

GATE TRIP REPORT ON ALBANIA AGRICULTURE COMPETITIVENESS (AAC) PROJECT GENDER TRAINING APRIL 13-20, 2008

GREATER ACCESS TO TRADE EXPANSION (GATE) PROJECT UNDER THE WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT IQC

CONTRACT NO. GEW-I-00-02-00018-00, Task Order No. 02

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INTRODUCTION

The Greater Access to Trade Expansion (GATE) training team traveled to Albania from April 13 to 20, 2008. The purpose of the trip was to conduct training for the staff of the Albania Agricultural Competitiveness (AAC) Program that is funded by the United States Agency of International Development (USAID)/Albania and implemented by Development Alternatives, Inc. (DAI). The scope of the assignment included the following tasks:

1) Develop appropriate training materials for understanding key gender concepts, a framework for gender analysis, and application of the framework to the value chain work carried out by the AAC program;

2) Conduct training for the AAC administrative, monitoring and evaluation, and technical staff members;

3) Prepare the workshop trip report and training manual.

Preparation and planning for the training workshop began in November 2007. At the request of the AAC program, however, the training was rescheduled from January 2008 to April 2008 in order to accommodate the involvement of the new Chief of Party, Ed Reinauer, as well as to permit the attendance of the entire staff. The GATE Training Team consisted of Deborah Rubin (Director, Cultural Practice LLC), Kara Nichols Barrett (Research and Program Manager, dTS Inc.) with the support of local consultants Elona Dhëmbo (Gender Specialist, Gender Alliance for Development Center (GADC), Tirana) and Elisabeta Mema, translator. A list of participants in and resource persons for the training is provided in Annex A.

TASK 1. DEVELOP APPROPRIATE TRAINING MATERIALS

A. BACKGROUND

GATE has been working in Albania since February 2006 and has developed a Country Action Plan (CAP) with several identified tasks. Over the last two years, GATE has conducted assessments on: men and women entrepreneur's financial skills, attitudes, and behaviors; the existence of gender related labor market data; and, gender issues in horticulture production. The financial needs assessment led to the development of a financial education training module currently implemented by Opportunity Albania.

In September 2007, GATE completed a rapid assessment on gender issues in horticulture production and marketing in the USAID Albanian Agriculture Competitiveness (AAC) program, with a focus on two regions, Lushnja and Korca.^{*} Based on the initial study, GATE proposed undertaking three implementation support activities, one of which was to hold training on gender issues affecting AAC activities addressing a need for greater gender awareness, orientation in gender analysis, and

^{*} Kara Nichols Barrett, "Gate Trip Report: September 17-28, 2007," Alexandria, VA: dTS, Inc., October 2007

application of gender analysis to AAC program activities. The training is expected to enhance AAC's ability to address gender constraints in its production and marketing activities and to ensure greater trade is achieved with proper attention to the role of women in agriculture production, as outlined in AAC's statement of work.

B. NEEDS ASSESSMENT

To design the training to be most useful to the AAC program, the GATE staff prepared a brief survey assessing the staff's training needs. Twelve of the fifteen staff members returned the surveys. Their responsibilities in the project varied across administration and financial issues, extension, monitoring and evaluation (M&E), and grants program administration, with the majority in M&E (4) and in extension (5).

From their responses, it was immediately clear that there was a very wide range between those who were somewhat familiar with ideas about gender and those who had not had any previous exposure to or experience working on gender issues. Five of the respondents had received some training on gender issues; six had not; and, one did not respond to the question.

When asked about the level of their knowledge, those who had received some training responded to say they were familiar with basic terms and analysis practices. Overall, the majority of respondents felt they had only basic or little knowledge. Interestingly, two respondents who had **not** had any training nonetheless professed to be the most comfortable with gender terminology, analysis, approaches, and the ability to integrate gender across a wide range of project types.

