



Australian Government  
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International Agricultural Research

Australian  
Aid

# Aik Saath



# ایک ساتھ

'Together'

## Review of Gender in Development

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AGRICULTURE VALUE CHAIN COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH PROGRAM

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## Introduction

Aik Saath means “together” in Urdu. It is also the name of an Australian research program in Pakistan supported by ACIAR and DFAT. This program comprises technical research projects selected for their potential to deliver benefits to the rural poor, particularly women.

“Together” applies to many aspects of the program including the two countries involved, as well as the four projects working on different crops from cattle to chickpeas. It also reflects the program goal of ensuring both women and men in smallholder families benefit from the research. This goal is very clear in the Program Design Document and the Aid Investment Plan for Pakistan (see extracts in Appendices 1 &2). It is also extremely challenging.

This document is the output from the first step towards addressing this challenge. The Aik Saath program coordinator undertook a wide-ranging, non-academic review of the many issues related to gender in agricultural development. This provided a glimpse of the wealth of activity in this field, past and present. It also enabled a process of mapping the issues and approaches. This review distils these into a number of themes within the perspectives of policy and practice related to gender inclusiveness as well as the particular themes related to the rural perspective.

The learnings from this review process enabled an initial gender strategy to be developed and prompted wider discussions and valued input from experts in the field. This included intensive consultation and workshops with members of the project teams within the Aik Saath program. As a result, by mid-2018, a robust program-level strategy and project-level plans for gender inclusiveness were in place, including scope for ongoing professional development. This recognises both the scale of the challenge and the breadth of available expertise and information, which is glimpsed in this review.

## Summary of Themes

1. **The Policy Perspective: WHAT is women empowerment and WHY such a strong focus in AVCCR?**
  - Policy Overview
  - Business case supporting policy
  - Policy related to Education
  - Policy related to Nutrition
2. **Policy into Practice: Some important factors affecting implementation**
  - M&E and Impact
  - Mainstreaming
  - Male perspective
  - Some context for Pakistan
  - What are the risks of focusing on women's empowerment?
3. **The Practice Perspective: HOW and WHEN to implement women's inclusiveness**
  - Practice Overview
  - Value Chain and Enterprise Development
  - Finance
  - Networks
  - Training
4. **The Rural Sector Perspective:**
  - a. Policy related to the Rural Sector
  - b. Practice related to the Rural Sector
    - Gender roles in the rural sector
    - Information separation (extension issues)
    - Commodity-specific approaches to gender in the rural sector

## The Policy Perspective

### WHAT IS WOMEN EMPOWERMENT AND WHY SUCH A STRONG FOCUS IN AVCCR?

#### Policy Overview

Article 38 of the Constitution of Pakistan *'guarantees citizens the right to pursue economic opportunities irrespective of sex, caste or creed and related labour laws'*<sup>1</sup>

Many development organisations have gender policy documents, including the UN<sup>2</sup>;

*UN Sustainable Development Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls*

also ECOSOC (United Nations Economic and Social Council), which includes IFAD<sup>3</sup>, FAO<sup>4,5</sup>, WHO; DFAT<sup>6,7,8</sup>; MDF<sup>9</sup>; CGIAR<sup>10</sup>; Gates Foundation<sup>11</sup>; DFID<sup>12</sup>. ACIAR's gender policy<sup>13</sup> is currently under review. Any of these documents provides detail on the rationale for the need to focus on gender issues in development.

Policy documents such as these are also useful for answering questions such as **"What is women's empowerment?"**. It is also helpful to understand the factors that contribute to disempowerment, specific to the situation of women in rural Pakistan. These factors are developed into an index by a recent IFPRI study<sup>14</sup>, which defines empowerment as:

***"access and control over resources such as income, assets, and time; and as ability to influence decisions such as those relating to production, household expenditure allocations, children's marriages, daughter's education, contraceptive use, and personal freedom of movement. In essence, we define women's empowerment in terms of access and agency."***

