Failing to Learn or Learning to Fail?
A Meta-Analysis of Evaluations of Gender in Ethiopian Agricultural Development

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Second Round of Inclusion

Project (Implementer)	Rigor			Gender Included in Evaluation			Social Norm Change Desired		
	Quant	Qual	Evidence	None	Section	Woven	None	Claimed	Present
ABDISHE (CARE)	X	X			X	X		X	
AMDe (ACDI/VOCA)		X			X	X		X	
Defar (Send a Cow)		X			X			X	
Emergency Nutrition Response (GOAL)	X	X	X	X			X		
ENGINE (Save the Children)		X			X			X	
ESSPII EDRI PSNP 2013 (GoE)	X	X	X		X		X		
FEED II (ACDI/VOCA)	X	X	X	X	X		X		
GRAD (CARE)	X	X	X		X	X			X
LMD MTE (CNFA)		X			X	X		X	
LNWB (WFP)	X	X				X		X	
PRIME (Mercy Corps)		X			X		X	X	
SEAES (Oxfam America)	X	X		X				X	
WE RISE (CARE)	X	X	X		X	X			X

Rigor: Quantitative Sampling, Qualitative Presentation, Substantiated evidence for claims

Gender Included in Evaluation: No treatment of gender, Included largely in a single 'gender section,' Woven throughout

Social Norm Change Desired: No stated desire for social norm change, Claimed norm change (without evidence) or desired, present with substantial evidence

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What Works

- **Programming:** programs should contextualize gender relations, engage a variety of community stakeholders, including traditional leaders, men and boys.

- **Project design:** multi-level, multi-component projects which directly target gender transformation or women within their communities achieve the best results, and project Theories of Change should incorporate and address gender.

- **Evaluations:** collecting data on women and gender relations is crucial for learning. Focus should be placed on outcome and impact indicators and not only output. Regarding methods, mixed methods are important, with rigorous qualitative research offering key insights into the contextualized aspects that characterize women's lives, relationships, and communities.

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What Works (for programming) in Ethiopia

- Designing and implementing **multi-component programs** which incorporate gender norm change;
- Targeting gender relations and **work with husband/wife teams**;
- Facilitating **household and community discussions** on gender relations;
- Targeting and improving women's access to finances and **buttress with literacy and numeracy capacity-building** where needed;
- Pairing support for women's financial contributions to the household with **gender sensitization**;
- Creating community-based **linkages between women and their relevant legal protections;**
- Recognizing that **male and female-headed households are likely to require different programming**
- **Allot budget** to address gender-related items and **reduce women's opportunity cost** of participation

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What works (for building an evidence base)

- **Place women and/or gender relations at highest level of project design.** This ensures gender is captured in monitoring systems.

- **Every evaluation SOW should have a mandate to address gender aspects of both project and implementing organization.**

- **If using OECD criteria, develop gendered questions for each category.** (See CIMMYT Report for example)

- **Mainstream gender in the evaluations.**

- **Make qualitative research systematic and rigorous.** (See CIMMYT report or AEA365 blog for examples)

- **Carry forward gender into the most-read report sections: executive summary, lessons learned, and recommendations**. (Examples to follow)

- **Document if the project didn't address gender well** (Examples to follow)

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Table 7. GRAD Final Performance Evaluation Recommendations – Gender-Related	
#	Recommendations (n=23)
2	Gender of household heads needs to be more explicitly taken into consideration in future project design to ensure that female-headed households' unique barriers to livelihood opportunities are addressed
10	Balance the gender of staff and community volunteers to reflect the gender balance of project participants, and advocate with GoE to achieve a similar gender balance among their extension workers
20	Include a women's economic empowerment approach, coupled with explicit gender sensitization, in future USAID projects
21	Conduct a sustainability study of gender relationships to identify challenges to maintaining changes after the end of project support

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How and why gender wasn't properly incorporated – Document it!

- **Project Goal: investment strategy to target smallholder farmer poverty reduction through value chain enhancement activities, with a target for export dollars.**

- At the same time, women were meant to be specifically targeted and engaged as beneficiaries. However, the majority of the crops the project chose to address are commonly for export and dominated by men. As a result, women were marginalized through the selection of the export value chains. Here, the theory of change and accompanying activities, although with a stated interest in women, were unable to reach women due to local gender norms and practices (Tufts University 2015b – external evaluation of AMDe project).

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