Respondents were asked to suggest examples of **gender-related challenges** faced by the men and women with whom they work on the AAC program. The areas of discriminatory or prejudicial attitudes by men towards women's greater involvement in farm management, business development, and decision-making were prominent. Several respondents noted that on the family farms women do a large portion of the work but do not share equally in decision-making and do not represent the farm in meetings or dealings with outsiders. The question of how to enroll more women in workshops and trainings relevant to their activities was also raised by several staff members. One person commented that women receive lower income from their farm work than do men.^{*}

The staff members were less clear as to what, if any, **strategies to reduce gender inequalities** were being pursued by the project. Those who responded suggested that the program increase the participation of women in different trainings, seminars, and field visits; provide opportunities for exchanges and farm visits in other parts of the country and perhaps to other countries; and, support women's involvement in producer associations. However, the majority of respondents did not have any answers to this question, and no one suggested working with men to initiate any change in their attitudes or limiting behaviors.

^{*} We could not confirm that this was a widespread problem, however.

Another question asked what types of skills or skill areas the staff thought they needed to improve their ability to identify gender challenges and to develop strategies to address them. Six people gave no response, but among the other answers there were several that requested suggestions to improve their communication skills particularly ways to talk about involving women in decision-making in the farm enterprise.

Finally, the survey asked about the type of data requested by USAID about men and women in the program. Here there were some discrepancies between the responses and the data in the project's performance monitoring plan. Staff members believed that more sex-disaggregated data was being collected than is in fact being requested for reporting, such as on increasing and strengthening the role of women in business enterprises or on the farm. The AAC program does have to report to the USAID the number of women and men (separately) that take part in trainings, meetings, or workshops, but other indicators on numbers of producer-buyer transactions, e.g., are not currently asked for in sex-disaggregated form.

C. DESIGN OF MATERIALS

In addition to the needs assessment, the GATE research and program manager was able to make two visits to Albania in early 2008 to discuss the content and scheduling of the gender training with the AAC program lead staff members as well as with key staff at the Gender Alliance for Development Center, a local non-governmental organization (NGO) that has conducted many trainings on gender with various donor projects in Albania. These discussions helped to sharpen the expected results of the training design.

In contrast to some of the earlier GATE trainings, it was agreed to provide a relatively short (one and a half day) and focused training that would offer a set of concepts, a replicable analytical framework, and a series of steps to apply that framework first to a case study and then to the AAC program work. The training team agreed that by providing a common framework and having the staff work together in their task groups, the different staff members would develop a common vocabulary and approach to gender integration. The training also provided an opportunity for team building across the project.

The training materials were built for the AAC program by combining and refining GATE training modules and others materials that had been developed under the USAID Women in Development (WID) Indefinite Quantity Contract (IQC) Short-term Training and Technical Assistance (STTA) Task Order. New exercises were added and a revised case study was developed that was linked to the AAC program activities and goals. The resulting training program highlighted issues related to integrating gender into a value chain analysis. The trainers also strengthened the section addressing the development of gender-sensitive indicators.

The final session of the training led the program task groups through the development of a gender action plan for the program by revising existing project objectives, identifying new actions, and designing new indicators that were more gender-sensitive than the original forms.

D. DISCUSSION

Overall, the design of the training and the revision and refinement of the training materials proceeded well. The training team included a local consultant who was able to provide advice about how to tailor the materials to the expected knowledge level of the training participants.

The greatest difficulty was developing a substantive program that could be presented in the short time frame allocated and to an audience with little formal knowledge of gender issues. The AAC program had initially specified a two-day training, but as the planning progressed, the time frame continually contracted to one and three-quarters down to the final one and one-half days. As a result, some sections were cut out and others revised. For example, we developed worksheets that were partially filled in rather than asking the participants to work through them on their own. This appeared to work well as many of the ideas and process were new to the group, and the examples proved to be very helpful.

A minor difficulty was finding Albania-specific materials on gender and agriculture that were available in both English and Albanian. All the training materials, including the slides, the worksheets, and the supplementary materials were translated into Albanian. In addition, lists of local Albanian resource groups and other Albanian resources, such as documentation available on the web, were provided in the training notebook. Although it was not possible to provide the same wealth of materials in both languages on gender and agriculture as is usually offered in this type of training, the compilation of materials offers a useful baseline to the project.