A third aspect of women's empowerment is **inclusion**, as in recognition and evaluation of the contribution made and constraints suffered by women. In the Pakistani rural context, these constraints are summarised in a 2011 review by Begum and Yasmin<sup>15</sup>, as follows:

#### Major Constraints faced by Women in Agriculture (in Pakistan)

- Poor Health and Malnutrition
- Lack or Complete Absence of Education
- Ignorance for Using Latest Means of Agriculture
- Lack of Land Ownership and Access to Credit Facilities
- Lack of Segregated Economic Policy & Reforms (Policy changes affect women differently than men)

- Natural Environment (illiterate women poorly placed to foresee weather changes)
- Migration
- Replacement of Female by Technology (May reduce drudgery but also require literacy & skills to operate)
- Low Skill and Low Paid Activities (contribution goes unrecognized and unrecorded mostly.)

The DFAT Strategy places women empowerment as one of three priorities<sup>16</sup> for achieving equal opportunities, rights and responsibilities for women:

1. Enhancing women’s voice in decision-making, leadership and peace-building
2. Promoting women’s economic empowerment
3. Ending violence against women and girls

Through the UNWomen organisation, more than 1046 business leaders around the world have committed to these Women’s Empowerment Principles<sup>17</sup>

- Establish high-level corporate leadership for gender equality.
- Treat all women and men fairly at work—respect and support human rights and non-discrimination.
- Ensure the health, safety and well-being of all women and men workers.
- Promote education, training and professional development for women.
- Implement enterprise development, supply chain and marketing practices that empower women.
- Promote equality through community initiatives and advocacy.
- Measure and publicly report on progress to achieve gender equality.

#### **Business case supporting policy**

The economic cost of non-participation by women in the workforce has been estimated by numerous researchers. “Smart Economics” is used to describe the economic efficiency of investing in women’s development<sup>18</sup>. UN Women has a useful summary<sup>19</sup> of factors related to participation, including unpaid care work and limited access to finance, both of which limit women’s ability to start businesses capable of driving economic growth. These limitations also apply in agriculture, a key economic driver in developing countries, where women provide significant labour but lack access to knowledge and technology that can boost productivity. The Development Policy Centre (Devpolicy) is a think tank for aid and development serving Australia, the region, and the global development community<sup>20</sup>.

***Relevance to AVCCR: The program is focussed on understanding the role of women in each of the agricultural value chains under study and seeking opportunities to enhance their participation.***

*“Experience over recent decades demonstrates that gender equality, economic growth and development are mutually reinforcing and significantly correlated. The relationship runs in two directions<sup>21</sup>.”*

**Policy related to Education**

Lower access to education for girls than for boys also limits their ability to add value to the economy, whether at village school level or in higher education.

***Relevance to AVCCR: Where the projects interact with large landholders providing schooling opportunities for boys, there may be opportunities to explore equity of opportunity for girls***

The literature provides evidence of gender discrimination in higher education in Pakistan. However, this is a global issue with initiatives such as Science in Australia Gender Equity (SAGE)<sup>22</sup> underway to address gender imbalances in senior staffing of universities, science institutes and similar bodies. Since industry will probably rarely prioritise pro-poor value chain research, capacity building in Pakistan research organisations will also need to be built around pro-poor and gender-sensitive research principles and methods<sup>23</sup>.

***Relevance to AVCCR: The program will be partnering closely with universities, government and other research organisations and can facilitate capacity-building in support of equal opportunities for female staff.***

**Policy related to Nutrition**

Poor nutrition has impacts beyond the level of denial of human rights. While both genders are affected, women have a key role through their nutritional status during pregnancy and in caring for infants. Childhood stunting acts as a brake on economic opportunities, impairing physical and mental capability. Pakistan's under-5 stunting rates have been estimated at 44%<sup>24,25</sup>. Pakistan ranks third in the world with 9.8 million children suffering from stunting<sup>26</sup>. 50% of malnutrition cases are linked to chronic diarrhoea caused by lack of clean water, decent sanitation and good hygiene. Australia is involved in a complementary feeding program through the World Bank Multi-Donor Trust Fund for Nutrition. A 2007 World Bank report linked agriculture to a pathway to better nutrition<sup>27</sup>.

