Table 4.2: The table clearly shows that the number of female members receiving loans is increasing and also the amount of loans. The reason is due to the increasing trend in women doing other activities in trade of agricultural products like grains, legumes, vegetables and fruits due to low productivity of coffee and inadequate remuneration to cater for basic needs. This has been facilitated by the development of local markets in the rural areas.

Table 4.2 *Amount of Loans in Tshs. and number of members who borrowed from 1996 to 2003*

Year		Male	Female
1997/98	Number of members	17	3
	Amount of loans in Tshs	1,010,000	203,000
1998/99	Number of members	19	4
	Amount of loans in Tshs	1,650,000	450,000
1999/00	Number of members	16	9
	Amount of loans in Tshs	230,000	920,000
2000/01	Number of members	20	4
	Amount of loans in Tshs	249,000	700,000
2001/02	Number of members	10	7
	Amount of loans in Tshs	1,135,000	1,050,000
2002/03	Number of members	22	17
	Amount of loans in Tshs	2,520,000	2,070,000

Members of this SACCOS also include groups like the keepers of stingless bee group that is composed of 15 members that are all male and Juhudi women group which deals with sewing and consists of 5 women members.

Staff employed

The Society has employed two staff (One male and one female). The male is the treasurer while the female assists in other activities like office keeping.

Leadership

The SACCOS has an Executive Committee of 18 members that governs the day to day activities. The committee has 9 women and 9 men as stipulated in its by-laws that at least 1/3 of the committee members have to be female as encouraged by RFSP.

Five of these women who are committee members own farms and are not widows. The Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and Secretary are all male while the chairpersons of the credit and mobilization committees are women. The leadership has taken into account gender equity.

The breakdown of responsibilities is as follows:

Table 4.3 *Composition of the Committees of Legho SACCOS*

Committee	Male	Female	TOTAL
Finance Committee	2	2	4
Loans committee	2	2	4
Supervision Committee	2	2	4
Mobilization and monitoring committee	2	2	4
Total	8	8	16

Participation in meetings

There is an annual general meeting that is conducted once per year. All the members are encouraged to participate. In the last annual general meeting that was held in 2003, 189 women attended. This figure is greater than the actual number of members because some of them belong to groups. Data on the trend of participation in meetings was not available.

Participation of women in meetings is good when it is compared to the AMCOS, here women contribute and have confidence. This is due to the opportunities they have been provided in the SACCOS like participation in the provision of credit and savings.

Policy

Members have not been involved in any policy formulation process. The members are not even aware that there exist national policies that safeguard them. They have not set any gender policy. It is only the RFSP programme that is providing them with advocacy skills. The impact is yet to be known. They are only following own by-laws whose formulation was guided by the RFSP and are gender sensitive.

Training

Members of the SACCOS have received minimum training the first one was conducted in December 2003 by the RFSP. The members of the Executive Committee have attended courses organized by the RFSP. They have not developed their own training programme. The ruling political party has been involved in sensitizing political leaders to encourage women to participate in groups.

4.1.5 MAMSERA Agricultural Marketing Cooperative Society.

The Society is located in Mamsera ward in Rombo district that has a total population of 246,479. Males are 116,856 and females 129,620. Mamsera ward has a population of 4,688 males and 4,956 females according to the 2002 population census.

The Society serves three villages that include Mamsera Juu, Mamsera Kati, Mamsera Chini and the neighbourhood Population of the three villages according to the 2003 census is as follows: Mamsera Kati 2345 people and 469 households, Mamsera Juu 2045 people and 409 households and Mamsera Chini 4690 people and 938 households

The society deals mainly with coffee marketing. It assists the members in selling coffee directly to the Coffee Auction at Moshi that is coordinated by TCB. Apart from coffee marketing the society has subsidiary activities that include operating a hardware shop and a brick making business.