TASK 2: CONDUCTING THE TRAINING FOR THE AAC ADMINISTRATIVE, MONITORING AND EVALUATION, AND TECHNICAL STAFF MEMBERS

A. BACKGROUND

The training was held in the Ylli i Detit hotel in the town of Durrës, on the coast, about 35 km from Albania's capital city of Tirana. The small hotel was almost filled to capacity with the training group, offering an opportunity for team-building. The lack of Internet access also helped to focus the group on the training and reduced distractions. In the evaluation comments, two participants especially noted that the venue was "well-suited" to the workshop.

The training team and some staff members arrived on the evening of April 16. The training itself was held on April 17 and 18th, departing after a late lunch on the afternoon of the 18th. There were fifteen participants in the training, comprising all of the current members of the AAC staff.

B. THE TRAINING PROCESS

The workshop was introduced by Kristaq Jorgi, Agricultural Specialist, USAID/Albania, who is the Cognizant Technical Officer (CTO) for the AAC program (see Annex B for the training agenda). Mr. Jorgi gave a persuasive opening to the event. He began his comments by saying that addressing gender issues was a critical technical part of the program, particularly the identification of gender barriers and finding solutions to remove those barriers, and that he expected the program to make major efforts in this area. He noted that the AAC program is expected to report on twelve different indicators, of which five now ask for sex-disaggregated data. Mr. Jorgi said he hoped that people would leave the training with a "different mind set" about gender issues as well as having learned ways to achieve not only the economic project results but also the gender results. Mr. Jorgi's comments made clear that USAID was serious in its expectation that the program would identify ways to improve the involvement of women in the program; reduce barriers to their participation; and, to report regularly on the program's ability to achieve these results.

After a short introduction by Kara Nichols Barrett (dTS Inc), the training started in earnest with a presentation by Elona Dhëmbo (GADC) on the difference between sex and gender. The concept of "gender" is linguistically a new one in Albania, and the lively group discussion showed that it was not yet fully clear to the staff. This session was done in Albanian, with the translator providing simultaneous translation for the two English-only participants. The training team chose to use Albanian to ensure that the Albanian program staff would be comfortable with the presentation and to encourage their full participation.

There were initially many comments made linking sex and behavioral characteristics, such as the belief that "females" have more patience than "males" or that "females" are better suited to fine, detailed work than "males." The facilitator had to work hard to help the participants understand that these links are predominantly defined by societal norms and not by nature, and that, it is more appropriate to use the vocabulary of "women" and "men" (rather than "females/males") when discussing such behaviors. By the end of the discussion, most of the participants seemed comfortable with the explanation that much of their association of behaviors was a product of their socio-cultural beliefs and education (gender) and not a product of biology (sex).

It is clear that in Albania, the idea that one's sex predetermines and limits appropriate behavior is heavily entrenched and that some people continue to believe (sometimes in contrast to documented reports) that women should not take on certain responsibilities or do not want to have responsibilities in the public arena. The second session of the workshop provided some background on gender inequalities in Albania and the legislative efforts that have been made or which are currently underway to work against discrimination and to support gender equality. The third session introduced a framework for gender analysis for agriculture projects, the Domains Framework for Gender Analysis, developed by Deborah Rubin and Deborah Caro of Cultural Practice LLC under USAID contracts (the WID IQC and the Health Policy Initiative). The framework is a tool for exploring how gender shapes social life. The four domains include access to assets; knowledge, beliefs, and perceptions; practices and participation; and legal rights and status. Power relations influence each of the domains and are a cross-cutting issue. Exploring gender relations in the main domains of social life helps to illuminate how gender differences may lead to constraints and/or opportunities that will affect the intended results of a development project.

After exposing the participants to gender concepts and a framework for analysis, the main body of the training focused on the use of a case study to help the group identify relevant information about gender for project work and then use that information to identify key gender-based constraints and opportunities. Once identified, the training process helps participants think through how to overcome those constraints or strengthen the opportunities and how to effectively measure whether or not these objectives have been achieved. This analytical process helps participants to follow a logical, systematic approach to gender analysis. Some of this work was carried out in small groups and some was carried out in plenary, led by the facilitators. The training concluded with the development of a Gender Action Plan for the AAC program. The completed charts developed by the project are shown in Annexes C and D.