***Relevance to AVCCR: The program is focussed on underpinning economic development through assisting poor farmers benefit from value chain improvements. There may also be opportunities for direct benefits to smallholder families from improved supplies of nutritious foods. Other potential links to explore include partnering with health and nutrition programs to deliver farming information.***

**Policy related to the Rural Sector**

*Women in Pakistan make up 39 percent of the labor force in agriculture compared to 10 percent in nonagriculture employment. Approximately 75 percent of total female employment depends upon agriculture and 84 percent of the women employed in the country are in the rural areas (GOP 2013). But despite their participation, women are far less likely to own income-generating assets such as land, agricultural*

*equipment, and large livestock or have a say in the household's production and other decisions<sup>28</sup>.*

For decades, a strong case has been made for adopting a gender perspective in the rural sector. A 1993 FAO policy paper<sup>29</sup> includes a chapter by Khawar Mumtaz<sup>30</sup> outlining the situation in Pakistan. In 2011, FAO is continuing to make the case<sup>31,32</sup>. As early as 1986, a review of the CGIAR Centres<sup>33</sup> by Janet Jiggins<sup>34</sup> highlights the urgent need to focus Agricultural Research more closely on the roles and opinions of female producers due, in part, to structural change such as male migration. Today, CGIAR policy is to focus on gender, in terms of supporting women scientists and in the development outcomes of their research<sup>35</sup>, as well as sharing the challenges and lessons through many resources at the CGIAR Gender Network site<sup>36</sup>.

*The importance of agriculture in poverty reduction derives from two basic circumstances: (a) the incidence of poverty is disproportionately high in developing countries, which still rely heavily on agriculture for output and employment; and (b) as the poorest households also have few assets and no skills, they typically rely more on agriculture and generally face many obstacles in connecting with the non-agricultural economy for income and employment. Social and economic exclusion further reduce alternative opportunities that may be open to certain groups, including women, youth, ethnic minorities and Indigenous people<sup>37</sup>.*

Some of the above resources, as well as a 2015 guide by DFID<sup>38</sup> and 2008 World Bank sourcebook<sup>39</sup> are noted in a useful DFAT Guidance Note<sup>40</sup>, which also provides an excellent overview of approaches to undertaking and evaluating projects with a focus on women empowerment. This is summarised as follows:

**DFAT activity managers can:**

- Integrate gender equality concerns into analysis that is commissioned or commission specific gender analysis as needed for the agriculture sector
- Ensure that DFAT's agriculture investments:
  - do no harm to women and gender dynamics
  - work on agricultural value chains, technologies and policies that have a potential to empower women
  - measure changes in women's empowerment<sup>41</sup>.

***Relevance to AVCCR: The program is focused on the rural sector.***



## Policy into Practice

### SOME IMPORTANT FACTORS AFFECTING IMPLEMENTATION

#### M&E AND IMPACT

A key consideration when undertaking gender-oriented projects is how to monitor and evaluate the project itself as well as its eventual wider impact (given that ACIAR's focus is Research for Development, rather than Development per se). Monitoring, Evaluation and Impact Assessment is a large field with many frameworks and guidelines. Most of these, including the ACIAR guidelines<sup>42</sup> are general, with no particular approach for gender-focussed projects. One exception is the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI)<sup>43</sup> (recently abbreviated<sup>44</sup>), which is quite well supported by USAID<sup>45</sup>. DFAT operates the generic Office of Development Effectiveness (ODE)<sup>46</sup> and also includes various evaluation frameworks (including WEAI) in DFAT's Operational Guidelines<sup>47</sup>.

***Relevance to AVCCR: The program has developed a Performance Framework which includes several gender-oriented indicators. Individual projects will determine how to provide evidence of progress against these.***

#### MAINSTREAMING

This relates to considering gender in all matters, rather than as a separate topic that is only considered on occasions. The ECOSOC (United Nations Economic and Social Council) 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<sup>48</sup>.”