Policy Formulation

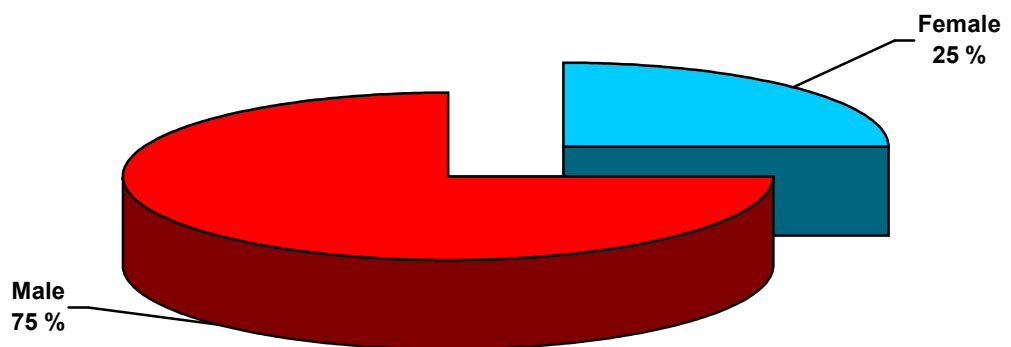
The society does not have a gender policy nor are the members aware of the existence of a National gender policy even the Cooperative Policy itself.

The society is no longer a member of the Secondary Society - KNCU. Therefore the Annual General meeting is the last stage in its decision making process. The Society does not any gender policy in place neither is there a plan of formulating it .

Leadership

The society is supervised by 12 committee members of whom 3 are female and 9 are male. The women were selected in the 1999 election for the first time. See the Figure 4.5 below whereby 25% of the members are females.

Figure 4.5 *Committee members of Mamsera AMCOS*



Employment

There are 6 employees of which one is a female and 5 are males. The female is the secretary who deals with the daily administration of the society. She is the brainchild of the society. She is highly committed and has attended several training programs on management that have increased her capacity.

Training

MEMCOOP training on member empowerment has facilitated in increasing the number of women members and opportunities for them to be elected as leaders. MEMCOP training has empowered women to such an extent that they are not afraid of contributing ideas in the Annual General Meeting. Women have gained confidence in speaking in meetings.

The number of men who are providing women portions of coffee to sell to the society is increasing but more research has to be done on this aspect as one may not be sure that it is the result of MEMCOP or the decline in the price of coffee so men have diversified to other income generating activities.

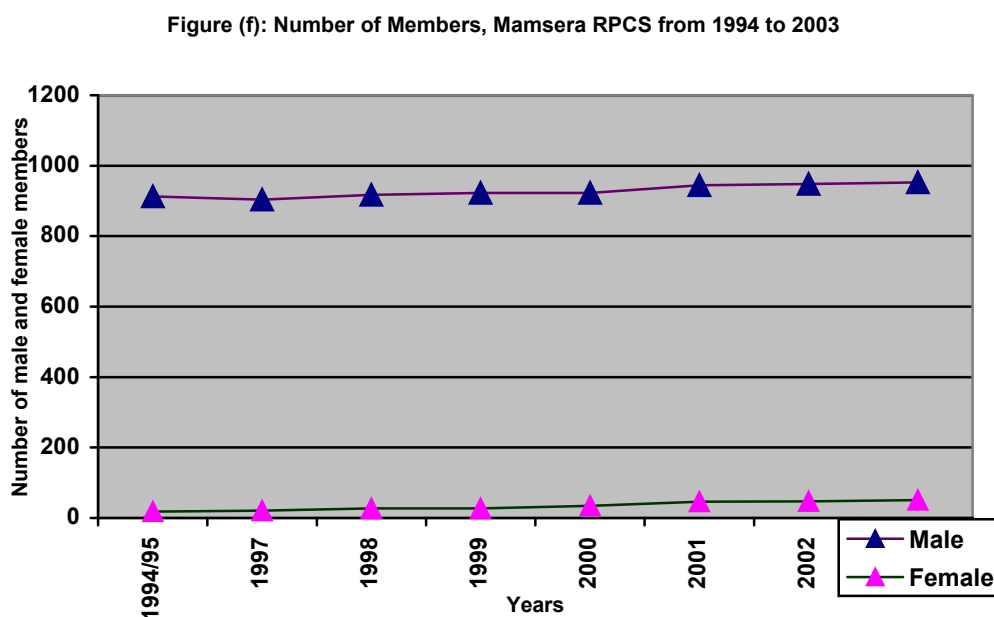
Envirocare an NGO has sensitized the community on land ownership rights. The Ruling political party has conducted seminars and sensitization meetings on gender.