C. SELECTED COMMENTS FROM PARTICIPANTS

At the end of the training, the team asked the participants to respond to the following three questions: What did you like? What did you dislike? What would you like changed? The answers were provided anonymously, written on Post-It notes and attached to three flipcharts under the heading questions listed above.

What did you like?

The majority of comments (8) regarding the training emphasized its thoughtful organization and the professional approach of the training team, with one enthusiastic commenter saying it was "perfect"! The use of concrete examples and the opportunity for interaction was also mentioned. In addition to finding the materials and information useful, "helping us to get results from our work" and "to work better on gender issues in the future," with its identification of gender constraints was specifically noted. It was also noted that the distinction between sex and gender was helpful and offered a new set of concepts to some participants. "[The training] will help the AAC project to involve the women in agricultural activities and increase their role in decision-making."

What did you not like?

Despite the generally positive views on the organization of the training, many of the group felt the training was long and very intense. This is not surprising, given that this training was the first time that more than half of the group had received any type of gender training. And one participant wished to have had a longer session to permit more in-depth analysis.

More importantly is the finding from the evaluations that there is a preference among this group for working as an entire team, rather than divided up into small groups. In any future training sessions with the AAC program, the material should be presented to the whole group together, with exercises carried out in plenary as much as possible, encouraging open discussions among the group members.

What would you change?

Several participants requested several additions to the training, including 1) a presentation on GATE project findings from other countries, 2) reference to more Albania-specific information (although this is not an easy request to fulfill as the topic is still new and not well-documented, especially in English), and 3) information and documentation from cases elsewhere that might be usefully applied to the Albanian case. As GATE continues its work with the AAC program, it should also identify more Albania-specific examples on women's roles in and production, processing, marketing, helping the project learn from other successes of integrating women and removing gender constraints in various Albanian value chains.

In terms of the organization and schedule of the training, there was one request for more breaks and another for condensing the training to one day. Another participant suggested one-on-one time ("directed discussions") with the trainers to solve specific problems.

D. DISCUSSION

As expected from the needs assessment responses, the group displayed a wide range of baseline knowledge on gender issues. Some members had clearly never thought about these topics, analyzed their own views, or thought about how those views influenced their work. The training helped to bring these opinions out into the open and to demonstrate that if gender was not addressed systematically, it did affect the ability of the program to recruit and maintain women as clients and/or to provide key production and marketing information to the women in the households with which the program was working.

- Flexibility

In response to a request from the group, the training team altered their plans for small group work to carry out some of the analytical process in plenary. The participants expressed a strong preference for being led through parts of the process as a single group, asking questions of the facilitator, and having a group discussion, rather than working in small groups and having the facilitators circulate among them.

The training team also revised other elements of the presentation in response to comments from the group. A discussion of the "continuum of approaches for gender integration" was added.^{*}

^{*} See materials at the Interagency Working Group on Gender, <u>www.igwg.org</u>.

- Language

Given the tight time schedule, the most complicated part of the training turned out to be the sequential translation from English to Albanian, and sometimes from Albanian to English.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND NEXT STEPS

GATE and the AAC program will discuss the next steps of the GATE/Albania activities with USAID/Albania. The three parties will work together to ensure that GATE's technical assistance will support AAC goals and meet USAID needs. Building on discussions at the training, GATE recommends the following activities be initiated to improve attention to gender in AAC activities.

Recommendation for continued GATE activities

- ✓ Provide technical assistance for gender-integrated value chain analysis.
- Provide recommendations for ways to integrate gender into the workplan for Years 2, 3, and 4.
- ✓ Identify activities for GATE to be included in the AAC workplan.
- ✓ Ensure GATE is involved in Year 2 workplan development.
- Conduct rapid appraisal on relevance of headship of farm enterprise for AAC commodity chains combined with literature review on global headship issues for Year 2 workplan.

Recommendations for joint AAC and GATE activities

- Develop a method for integrating gender into the value chain analysis, e.g., apples, to use as blueprint for next two VCs being developed this fall, as initiated in the gender training.
- Carry out a gender assessment of current clients in an existing VC in a single commodity for the purpose of 1) strengthening the knowledge of those client profiles; 2) establishing a baseline on types of households as suggested in the gender training by the M&E group.
- ✓ Develop a more inclusive process for identifying new clients.
- Review AAC workplan (years 1 and 2) for additional opportunities for refining sex-disaggregated or other gender-sensitive indicators as initiated in the gender training.

