



Food and Agriculture Organization
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Global Forum on Food Security and Nutrition • FSN Forum

TEMPLATE FOR SUBMISSIONS

Call for submissions No. 202 • 09.10.2024 – 27.11.2024



<https://www.fao.org/fsnforum/call-submissions/community-engagement-rural-transformation-and-gender-equality>

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS:

Community engagement for inclusive rural transformation and gender equality

The objective of this call for submissions is to collect good practices, experiences, and lessons learnt on the use of community engagement for inclusive rural transformation and gender equality. The initiative, organized by the [Rural Transformation and Gender Equality Division \(ESP\)](#), seeks to gather insights from a diverse range of contributors, both within FAO and from external stakeholders. Its goal is to share knowledge, foster learning, and guide the scaling up of community engagement and community-led collective action to leave no one behind. The call builds on FAO's past efforts in this area, such as the [Community Engagement Days](#) series of webinars.¹



The call for submissions is open until 27 November 2024.

How to take part in this call for submissions:

To take part in this Call for submissions, please [register](#) to the FSN Forum, if you are not yet a member, or “sign in” to your account. Please review the **topic note** to understand the criteria we are considering for this call. If you wish to learn more about community engagement, you may refer to the [background document](#). Once you have completed this submission template, upload it in the box “Post your contribution” on the [call webpage](#), or, alternatively, send it to fsn-moderator@fao.org.

¹ The call for submissions is directly aligned with the thematic components of collective action within FAO's Programme Priority Areas (PPAs), specifically Better Life 1 (Gender Equality and Rural Women's Empowerment), Better Life 2 (Inclusive Rural Transformation) and Better Life 3 (Agriculture and Food Emergencies).

Please keep the length of submissions limited to **1,500 words** and feel also free to attach relevant supporting materials.

Template for submissions

Contact person	Name: Cristina Manfre Organization/Unit: TechnoServe Country: USA Email address: cmanfre@tns.org
Name/title of the good practice	Women's leadership and household dialogues on gender equality in the Coffee Value Chain
Where is the good practice taking place? (Multiple selection allowed)	<input type="checkbox"/> Europe and Central Asia <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Latin America and the Caribbean <input type="checkbox"/> North Africa and Near East <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sub-Saharan Africa <input type="checkbox"/> Asia and the Pacific <input type="checkbox"/> North America <input type="checkbox"/> Global
Affiliation	<input type="checkbox"/> Farmer and producer organizations <input type="checkbox"/> Trade Union <input type="checkbox"/> Informal community-based, farmer-based or self-help group <input type="checkbox"/> Research and academia <input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Local/traditional authorities <input type="checkbox"/> Private Sector <input type="checkbox"/> Civil Society Organization <input type="checkbox"/> Intergovernmental Organization (e.g. UN system, World Bank) <input type="checkbox"/> Resource Partner/Donor <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) Non profit Organization
In which sector(s) and context (s) have you used this community engagement	<input type="checkbox"/> Education <input type="checkbox"/> Health and Sanitation <input type="checkbox"/> Food production in agrifood systems (please also tick the sub-categories)

good practice? (Multiple selections allowed)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Crop cultivation</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Fisheries and aquaculture production</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Livestock</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Forestry</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Agroforestry</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Horticulture</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Apiculture (beekeeping)</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Agroecology and sustainable farming practices</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Soil and water management</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Other: _____</i> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Post-production in agrifood systems (please also tick the sub-categories) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Processing and value addition</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Marketing and retailing</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Transporting</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Food loss and waste</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Packaging</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Storage</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Distribution</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gender Equality <input type="checkbox"/> Climate Action <input type="checkbox"/> Citizenship and Governance <input type="checkbox"/> Social Protection <input type="checkbox"/> Humanitarian and protracted crisis <input type="checkbox"/> Conflict resolution, peace and resilience <input type="checkbox"/> Digital innovation <input type="checkbox"/> Other sector (please specify) _____
Who are the financial partners supporting this good practice, if applicable?	USAID Peru, JDE Peet's, Starbucks Foundation and Nespresso (only for work in East Africa)
1. In a few sentences, summarize your community engagement good practice. TechnoServe's community engagement practices center on empowering women in the coffee value chain through leadership development and the facilitation of household dialogues on gender equality. The first practice incorporates leadership workshops and a participatory PhotoVoice	