Gender disaggregated data.

The AMCOS has gender disaggregated data that facilitates in monitoring its activities and also decision making.

There has been an increase of the number of female members from 18 in 1994 to 51 in 2003. About 2% of the women own land either through inheritance, being a widow or through purchase. See Figure 4.6

Figure 4.6 *Number of Memebers, Mamsera RPCS from 1994 to 2003*



Source: Mamsera Agricultural Marketing Society, 2004

The total number of coffee sold to the society is as shown of the table below :-

Table 4.4 *Coffee sales at Mamsera AMCOS from 1993 to 2002*

Villages	93/94	94/95	95/96	96/97	97/98	98/99	99/2000	2000/01	2001/02
Mamsera Juu	19391	37030	31376	23032	18216	16560	42223	19994	16573
Mamsera Kati	25603	39508	32266	26298	16731	17225	4387	29822	24876
Mamsera Chini	21877	31859	25163	17862	6087	13838	32633	28976	15999
Neighbours from nearby villages who are not members	18445	60575	37621	73069	4934	13057	85101		83140

Source: Mamsera Agricultural Marketing Society, 2004

Out of all this volume of coffee that the society markets only 2% is from women. This indicates the small volume of coffee that women sell to the society as members.

4.1.6 Nkoanrua Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Society.

It is located in Sing'isi village, Arumeru District in Arusha region. It is one of the oldest AMCOS in Arusha region. Formed in 1953 but later on broke into branches. At present we have Nkoanrua 1995 Ltd. The society deals with marketing coffee, but at present there has been a fluctuation in the volume of coffee sold due to unfavourable prices that has also affected membership.

Membership and gender disaggregated data.

The society was re-established in 1992 with 980 members of whom 12 were women. By 2001 the members had decreased to 105 members only with about 12 women. The reason for this decrease is due to two reasons; one is that some of the members have moved to the other societies that were formed due to closeness in getting services and secondly it is due to the inefficient operations of the cooperative societies.

The members who attended the focus group discussion said that women traditionally are not members of AMCOS . The few women members participating are mostly widows. The culture of people residing in this area is quite similar to that of the Legho Mullo and Mamsera Cooperative Societies whereby land is owned by men, women only have *usufruct* rights on land .

The society does not have any gender disaggregated data that facilitates in decision making and monitoring of its activities.

Policy Formulation.

The AMCOS does not have any gender policy and therefore it has not streamlined gender in any of its activities. In the focus group discussions that were attended by mainly men they claimed that at household level they recognise the role of women in production, especially after the decline in the price of coffee and even production. One man said:

BOX 4: Shift to female dominated Activities.

“ The coffee business that is male dominated is not good so we have shifted to agricultural activities that were practised by our wives like livestock keeping, tomato and onion production, and vegetable production. So at household level if we do not cooperate with our wives on income where will we get money?”

Leadership

It has an executive committee that consists of nine members who are all males. This is the case because traditionally it is a coffee producing area and they follow the patrilinear system.

Participation

Women do participate in the Annual General Meeting but the participation is usually low in terms of attendance and speaking. The AMCOS has not participated in any external policy formulation process at National level.

Rural Wealth Creator

To empower the members, Rural Wealth Creator an NGO formed in 2002 established smaller groups within the AMCOS in order to facilitate participation of both men and women and have innovativeness in marketing coffee and diversification. These groups deal with coffee, livestock keeping, vegetable production etc. Nine groups were formed that consisted of 15 to 20 members. Members of these groups consist of males and females.

The groups have informal by-laws on leadership that focus on the executive committee that consists of five members. The by-laws stress that 1/3 of the committee members have to be females. Secondly if, the chair is a male then the Secretary has to be a female and vice versa.

Training

The members have undergone training on member empowerment by MEMCOP. This training has had an impact on marketing but on gender participation the impact seems to be negligible.