Recommendations for AAC activities

- Disaggregate farm enterprise data by type of management (woman-managed, man-managed, and joint-managed).
- Increase number of women-managed enterprise clients set a target for # of women-managed farm enterprises as clients.
- Reorient monthly workshop venues and schedule to incorporate more women in client households.
- ✓ Solicit views for monthly workshops topics of relevance to women in client households (e.g., negotiation techniques, farm management practices, access to

new technologies, use of computers for farm enterprise accounting, establishment of model contracts).

- Establish list of women-owned or managed processing and distribution enterprises to encourage producer-buyer and processor-consumer linkages that support these enterprises.
- ✓ In financial training workshops, include 25% women participants.
- ✓ In marketing information workshops, include 25% women participants.

Recommendations to USAID

- Coordinate with AAC on refining gender-sensitive indicators for project workplan in areas other than the already identified land tenure study component.
- Monitor project's quarterly and other reports for inclusion new gender-relevant information.

ANNEX A: LIST OF TRAINING PARTICIPANTS AND RESOURCE PERSONS

Name	Title	Organization	
USAID			
Jorgi, Kristaq	Agriculture Specialist	USAID	
AAC Project Staff	L	r	
Reinauer, Ed	COP	AAC/DAI	
Sommers, Paul	Production Specialist	AAC/DAI	
Janushi, Merita	Project Administrator	AAC/DAI	
Pilku, Illir	Grants Manager	AAC/DAI	
Hodobashi, Bled	Monitoring & Marketing Information Specialist	AAC/DAI	
Qorri, Majlinda	Monitoring & Evaluation Specialist	AAC/DAI	
Thimo, Monika	M&E Specialist	AAC/DAI	
Mehmeti, Illir	Outreach Specialist	AAC/DAI	
Turtulli, Lefter	Korca Region Market Linkages Manager	AAC/DAI	
Rapushi, Pirro	Lushnja Region Market Linkages Manager	AAC/DAI	
Tuxhari, Pellumb	Extension Specialist	AAC/DAI	
Pupa, Mehmet	Extension Specialist	AAC/DAI	
Liko, Josif	Extension Specialist	AAC/DAI	
Goga, Luto	Extension Specialist	AAC/DAI	
Koco, Kostandin	Extension Specialist	AAC/DAI	
AAC Project Consulta	ant		
Mitchell, Robert ¹		Rural Development Institute,	
Training Resource Pe	rconc	Seattle, WA (USA)	
		Conder Alliance for	
Dhëmbo, Elona	GATE Consultant	Gender Alliance for Development (GAD) Center	
Mema, Elisabeta	GATE Consultant	Independent Consultant	
ivienta, Elisabela			

¹ Although Mr. Mitchell did not attend the training, Nichols Barrett and Rubin met with him on April 19, 2008 to discuss the project.

ANNEX B: TRAINING AGENDA

"ADDRESSING GENDER ISSUES IN ALBANIAN AGRICULTURE AND AGRIBUSINESS"

DAY 1: Morning Sessions

Time	Topic – Activity	Facilitator
9:00 AM – 9:45 AM	Session One: Welcome and Introductions - USAID Representative - GATE Training Team - Workshop purpose and objectives - Review of agenda - Group introductions - Ground rules	Kara Nichols Barrett
9:45 AM – 10:30 AM	 Session Two: What do we mean by Gender? Sex and Gender Exercise Concepts and Background ✓ Sex and Gender ✓ Gender Relations ✓ Gender Analysis ✓ Gender Mainstreaming ✓ Gender Equality 	Elona Dhëmbo
10:30 AM – 11:15 AM	 Session Three: Overview on Albanian Gender Issues Gender Equality and Inequality in Albania: An Overview International Agreements on Gender Albanian National Architecture on Gender Data and Information Sources on Gender 	Elona Dhëmbo
11:15 AM – 11:30 AM	Coffee break	
11:30 AM– 12:30 PM	 Session Four: Introducing a Gender Analysis Framework ✓ USAID policy ✓ Access to Assets ✓ Knowledge, Beliefs, and Perceptions ✓ Practices and Participation ✓ Legal Rights and Status ✓ Power ✓ Gender Analysis Information Outcomes 	Deborah Rubin

