
Breakout 8: Gender Targeting of Rural Financial Services: Is This Appropriate?

“Best Practices by Women’s Bank of Sri Lanka”

Authors

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Summary and Key Findings

This cases study explores gender targeting in rural finance through the practices of the Women’s Bank of Sri Lanka. The Women’s Bank mission is to engage resources, ideas and support of its members to raise their socio-economic and cultural status on the principle of self-help. Currently services are provided to 20000 of the 80000 needy families in the Sri Lanka. Replication and/or expansion of Women’s Bank of Sri Lanka to reach more of the population will necessitate activities undertaken by external funds and will justify an national level outreach. (p.13).

“Case Study of FINCA Uganda”

Author

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Summary and Key Findings

This case study examines gender targeting microfinance services provided by FINCA Uganda. The criterion for selection for inclusion in the FU program is that clients have a viable income generating business. The types of activities and products supported are that of commercial, manufacturing, and service delivery; clients’ businesses include an array of privately owned shops and food, craft and brewery production. (p. 5) Gender targeted micro-finance services can be very effective to fight poverty because the target group owns the program and feels that they belong to the institution, while at the same time the institution gets to better understand & serve the needs of the clients.

Break out session 8 notes

Kachesa Bbenkale

Problems for women in South Africa:

- Donors/lenders not always interested in gender mainstreaming
- Products may not match needs of women – demands of home and compete with business
- In South African men have high expectation for women at home this may compete with the success of their business
- Credit not enough. Women need savings, ability to receive transfers from men in urban areas

HIV/AIDS tool kit

- Once MFIs internalize the prevention process, it can be given to clients and small business deal with the epidemic

CAPACITY BUILDING

- Business skills for women – not enough capacity building for women this accompanies loans, the business women are involved in are too small to support their families land to support donor agencies
- Once projects are done they can open the vision of women to get them involved in larger enterprises

1. Increasing awareness of women/gender targeting
2. HIV/AIDS toolkit
3. Education/capacity building for women

- Repayment rates in S. Africa are 50% for FINCA – MFIs there have not been successful, so the issue of women so along with the improvement of microfinance generally.

Q. What kind of education/training is appropriate for women in Africa?

A. It is easy for NGOs to train women in several areas, but not necessarily in areas that can help them increase earnings. Getting women to the classroom is a challenge. You have to show the benefits of training community radio could also be a useful way to reach women in the home. Can also use existing institutions (churches etc)

Q. What do you do to change the attitude of the rest of the faculty as women become more involved in business?

A. Short training groups, women can discuss their issues together changing attitudes take time. In Uganda, the government has a program to work on “emancipating” women. As the years go on, men are increasingly willing to let women manage funds.

* Freedom from hunger Credit for Education module show training together

Q. What indicators do you use to monitor social impacts of FINCA?

A. Founder of FINCA is spearheading the effort to monitor the impact. Issues considered include schooling for children to loan recipients

Challenge: In South Africa, most MFIs are not interested in X impacts, the focus is still on financial sustainability

Q. If MFIs have done well in South Africa as Stand-alone credit services, how do you handle financing additional services?

A. Micro enterprise Alliance donors are helping find the development of public goods, including the HIV tool kit. They didn't expect lenders to be able to enact all these projects on their own – after teaching them about new services and showing them government agencies and others that might be willing to help support them.

Q. Have you found needs for larger loans and individual (as opposed to group) lending? How about groups of women producers who need funding @ higher level

A. Cooperatives can help, but larger loans are hard to find. One case in Botswana; large groups of 400 women, trained in skills and business, and \$ is provided in larger chunks. Conventional MFIs can't go in to long term lending because their funding is short term, Bigger clients might benefit from strategies like leasing, though this doesn't reach women very well MNCs also give large scale loans (though often for their benefits).

Q. Is there equal access to resources across genders? Law reforms do not always result in improved situations for women. What should donors do to get involved in the improvement of the law for women? Is their imprisonment for debts?

A. Not really in Uganda – you are given a period to pay, if not you have to go to civil court. In South Africa, it is almost impossible to prosecute anyone (for anything) been implemented because of national attitude
Focusing on women not just as care takers of the family, but for women in themselves. It is hard to do this through MFIs. It is Important to design products that can best serve their needs.