4.2 Mviwata

Genesis of the Organization

The national network of small-scale farmers' group (MVIWATA) was established in 1993. The idea came from a farmer attended a meeting in Senegal on farmers networks. This farmer observed how Senegal had established Farmers Networks that played a great role in improving their livelihoods. He spread this idea to 21 others innovative farmers in Tanzania who agreed in 1993 to form a network of farmers for exchanging ideas. By 1995 there were about 40 members of whom 11 were females. These members jointly wrote the constitution of MVIWATA and thereafter it was registered in 1995 as an NGO under the Government of Tanzania.

The aim of the organisation was to increase the farmers' voice, to solve marketing problems, to enhance communication between and among farmers, cater for lobby and advocacy and other farmer related problems.

MVIWATA is financed by donors like FERT, AFD, and Agritererra while the government provides technical assistance. The organisation has a four tier structure which includes the national and the regional office that is under development and the groups that are made up of farmers.

Policy Formulation

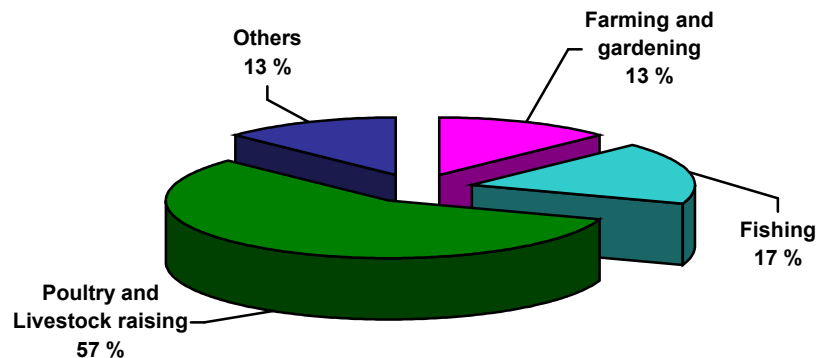
MVIWATA does not have a gender policy but it is in a process of preparing one. In spite of the lack of a policy there is no open gender discrimination. The Gender and extension manager has done deliberate efforts in streamlining gender in all the activities of the organisation. Two female members of the organization participated in the process of the formulation of the National Woman and Gender policy.

Gender Disaggregated data and members

The mission of the organisation focuses on formation of groups as one approach of improving livelihood. It states: "Let farmers unite and be empowered in deciding on their own economic and social development".

MVIWATA has about 5,200 active members in 19 regions in Tanzania. Out of the 600,000 targeted membership. These members are mainly from groups that are involved in various activities as follows:-

Figure 4.7 *Activities of MVIWATA members*



Source: MVIWATA (2004)

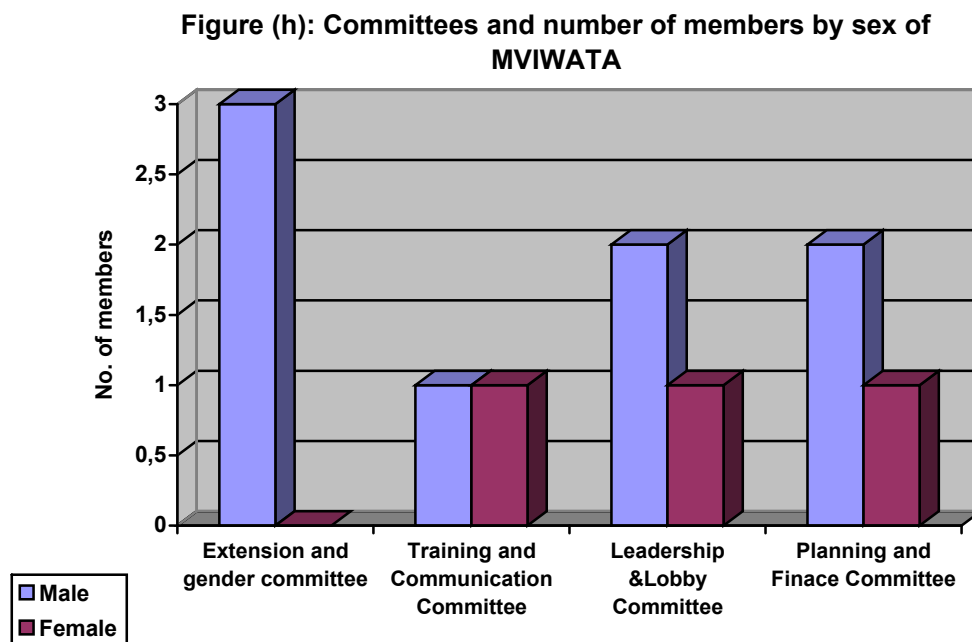
MVIWATA does not have gender disaggregated data. It is in the process of preparing a database of its members. This implies that membership data is not used in decision making and monitoring activities.