Some writers note that other issues such as disability should also be mainstreamed<sup>49</sup>

***Relevance to AVCCR: See below***

#### MALE PERSPECTIVE

This is related to gender mainstreaming in recognising that there are major pitfalls in addressing women only. A 2013 journal devoted to the topic opens with the lines:

***“There are compelling reasons / both pragmatic and principled / to work with men as allies to achieve lasting transformation in gender relations benefiting both women and men<sup>50</sup>.”***

This is not a new concept, since a 1997 edition of the same journal states:

*“Widening the gender perspective to include men and masculinities should broaden and deepen our understanding of power and inequality not only between men and women but in other social relationships and thus increase the effectiveness of development interventions<sup>51”</sup>*

***AVCCR team members will have the opportunity to explore the challenges and benefits both of gender mainstreaming and of researching the male perspective in a wide range of contexts in Pakistan.***

### SOME CONTEXT FOR PAKISTAN

There are many examples of past and current development projects in Pakistan focused on Women Empowerment and with potential lessons for AVCCR project teams. While ASLP was not designed from scratch with a gender focus, it did include a Social project in latter years and several of the projects had valuable aspects of engaging with women’s skills and enterprise development<sup>52</sup>. The DFAT Women’s Economic Empowerment and Market Development Program (KP)<sup>53</sup> is an ongoing program.

It is also important to develop awareness of ongoing or completed gender-focused work by other donors, such as USAID<sup>54</sup>, CIDA/KASHF<sup>55</sup>, MEDA<sup>56</sup>, AKRSP<sup>57</sup>, Aurat Foundation<sup>58</sup> and others.

Recent (2016) research on women empowerment in Pakistan is also available from the International Food Policy Research Institute<sup>59</sup> (with a useful literature review) and an analysis from the Applied Economics Research Centre (AERC), University of Karachi<sup>60</sup> which states that about 35.9% women have lower, 54.1% have moderate and only 10% women have a high level of empowerment. The Asian Development Bank has a recent gender analysis for Pakistan<sup>61</sup>. The World Economic Forum’s Global Gender Gap Report 2015 ranks Pakistan 143 out of 145 countries in economic participation and opportunities and 135 in educational attainment<sup>62</sup>.

Several papers have assessed that women in rural Pakistan are often at the lower end of the empowerment scale<sup>63,64</sup>.

The Pakistan Government has responded to these issues through the aforementioned Vision 2025 as well as the National Plan for the Advancement and Empowerment of Women and the National Policy for the Development and Empowerment of Women and various channels for micro credit such as: National Bank of Pakistan; National Rural Support Program; Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund (PPAF); Rural Support Programmes (RSPs); First Women Bank (FWB); Agricultural Development Bank (ADB); Khushali Bank; and Benazir Income Support Program (BISP). Pakistan’s National Commission on the Status of Women was in hiatus for most of 2016, until Khawar Mumtaz was reappointed as Chair in October<sup>65</sup>.

However, the 2016 report by UNWomen analyses in detail the *social and economic vulnerabilities that keep the Pakistani woman underpaid and overworked, even when she has overcome structural and social barriers to seek employment*<sup>66</sup>. A recent study based on interviews with women states that *the*

*government is not taking solid initiatives for the protection of women rights. Most of the females, about 78.5%, were unaware about Muslim family law act that has clauses about the rights of women<sup>67</sup>.*

A number of papers discuss the role of religion in women's empowerment in Pakistan, noting the support for women's rights within Islam<sup>68,69</sup>, although others note that the application of this support is more nuanced<sup>70</sup>. A key point, which applies to many factors other than religion is the need to:

*"... avoid stereotyping, as this has a huge negative impact on women's rights: the homogenisation of diverse groups ignores the diversity of experiences, and often means that women lose their voice in the process<sup>71</sup>."*

*AVCCR operates in the context of Punjab and Sindh in Pakistan. While recognising the challenges, there are also many opportunities to link with the many private and public programs (including Provincial Government initiatives<sup>72</sup>) in order to maximise the potential impacts of the research outcomes*

#### WHAT ARE THE RISKS OF FOCUSING ON WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT?

Any change brings with it risks that should be assessed and minimised. There have been examples in the past of perverse outcomes from well-intentioned interventions. These include instances of male on female violence or excessive female workloads due to extra, income-producing duties.

