

Gender transformative approaches

Dear All

My name is Takele Teshome, Founder and executive Director of Association for Sustainable Development Alternatives (ASDA). I was not able to actively participate in the online discussion since I was out on field trip where Internet access is difficult. I am now ready to share my thoughts and experiences in the field

Question 1: What are the main challenges rural women and girls are facing today?

The key challenges of rural women in Ethiopia were unequal access and control over resources. Insufficient knowledge and access to information have also affected economic empowerment of women in general and women headed households in particular. Gender violence is also part of the challenge. However, although a lot remains to be done there are improvements in the recent years

Question 2: Are we using the right approaches and policies to close the gender gap?

Noticeable effort has been exerted in areas of policies and strategies. However, practical actions to bridge the gaps are insufficient. A lot has been done to address practical gender needs such as reducing work - loads, increasing access to education, reproductive health etc. Programmes and projects are often formulated based on general need assessment, not on proper gender analysis, not on in-depth analysis of underlying causes for gender gaps and gender sensitive targets and indicators

Question 3: How can we best achieve gender transformative impacts?

*AS to ASDA, programmes and project be formulated based on gender analysis to understand underlying causes for existing gender inequality and harmful traditional practices and gender violence. Research agenda should also consider gender inequalities. Feed back should also be collected not only from males but also from females using gender lense
The population ratio between men and women in many countries is about 50:50. But when it comes female extension experts and development agents is unacceptably low. The challenge is very serious when it comes to female headed households and orphan girls (child/youth headed households)*

ASDA has success stories in enhancing economic empowerment of women. It has established fuel efficient stove production, seedling production women groups, vegetable growers, poultry keepers and sheep fattening groups. These livelihood diversification options promoted skill acquisition and economic empowerment. The project also enhanced management and leadership capacities to run their business and increase self esteem

In addition to this, ASDA established community dialogue center in one of the project districts to facilitate discussion among women groups on matters that affect their lives and come up with women driven projects and local actions. In ASDA, women participation in water users and care takers committee, social accountability committees natural resource management groups Women initiated and managed projects were presented to good practice competition at national level and undergone series of reviews at various levels and now short listed as top 5 best practices winners where the final ranking will be done by the panel of Judges in recent future