Day 1: Afternoon Sessions

12:40 PM – 1:30 PM	Session Five: Applying the Gender Analysis Framework to a Case Study (Group Work) ✓ Worksheet One	Kara Nichols Barrett
1:30 PM – 2:30 PM	Lunch	
2:30 PM – 3:30 PM	Session Six: Applying the Gender Analysis Framework to a Case Study (Group Work) ✓ Worksheet Two	Deborah Rubin
3:30 PM – 4:00 PM	Session Seven: Integration of Gender in the Project Cycle (Plenary) ✓ Worksheet Three	Deborah Rubin
4:00 PM – 4:30 PM	Session Eight: Gender in Value Chain Analysis	Kara Nichols Barrett
4:30 PM – 4:45 PM	Coffee break	
4:45 PM – 6:00 PM	Session Nine: Integration of Gender in the AAC Project Components (Work in Task Project Groups) ✓ Worksheet One, Two, Three and the Value Chain Chart	Kara Nichols Barrett

DAY 2

Time	Topic – Activity	Facilitator
8:30 AM – 8:45 AM	 Review of Previous Day Outline of schedule for Day 2 	Kara Nichols Barrett
8:45 AM – 9:15 AM	Session Ten: Gender Sensitive Indicators, Monitoring and Evaluation	Deborah Rubin
9:15 AM – 10:15 AM	 Session Eleven: Gender Integration in the AAC Project Plenary Session 	Team
10:15 AM to 10:30 AM	Coffee Break	
10:30 AM – 12:30 PM 12:30 AM – 1:15 PM	 Session Twelve: Gender Action Plans (Work in Task Project Groups) ✓ Complete Gender Action Plan Matrix ✓ Reporting Out on Gender Action Plans 	Kara Nichols Barrett
1:15 PM – 1:30 PM	 Evaluation Closing and Thanks 	Kara Nichols Barrett
1:30 PM until departure	Lunch	

ANNEX C: GENDER INTEGRATION WORKSHEETS

Steps 1 and 6	Step 2	Step 3: ID of	Step 4: Actions	Step 5:
Revised	Data Collection	Gender	to reduce	Indicators
Gender-		Constraints &	constraints &	
Sensitive		Opportunities	enhance	
Project			opportunities	
Objective				
Original-	Number of	Attitudes of	Develop	# of transactions
		women buyers	marketing	(by type of
linkages	managed by	dealing with	information	enterprise
between		producers/	systems	manager)
producers and	(de facto, de	producers		
buyers"	jure) [by crop, by			
	region]	buyers		
Revised-				
"Improving	Roles and	Transportation		
linkages	responsibilities	constraints	Organize	
	on the farm (by		trainings in the	
farm enterprises, both (managed	crop, by region)	Time constraints	field on family farms	
by men or by	Are there special	Credit for		
womende facto	constraints by	purchasing		
and de jure) and	type of			
buyers"	business?	Removing intra-	Use workshops	
		household	to change	
		constraints to	household	
		accessing	dynamics on	
		information and	information and	
		technology	technology	
			access	

Component Two Work Group

ANNEX D: GENDER ACTION PLANS

Example

Focus	Tasks	Result	Respon- Sibility	Timeframe	Resources
	outcome desired for	statement drafted	Key staff: M&E specialist Chief of Party	One week to develop One week to review and adopt	Staff time

Group One Results

Focus	Tasks	Result	Respon- Sibility	Timeframe	Resources
Training	<u> </u>	# of women	Outreach specialists	According to production	Staff and financial
Sector-	women participating	included	Regional	calendar	experts
specific	Produce	increased Improved	manager STTA		
	materials and deliver them to women	skills among women	Outreach specialists Regional manager	Year 2	Financial experts
		Knowledge of skills among women	U U		

Group Two Results

Focus	Tasks	Result	Respon- Sibility	Timeframe	Resources
Including more women- headed enterprises as clients	women dealing with buyers/marketing	0	and		Staff plus NGO (Gender Alliance for Development Center) and dTS/GATE project assistance