*"Careful analysis and considered interventions are needed so women's economic participation is empowering and does not exacerbate inequalities or place unfair burdens on women and their children<sup>73</sup>.*

*"Gender equality is a politically and culturally sensitive area that requires careful gender and political economy analysis. It requires us to commit to do no harm and take into account challenges faced by countries in or emerging from fragility and conflict<sup>74</sup>.*

A less harmful, but still serious risk is of a disappointing impact from investments into women's empowerment. Among numerous possible causes, inadequate time and effort invested in understanding the cultural context is a high risk, as discussed later.

*"While directly facilitating collaboration among women has been proven to be a worthwhile approach to improving*

*household livelihoods.....an alternative approach .....is to work on changing the structure of decision-making within the household so as to facilitate the (male) heads developing a more positive attitude to collaboration outside the family.<sup>75</sup>*

***Relevance to AVCCR: The program will incorporate awareness of any such risks into training and include in the Risk Management Plan.***

## The Practice Perspective

### HOW AND WHEN TO IMPLEMENT WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

#### PRACTICE OVERVIEW

As a general principle, it is recognised that detailed studies into aspects of women empowerment will require advice and supervision from gender expert(s). However, this does risk parking gender issues in a separate “silo” from the “main” research program, (as occurred in parts of ASLP), rather than being mainstreamed across all activities. Moon and Blackman (2014)<sup>76</sup> provide a guide for natural scientists to better understand the approaches taken by social scientists, as a basis for improved integration.

As noted above, stereotyping by ignoring the diversity of groups and experiences is highly undesirable. The literature provides ample evidence of this diversity and of the diverse approaches taken to address women's empowerment in different contexts (some of which are touched on below).

Nevertheless, it is important to identify some broad principles for addressing women's empowerment in agricultural research. These are summarised in five pages by Njuki (2016)<sup>77</sup>, who provides four clear entry points to a systemic process for gender integration. Importantly, this covers both the design of the research itself plus the staffing and conduct of the research team. Leduc (2009) provides an alternative approach for comparison<sup>78</sup>

Elias and Hermanowicz (2016) provide principles for gender-responsive communications<sup>79</sup>, also via a podcast.

***Relevance to AVCCR: The program will be structured with ongoing availability of training and gender expertise at both program-level and project -level , tailored to project needs***

#### VALUE CHAIN AND ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT

The dual focus of AVCCR on women empowerment and value chains highlights some challenges shared by these two topics:

Just as there is enormous diversity in the roles and contexts of women, so there is in the value chains that connect input suppliers, via producers and distributors, to consumers. In both the gender and value chain contexts, this diversity is a challenge to traditional research methods which seek to remove variability as far as possible.

To deal with this, some agricultural research for development has self-identified as “gender-focussed” by virtue of building in some level of gender engagement (often, in doing so, making a great difference to the lives of the individuals involved). Similarly, much agricultural research in the past has self-identified as “value chain” research simply by noting that the commodity under study would enter a distribution system. Clearly, to maximise the impact of research for development, a more committed and informed approach to gender engagement and value chain is required. This needs a bridge between the traditional science and the dynamic nature of social and market contexts.

The rationale and tools for taking a more holistic approach to women empowerment are summarised throughout this document. There is a similar rationale and range of tools for more thorough approaches to agricultural value chains<sup>80,81,82,83,84</sup>. There are also many guides<sup>85,86,87</sup> and case studies<sup>88,89,90,91,92,93,94,95,96,97</sup> illustrating how a genuine value chain focus can benefit small holder families and women in particular<sup>98</sup>. DFAT previously funded a value chain program in Indonesia, commissioned by ACIAR, and many of the reports and other documentation would have general relevance<sup>99</sup>.