Leadership

The Steering body of MVIWATA is the General Assembly that is held once per year. The functions of the general assembly are to;

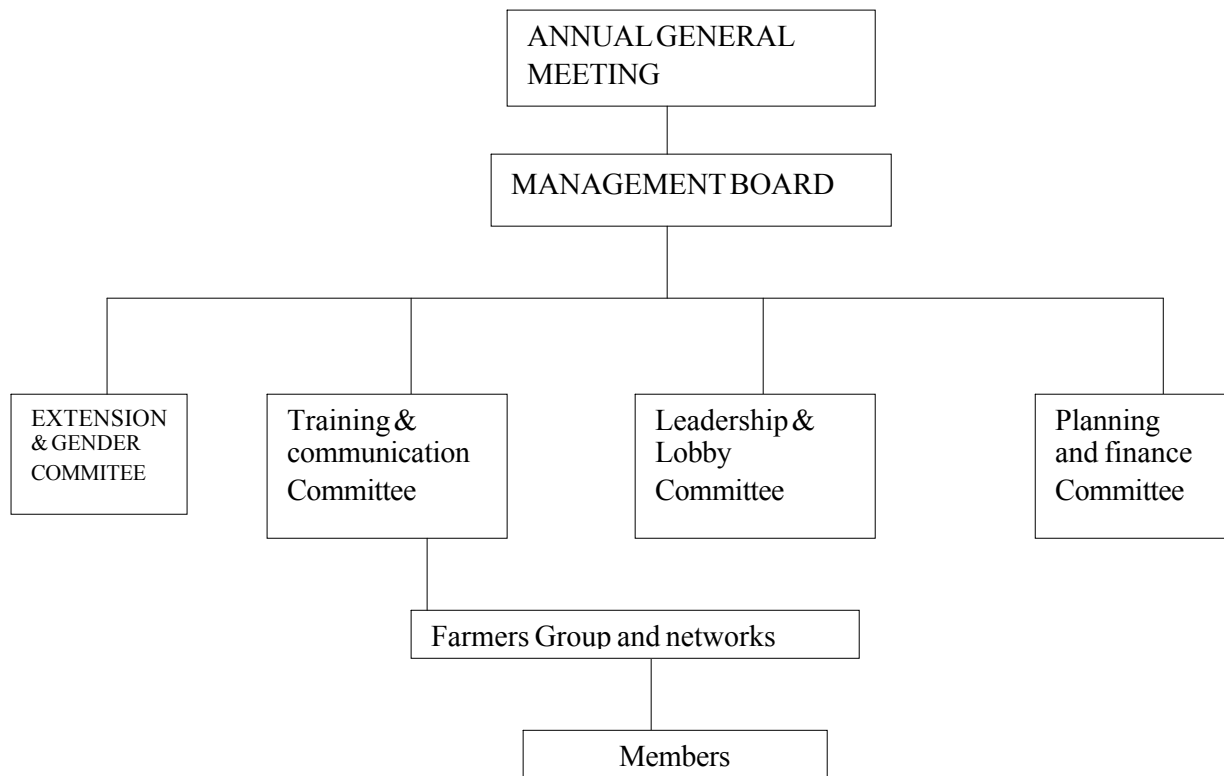
- Elect leaders;
- Receive and approve annual report;
- Approve the annual budget;
- Propose and approve strategic plans for the next period ;and
- Receive reports from members and any other interested person.