(PV) methodology, fostering skills-building, confidence, and support among rural women in Peru. Through PV, participants document their experiences, which are later showcased in community exhibits, sparking community dialogues on gender roles and empowering women to share their achievements publicly. This approach increases both women's agency and also contributes to shifts in gender norms within their communities. As a result, 59% of leadership positions in cooperatives are now held by women, with 100% of those women having participated in these activities. Additionally, 89% of women trained in leadership reported greater decision-making power, while 97% reported increased control over their income. Our leadership workshops are implemented in Peru, Ethiopia, Kenya, and DRC.

In parallel, the **household dialogues on gender equality** methodology promotes gender equality by engaging men and women in facilitated discussions to explore and challenge existing gender norms. These sessions create a non-judgmental environment for open conversation, promoting shared responsibilities and enhancing women's participation in economic decisions. This practice has been adapted across various contexts in coffee-growing areas in Peru, Guatemala, Ethiopia, Kenya, Zimbabwe and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) demonstrating scalability and versatility.

2. What **problem(s)** or **challenge(s)** does your good practice aim to address through community engagement?

Rural women in coffee-producing communities face multiple barriers that limit their ability to fully participate in economic and leadership roles. These barriers come from limited access to resources, restrictive cultural norms, and established structures that prioritize men in decision-making across various levels, including families, businesses, cooperatives, wet mills, and broader community settings. Gender norms shape expectations around roles, behaviors, and aspirations, often assigning women the majority of caregiving responsibilities and participation in productive activities while typically reserving economic decision-making and leadership roles for men. This dynamic restricts women's input on important business decisions, devalues their contributions, and reinforces a cycle where men's roles are seen as more economically significant.

In response, our approach of **leadership training combined with PV** was designed to help women activate their leadership skills, fostering confidence in themselves as leaders to influence positive changes in their communities. Through these leadership workshops, women gain the skills needed to advocate for themselves and take on decision-making roles within the coffee sector. Women apply these skills to reflect on their leadership journey through their participation in the Photovoice exercise, a participatory photography method that uses visual storytelling to capture insights and impact.

Our **household dialogues on gender equality** complement this by addressing the underlying norms that govern men's and women's roles and decision-making power. By facilitating open, single-sex discussions, followed by joint conversations, safe spaces create an environment where both men and women can critically reflect on and reframe expectations for their roles and how to work together to achieve common goals. This method encourages men to support women's participation in both household and economic decisions, contributing to improved family dynamics and farm management.

Together, these approaches promote a supportive, inclusive environment that allows women to overcome restrictive norms, assume meaningful leadership positions, and drive a community-led transformation in coffee communities across Peru and Sub-Saharan Africa.

3. Describe your **good practice** in more detail. Include the main **guiding principles**, the **desired changes or outcomes** you aim to achieve (*Theory of Change*), and the **key phases of implementation**.

The leadership training combined with PV is a two part methodology that takes women first through a journey of self-reflection and personal discovery to reconnect them to their inner power and potential regardless of their educational level or previous experiences. The four workshops start with the idea that women are already leaders and possess the qualities for leading their lives, their families, and communities. The four workshops include:

1. Recognizing My Power: Reconnecting women with their inner power to unlock confidence and self-esteem, and identify individual strengths.
2. Communicating My Power: Developing communication skills and learning strategies to convey their ideas and needs effectively.
3. Identifying Resources Within My Reach: Enhancing their belief in their ability to succeed and reach their goals.
4. Putting Into Action Our Leadership: Enhancing their ability to execute actions and behaviors that will allow them to achieve greater participation in their communities.

Inspired by the Pro-WEAI (Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index), the workshops emphasize intrinsic agency (power within), instrumental agency (power to) related to their contributions in agriculture, and collective agency (power with), which includes group membership, access to public and private resources, income control, financial decision-making, and the equitable distribution of labor. The goal is for women to view themselves as agents of change within their families, communities, and the broader coffee sector.