***Relevance to AVCCR: The program will provide support to project teams to build awareness and understanding of how enterprise opportunities for women along the value chain could emerge. It will also build linkages with value chain participants in the commercial sector to help increase such opportunities. There are opportunities to extract further learnings by re-visiting some of the ASLP legacy projects.***

## FINANCE

Many of the guides and case studies above cover aspects of financing as a key enabling factor in value chains. The previous ASLP Social Research in Pakistan noted in surveys that finance was ranked highly as an obstacle to increasing income by adopting new farming approaches<sup>100</sup>. This report also noted the educational and cultural barriers to women obtaining finance in Pakistan and other countries (confirmed in a recent analysis by CGAP<sup>101</sup>). This is despite women being reportedly more trustworthy with finances than men.

In the context of AVCCR, this aspect of development sits well beyond the expected research outcomes. Nevertheless, finance is clearly a major potential barrier to the delivery of impacts from the program. Therefore, some basic understanding of the issues and the potential to seek partnerships to address these, would be valuable.

Detailed guides are available<sup>102</sup>, as well as case studies, including a recent analysis funded by DFAT<sup>103</sup>. The Market Development Facility (MDF) also has close links with finance and microfinance organisations in Pakistan<sup>104</sup>. Many examples are available of women empowerment being enabled by providers of microfinance<sup>105,106,107,108,109,110,111</sup>. There are also cases of women collectively organising self-funding at village level<sup>112</sup>.

***Relevance to AVCCR: The program will provide training and create linkages with the finance sector.***

## NETWORKS

As is clear, the diversity and complexity is a common theme through the discussion of gender issues and policy with its varying levels of implementation as well as in the wide range of practices employed by practitioners. This requires openness to ongoing learning and an awareness of networks that can facilitate this learning and contribute advice, news and ideas, while potentially supporting AVCCR itself.

At the inter-agency level, the Inter Agency Gender and Development Group (INGAD) comprises donors and multilateral agencies working to promote gender equality and interagency coordination in Pakistan. INGAD is co-chaired by Australia and UN Women<sup>113</sup>. The IFRPI Gender Task Force has had the lead role in coordinating approaches to gender research across the CGIAR centres. There continues to be a role for a gender task force to coordinate, support, and publicize gender research institute-wide. Each Centre

has a Gender Strategy<sup>114</sup> with a 6-monthly reporting process to the Fund Council on gender and diversity developments throughout the CGIAR system<sup>115</sup>. There are Gender and Development Networks in the UK<sup>116</sup> and Australia<sup>117</sup>.

Other networks are not specifically gender-focussed, but would also provide opportunities for cross-learning and professional development. Researchers in Agriculture for International Development (RAID)<sup>118</sup> is an Australian-based not-for-profit organisation, bringing together early to mid-career researchers working in developing countries. Agrilinks<sup>119</sup> is an online hub connected to USAID's Feed the Future where "food security and agriculture professionals can contribute knowledge, learn about upcoming events and connect with other practitioners."

BEAM (Building Effective and Accessible Markets)<sup>120</sup> provides "a space to share knowledge and learning about the role of market systems in reducing poverty". Microlinks is a USAID platform for sharing good practice in inclusive market development around the world<sup>121</sup>.

There are also potential benefits from engaging with women's organisations in Pakistan<sup>122,123,124</sup> in order to keep updated on initiatives in the gender field.

***Relevance to AVCCR: The program will encourage engagement in these networks by project staff as part of the ongoing development of capability in planning for gender outcomes***

## TRAINING

In addition to the information resources noted above, it would be beneficial to identify training resources to underpin the selection and implementation of approaches to women's empowerment in AVCCR. DFAT have a range of gender equality training resources for staff<sup>125</sup>, but their wider availability is not known. Some other resources have been identified<sup>126,127,128</sup> but further advice from gender experts is required to confirm appropriate content and delivery. GREAT (Gender-Responsive Researchers Equipped For Agricultural Transformation) offers a blended model of two face-to-face courses with field work and e-mentoring and learning in between, structured in three parts<sup>129</sup>. It is only offered in Africa. A new training resource for Participatory Gender Training has recently (2017) been developed from an ACIAR irrigation project in India<sup>130</sup>

***Relevance to AVCCR: Through linkages with a range of gender experts as well as through the above networks,, the program will identify and coordinate appropriate training in collaboration with project staff.***

## Practice related to the Rural Sector

Some of the issues and resources described above also apply in the rural sector. However, in the context of AVCCR, some particular factors merit further emphasis.