MVIWATA is managed by a management board that consist of nine members whereby, the senior leadership positions are all controlled by men of which the Chairperson is a male, the vice chairperson is a male, the secretary is a male, treasurer is a male there are also 5 other members in the board of which two are female. The board is composed of four sub- committees as shown in the figure below:-

Figure 4.8 *Committees and number of members by sex of MVIWATA*

Source: MVIWATA

The leadership structure is as shown below:



Source: MVIWATA 2004

Employment:

There are ten employees of which there is one female who is a secretary. The coordinator who is also involved with extension and gender is a male. Training and communication officer is a female while in administration and finance there is a male, the auditor is also a male; while there are 2 male drivers and 2 male guards.

Participation in Policy formulation.

There is an annual general meeting that is conducted once per year . The number of female participants attending this meeting has increased. In 2003 there were 67 females and 115 males, while in 2004 there were 114 females and 84 males. The main reason for this increase has been women promoters. Women have been encouraged to participate in meetings of groups even though they have more obligations in meeting the practical needs than men. Women are encouraged to send their ideas by writing or by any oral means if they are not able to attend meetings.

One of the deliberations of this year's annual general meeting is to have a ratio of one to one in participation in the annual general meeting. That is the number of male participants to be equal to the number of female participants.

Therefore the participation of both men and women in formulating policies at the national level of the organisation reflects gender equity. The only shortcoming is that members lack the ability of interpreting the policies and implementing them as required.

Participation at the village level whereby we have the farmers that form the network is not good. It has also been noticed that the communication system between the organisation and the groups is not good. The organisation is in the process of forming regional intermediaries that will be a network of farmers group at the village level.

Apart from meetings there are other mechanisms that ensure participation of both men and women which include motivation, training, provision of capital and initiation of study tours.

4.2.1 Training

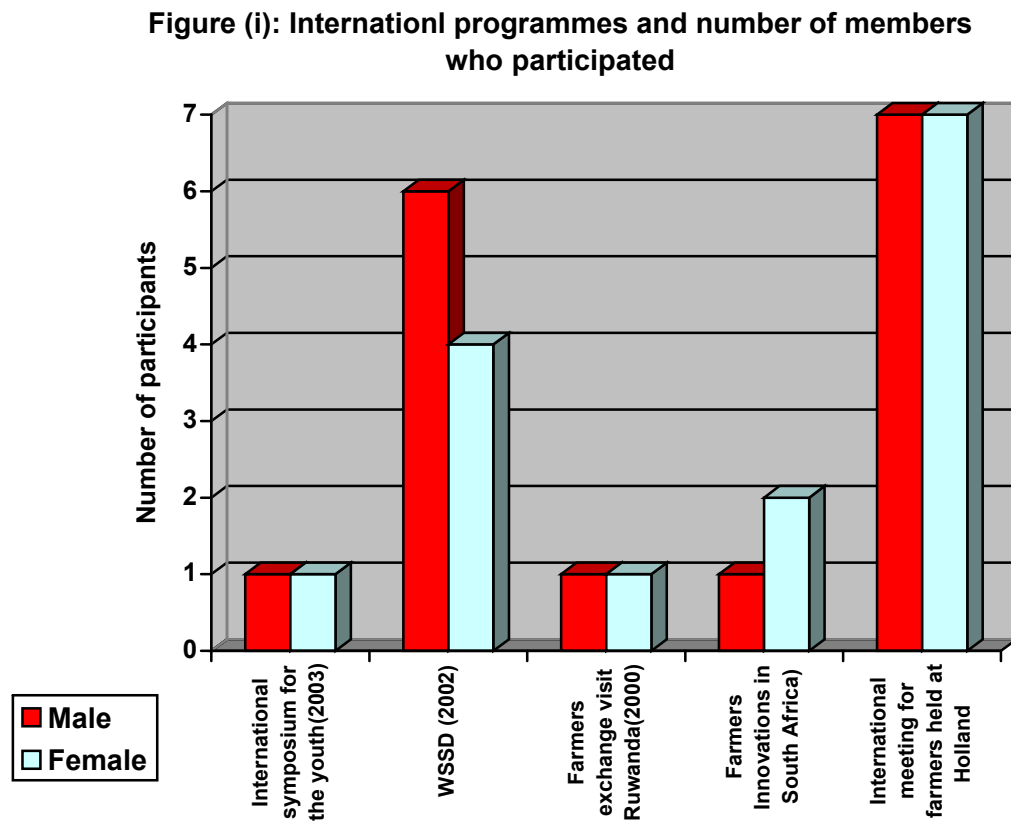
The organisation has used various approaches of building the capacity of its members. These include study tours, exchange visits, sensitization seminars, various courses and influential people presenting papers on cross cutting issues like gender, AIDS/HIV and environment at the annual general assembly.