Following the workshops, a subset of women participate in a **PhotoVoice (PV) activity** to use their voice and narrate their experiences. This community-based qualitative research method allows women to document and evaluate changes in their lives and communities through photography and storytelling. From a gender perspective, PV is particularly powerful as it amplifies the voices of women who often struggle to express their needs and experiences openly. It's a transformational process that strengthens confidence, self-expression, and problem-solving abilities. Through photo exhibits and community storytelling, women lead community-wide discussions and deeper reflections on their leadership journey, their relationships to nature, and their role in the coffee sector. This process opens up a platform for individual and group reflection, allowing women to share their stories with broader community stakeholders, thus reinforcing their roles as leaders and change-makers in their communities.

Similarly, through the **household dialogues on gender equality** approach, men and women explore different gender-related topics to arrive at a greater understanding and appreciation of their different and common experiences and perspectives. Men and women are invited to participate in three sessions where they hold single-sex conversations (one for women and one for men) that run concurrently during which the groups explore a gender-related topic, including:

- Exploring what it means to be men and women: Participants understand how cultural beliefs and perceptions shape differences between women and men
- Exploring the value of men's and women's work on the farm and in the household: Participants discuss the value of women's and men's contributions to the household and farm and the returns or benefits of their labor
- Exploring how to collaborate, communicate, and make decisions: Participants examine and understand the value of joint decision-making in household and farm management

These separate conversations provide a safe space where women and men can share their ideas without feeling uncomfortable or unwelcome. This is followed by a mixed-sex facilitated session where ideas are exchanged between women and men. The single-sex sessions are led by the participants, while the trainer guides the mixed exchange.

Both methodologies follow the guiding principle of shifting norms and attitudes to create a positive environment in which women can become more active participants in agricultural value chains, earn an income, and make decisions either independently or jointly with spouses or other actors. They also aim to improve relationship dynamics between spouses and among men and their children contributing to improved life satisfaction.

4. Who are the **key actors and stakeholders involved in the design and implementation of the good practice, and what are their respective roles? *Consider local partners, government, local authorities, community radios, civil society, research, the private sector, etc.***

- Community Leaders and members of the Producer Associations' Gender Committees: Local facilitation and impact sustainment
- Local Producer Associations: Recruitment and support for women participants
- Funding Partners: USAID Peru, and Starbucks Foundation, Nespresso
- TechnoServe: Approach design and implementation, including local community trainers that deliver the workshops
- A Sus Marcas: Partner implementing the PhotoVoice component

5. How does your intervention ensure **inclusivity and equal and meaningful participation within the **community**?**

Describe how your intervention includes and engages different groups within the community. Consider aspects like gender, age, ethnicity, disability status, livelihoods, and other specific conditions (e.g., people living in prolonged crisis, migrants, refugees). Explain how your intervention engages diverse segments of the rural community. Highlight the specific actions or strategies you use to reach these groups. If applicable, mention if your intervention uses specific approaches such as gender-responsive, gender-transformative, intersectionality, or other methods to ensure inclusivity and gender equality.

By design, both approaches ensure inclusivity and meaningful participation by creating environments that reflect the realities of women's lives while actively involving men as key allies.

To better understand contextual challenges both methodologies build on local insights through a participatory gender equality assessment. This process helps to adapt or create modules appropriate to the local context and gain support for inclusion initiatives that benefit women, men, and the organizations' goals. At the same time, these approaches provided spaces for open dialogue

on gender-related topics, placing special emphasis on building women's leadership and agency while recognizing and encouraging men's role as supporters and enablers in advancing that leadership.

The **leadership training combined with PV** ensures inclusivity by engaging local producer associations to strengthen policies that promote gender inclusion and form leadership groups. These groups allow participants to build self-confidence, develop their inner strength, and start their personal empowerment journey by connecting with others in similar circumstances. Community dialogues during the PhotoVoice activities and exhibits enable women to share their stories publicly, fostering a deeper sense of inclusion and recognition within their communities.

The **household dialogues on gender equality** approach provide a supportive sharing and learning environment where men and women can express themselves freely, without fear of being judged, challenged, or made to feel unwelcome. It also encourages meaningful participation because of its open, non-judgmental setting that motivate even typically reluctant participants to voice their experiences and concerns. These discussions foster inclusion and transparency because they create opportunities to address cultural beliefs that limit women's and men's contributions to farms and households, and identified practical solutions to these challenges.