The rural sector, by its nature, is disadvantaged by issues of separation - from information, from technology (both communications technology and farm management technology) and from markets. Generally, this separation is more extreme for women, particularly in Pakistan.

### GENDER ROLES IN THE RURAL SECTOR

Rural women are most likely to carry multiple work responsibilities, including family care roles as well as farm labour and postharvest processing. For example:

*“Women are an integral part of the vegetable production in country. However, their work is mostly unpaid and not considered even in the national statistics that shows only 17% of women are employed in agriculture. Therefore, most of the agricultural value chain development projects tend to focus on men and ignore the important role of women, marginalizing them in terms of knowledge, skills and linkages<sup>131</sup>.”*

However, beyond these generalisations, the situations with individual women, families, communities, and districts varies enormously and evolves over time, whatever country, crop or value chain is involved. In traditional technical research, improved insights are often (not always) gained through increased specialisation. In contrast, to orient technical research towards women empowerment (beyond a narrow spectrum of farmers) an appreciation of the diverse lessons from a broad spectrum of social research is needed. For example, recent (mostly value chain-oriented) socioeconomic research in PNG provides a rich vein of approaches, lessons and expertise that could be of value to AVCCR<sup>132,133,134</sup>.

In Pakistan, past studies have noted that, within one village, differing clans might vary in their levels of women's empowerment (as in Inclusion, Access and Agency)<sup>135,136</sup>. *“Rural Pakistan is a good example of a familist, patriarchal society”*. Spriggs et al<sup>137</sup> explored the attitude of the (male) heads of smallholder farm households in rural Pakistan to collaboration with other households and to see how, if at all, this attitude is modified by the empowerment of their spouses within the household.

### INFORMATION SEPARATION (EXTENSION ISSUES)

There is extensive extension literature, for developed and developing countries alike, addressing the challenges of (a) transmitting information to rural producers and (b) overcoming barriers to adoption. Previous work in Pakistan may be particularly valuable in providing lessons to AVCCR on approaches such as Farmer Field Schools, Best Practice Guides, Mobile Phone messaging<sup>138</sup> and collaboration with Provincial extension services and specialised extension services such as SOFT. While each AVCCR project



will develop its own communication plan, there may be scope for cross-learning, particularly on developing concepts in ICT-enabled remote delivery of information<sup>139,140,141</sup>. Another aspect in common is the benefit and risk of partnering with the commercial sector in information delivery.

***Relevance to AVCCR: The program will benefit from the extension expertise developed by the Dairy-Beef team in the previous ASLP program. AVCCR has developed a communications tool-kit as a resource for individual project communication strategies as well as program-wide coordination. Through links with MDF and SOFT, there will be ongoing monitoring and engagement with emerging tools for digital-based information exchange through the mobile networks.***

### COMMODITY-SPECIFIC APPROACHES TO GENDER IN THE RURAL SECTOR

It is noted above that “to orient technical research towards women’s empowerment (beyond a narrow spectrum of farmers) an appreciation of the diverse lessons from a broad spectrum of social research is needed”. Nevertheless, there are likely to be some lessons in the literature, from Pakistan or elsewhere, that are applicable to one or other of the specific commodities/value chains in AVCCR. These could be considered as each AVCCR project develops its own gender strategy. Examples have emerged in Livestock<sup>142, 143, 144, 145, 146</sup> Horticulture<sup>147, 148, 149, 150</sup> and Pulses<sup>151, 152, 153, 154</sup>, as well as in water<sup>155, 156, 157, 158</sup>.