There is an on going programme on lobbying and advocacy and so far 136 farmers have been trained as promoters between 1998 – 2003. Training is on leadership, communication, entrepreneurship, advocacy and lobbying. One third of these trained promoters are women. These promoters encourage women to participate in farmers groups and also form groups.

MVIWATA also has a strategy of targeting influential people to address pertinent issues. For example a workshop on the role of women in MVIWATA was held in 2002. The Minister for Women Affairs and Children was invited to address this issue. This was done purposely so as to encourage women to attend organisational meetings. It had a positive impact because in the following year more women attended the annual general assembly.

At national level, MVIWATA has also participated in policy formulation. Two Women in 1999 participated in the formulation of the National gender policy.

Members of the organisation have participated in international forums and exchange visits as shown below.

Figure 4.9 *International programmes and number of members who participated*

Source: MVIWATA 2004

Compared to the cooperatives MVIWATA has done great efforts in streamlining gender. One of the male members remarked that:

BOX 5: Men Encouraging Women Participation

“Some of the men are encouraging female members to join the farmers groups, because they have realized that female members have a role to play in such groups. Therefore without female members we cannot have a successful farmers group”.

4.3 Association of Kilimanjaro special coffee growers

The Association Of Kilimanjaro Special Coffee Growers (AKSCG) was formed in 2002. It is an Umbrella Association that consists of 60 groups that are its members. Each group has an average of 1000 members. The Association itself is funded by Technoserve an NGO. Groups are registered by the Ministry of Industries, the Ministry of Home affairs and The Ministry of Cooperatives.

The major aim of this association is to provide a competitive environment for coffee producers by encouraging their members to grow special high quality coffee. The

objectives of the association are; to assist members in sourcing finance, provide education on extension services on coffee, and marketing of coffee.

The Association does not have any gender disaggregated data that can assist in decision making, nor does it have any gender policy. Training programmes conducted by the Association are only on extension services based on coffee production. The attendance of women in these sessions is low. They also assist farmers in growing improved varieties of coffee.

On leadership most of the groups are headed by male chairpersons, only two have female chairs, while the vice chairpersons are all male. This may be cultural because exports crops are male dominated. One of the groups that is a member of this Association is Mrimbo Uuwo farmers group that is analysed below.

4.3.1 Mrimbo-uuwo farmers group

The essence of this group is that farmers were involved in an Integrated Pest Management Programme (IPM) of production of good quality coffee (special coffee). This programme was funded by GTZ-Germany. Farmers who were under this programme decided to form their own group due to the inefficiencies of operations of cooperative societies. These farmers were from Kiruweni, Kimangaro, Kondeni and Mawanjeni Villages in Moshi Rural District.

It started in 1998 with 200 members of whom 20 were women but presently membership has declined to 100 of which only 10 are women. These women are widows.

In the meetings they encourage women to participate because they do most of the on-farm coffee activities though they are shy in speaking in these meetings

This group is managed by a board of 12 members that consists of a chairperson who is a male, secretary who is a male, the treasurer cum manager is also a male. The rest of the members are male with an exception of two women who are government representatives and are ward level employees. One is an agricultural officer of the ward and the other is an agricultural officer of Kondeni village. This village has a good relationship with ward officials in the sense that the Ward Executive Officer (WEO) and Ward chairpersons are board members.

There are capacity building meetings held once per week for all the members on coffee growing and how to take care of coffee but most of the participants are male. The manager said that members are encouraged to come with their spouses because he is aware of the contribution of women in managing the coffee on-farm. Most of the women are not able to attend because of the duties that they have to perform at household level and some of them do not have the confidence of attending such meetings.