***Relevance to AVCCR: The program will encourage and facilitate information exchange with other programs and donors with current or past experience in the crops.***

## Appendix 1 Extracts from Australian Investment Plan 2015/15 to 2018/19 (AIP) for Pakistan

“In rural areas we will increase livelihood opportunities for poor men and women. Australia will draw on its world-class expertise to help Pakistan enhance agricultural productivity and expand revenue streams for farmers, including through improved water management practices, adding value to raw agricultural products and improved access to markets for those products. This will also contribute to improving Pakistan’s food security and nutrition levels, and women’s economic empowerment.

Through our support to the Market Development Facility, our development investments provide business and innovation support to the private sector in ways that benefit the poor through expanding jobs and lifting incomes, particularly for women. Australian-led collaboration between government, business and research bodies has been a leading force in the dairy sector in Pakistan, and provides a model for our future engagement in agriculture.” (p3)

### “Multi-sectoral policy priorities and approaches

Australia’s support to Pakistan is underpinned by three important cross-cutting themes – women’s empowerment, stability and governance. We recognise that progress in these areas is critical to Pakistan’s ability to realise its development and economic objectives.

### Women’s empowerment

Gender equality is a core policy priority for Australia, and is centred on women’s economic empowerment, women in leadership and the elimination of violence against women. We will ensure our aid investments and economic and public diplomacy efforts promote women’s empowerment and target areas of key disadvantage in Pakistan.

A focus on women’s economic empowerment, especially through women’s involvement in market development and trade, will help women lift themselves and their families out of poverty and participate more in the country’s growing economy.” (p4)

## Appendix 2 Extracts from AVCCR Program Design Document

Women's economic empowerment: Linked with poverty is the gender inequity endemic in rural Pakistan. Traditionally, research programs have focused on technologies or commodities, without effective consideration of the current and potential roles of women. AVCCR must therefore identify:

- a) Those value chains that specifically engage women in economic roles;
- b) The unique constraints experienced by women when accessing inputs, information and advice;
- c) The balance between women's productive and reproductive workloads;
- d) The relative intended and possible unintended impacts of its interventions on women and men, in particular decision-making power; and
- e) Social research into the most effective ways to improve women's access to and benefits from decent employment, entrepreneurship and leadership. (p 10)

Women's Economic Engagement: From Australia's perspective there is an important need to focus on improving the economic opportunities for small-scale enterprises and farmers, especially those involving women. In Pakistan, there is demand for women's economic empowerment within the civil society and parts of the government, for example in national and some provincial development plans.

AVCCR will work to remove barriers to women's participation in markets, and, more generally, in decision-making processes that affect their livelihoods. It will also work to remove barriers that limit women's access to, and control over, the resources needed to maximise their productivity. AVCCR will adhere to DFAT's recently published guidelines on Women's Economic Empowerment. As such, AVCCR will promote three key issues that underpin women's economic engagement:

- Inclusion: All AVCCR value chains will be purposefully selected based on their potential to increase women's engagement, whether in production, value adding or labour; this needs to be combined with a pro-poor approach given that exclusion is not only along the lines of gender.
- Access: Complementing the technical research within the target value chains will be social research that identifies the constraints on women's access. The usual traditional practices that limit women's access relate to:
  - I. the cultural restrictions on women's and girls' mobility;
  - II. the cultural and political lack of prioritisation of women's and girls' education and skill development; and,
  - III. the resulting difficulties that women face in accessing information and claiming their rights

- Agency: Social Research will also identify ways in which women can assume greater decision making or leadership roles within a value chain. (pp 11-12)

The Flexible Fund will cover:

- b) Cross-cutting studies on inclusive growth, poverty, gender equity and women's empowerment that build the program's understanding, integration and impact. (p23)

The AVCCR Coordinator will be supported by:

A part-time international Gender Specialist who will:

a. provide training, mentoring and support to the project teams to ensure that all research:

- takes gender inclusion and women's economic empowerment within the target AVCs fully into account,
- develops the options that best enhance women's access and agency, and
- effectively monitors and responds to the gender implications of all activities;

b. work at the program level to assess its overall contributions to women's engagement and economic empowerment. (p 38)

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