4.4 Summary of findings

- All the RPOs do not have any policy reflecting gender and have not participated in any policy formulation process at the national level with the exception of MVIWATA
- There is a problem of communicating policies from national RPOs to the primary level RPOs.

- Some of the members have not heard of the word gender and are also not aware of the existence of national policies including gender and other related policies
- RPOs do not have gender disaggregated data that can facilitate in monitoring of its activities, decision making and policy formulation at their level.
- RPOs in export crop producing areas, particularly coffee are male dominated and most of the members are males and a few are women who are mostly widows. Thus there is a relationship between ownership of land and membership in the RPO.
- RPO members/leaders lack lobbying and advocacy skills that can enable them to participate in various forums and also expand outreach except MVIWATA.
- RPOs lack training or sensitization programmes that can empower the members, men and women. A good example is Mamsera Agricultural Marketing Cooperative Society whereby members have been empowered by the training programmes conducted by MEMCOP.
- RPOs that have gender training/sensitization of its members like MVIWATA, members have seen the importance of streamlining gender and eventually having gender equity in their organisations.
- Very few women have leadership positions in the Rural Coffee Producer Organisations. This is the opposite case with The Legho Savings and Credit Society that provides financial services to its members and MVIWATA whose members have different activities and are involved in producing non-traditional export crops. Therefore there are both female and male leaders in such RPOs in national management boards/Executive committees.
- Where women have been leaders like the village chairperson of Legho village, women seem to have confidence that they can even be democratically elected by both men and women to become leaders.
- Very few women participate in meetings especially in the coffee growing areas. One of the reasons is due to the workload which they have domestically or cultural problems.
- Women who attend meetings are shy to contribute own ideas. They are shy to talk in public. Thus they have minimum contribution in formulating policies at RPO level. This is attributed to the culture of women not having opportunities in decision making.
- Lastly, gender equity is based on fair resource use by both men and women. It has been noted that women have limited access to resources. No emphasis has been done by the RPOs on this aspect. At least the RPOs could have reflected how they have made attempts to mainstream gender in their budgets.

5 Policy implications and conclusion

The findings of this study have significant implications on the country's policies and strategies that focus on gender and rural producer organizations. The study reveals that gender equity and mainstreaming in Rural producer organizations is minimal due to cultural and economic factors. Therefore there is a need for the rural producer organisations to take affirmative actions in incorporating both men and women in participation at all levels of power and decision making. Considering that Women and men have different issues and interests, both should participate. This can be enhanced by having gender aggregated data that will assist in monitoring the level of participation of both men and women.

Rural producer cooperatives that are mono-crop is mainly male dominated despite conducive policies and legal environment at national level membership. Thus there is a need for the cooperatives to encourage participation of women and men by diversifying the activities and crops. This will encourage women participation and will also lead to sustainable rural producer organisations. Mainstreaming gender in the budgets, training, exchanging experiences with other rural producer cooperatives and advocacy are fair alternatives though they are costly.

The gendering process in rural producer organisations is slow and it varies from one society to another. But the participation of both men and women is vital as it will bring to life different set of values and will create a more caring, pluralist and compassionate rural society.

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Annex 1

Institutions interviewed/visited:

1. Tanzania Federation of Cooperatives
2. MVIWATA
3. Kilimanjaro Native Cooperative Union
4. Mamsera Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Society
5. Legho Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Society
6. Legho Savings and Credit Cooperative Society
7. Nkoanrua Agricultural Marketing Cooperative Society
8. Tanzania Network of Non Governmental Organisations
9. Tanzania National Gender Network
10. Economic Social Research Foundation

Key people involved

- | | | |
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| 3. | Mrs. Shao | Mamsera Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Society |
| 4. | Mr. Kyara | Legho Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Society |
| 5. | Mr. Musa | Nkoanrua Agricultural Marketing Cooperative Society |
| 6. | Mr. Shekilango | MVIWATA |
| 7. | Mr. Yatera | Association of Kilimanjaro Special Coffee Growers Association |
| 8. | Mrs. Ngowi | Member Mrimbo- Uuwo Farmers group |