6. By using community engagement, what **results and impacts** have your good practice achieved?

Please provide specific examples and evidence demonstrating the effectiveness of your intervention, focusing on both qualitative and quantitative outcomes related to livelihoods and well-being improvements.

This intervention in Peru has led to significant outcomes, such as:

- A 59% increase in leadership roles held by women in producer organizations
- 206 % increase in household income and an 81% increase in productivity.
- Increased joint decision-making on coffee-related income in over 1,600 households
- 97% of participants reported greater control over their income and increased confidence
- Increased participation and engagement in the agronomy training sessions after household dialogues on gender equality

- Among these results, has the good practice led to improvements in terms of **gender equality, women's empowerment, and/or social inclusion**?

*Describe the **behavioral changes** in terms of gender that the good practice promotes, emphasizing agency, leadership, and participation in local governance. Include efforts to challenge discriminatory norms and unequal power dynamics. Highlight also how the intervention has supported the well-being (including psychological resilience) of marginalized groups and enhanced their inclusion and participation in decision-making processes.*

Yes, the **leadership training combined with PhotoVoice (PV)** has significantly shifted community norms around gender roles by increasing women's decision-making power and leadership. After participating in the training and PV activities, 88% of women reported having greater influence in both

their households and communities, which positively impacted their sense of agency and psychological resilience. Furthermore, there was a notable increase in women participating in financial decisions, assuming leadership roles in producer organizations, and managing coffee sales, fostering social inclusion and shared responsibilities within families.

Before this good practice was implemented, many women expressed fear of participating or speaking up. However, after the intervention, these dynamics shifted significantly. The quotes from participants speak to the profound impact of the program:

- “Before, we were shy; we didn’t have the right or duty, for instance, to have a role in a meeting or to generate an opinion.” – **Eslit Flores Carrasco**
- “What brings me the most joy is that through these trainings, my mind has expanded. I feel like more doors have opened for me, and from the bottom of my heart, I would ask for more spaces like this to continue, so that women can keep learning and growing.” – **Lucy Pulce**
- “...For me, I feel happy, I feel satisfied, because through work and everything you work for and set out to do, especially now that we talk about empowerment, everything can be achieved, everything can be done. As long as you have the determination, you can decide to do anything.” – **Monica Huancas Santos**

7. What key challenges did you encounter while implementing the community engagement activities, and how did you address them?

Include any resistance from communities, pushback, or issues related to unequal power dynamics, if applicable.

Key challenges included resistance to changing traditional gender roles, particularly regarding women’s involvement in decision-making. Tackling this required community-wide efforts, including involving men in discussions about shared responsibilities and promoting equitable decision-making through direct household visits.

Another significant challenge was women’s uncertainty about and fear of asserting their voice in private and public. Overcoming this required considerable time and effort, achieved through facilitating safe dialogue spaces where women could reflect and interact, as well as tailored leadership training designed to increase confidence in their voice and power.

8. What are the key lessons learned from your community engagement good practice?

- Transformation is only sustainable when both men and women are engaged
- Developing women’s leadership skills in tandem with community dialogues is essential to creating opportunities for women to apply their leadership and a shared sense of progress and transformation.
- Recognizing and understanding cultural and social contexts is essential to facilitate the adoption of gender norms that promote women’s economic inclusion.

9. Has this practice been replicated in the same context or in different contexts?

What are the required conditions to replicate and adapt the practice in another context/geographical area?

These practices are currently being replicated in TechnoServe coffee programs including Ethiopia, Kenya, DRC, and Guatemala. In each of these contexts, the following is suggested:

- Develop strong relationships with coffee associations, community leaders, and farmers
- Hire local community trainers
- Combine norm-changing workshops with agronomy training to improve livelihoods
- Conduct focus groups before delivery of the workshops to make sure the language, concepts, and issues are adapted to the local context

10. How **sustainable are the results achieved by this good practice?**

Describe the key elements that need to be in place to make the initiative sustainable, including enabling environment (legal and policy frameworks and institutions), local ownership, accountability, etc.

To sustain these outcomes, it is important to :

- Encourage community ownership
- Strengthen policies that promote gender inclusion at the producer association level
- Building a local network of trained community leaders helps keep the progress going, for example through the gender committees in the producer associations
- Support from financial and local government partners

11. Based on the conversations FAO held during the Community Engagement days, a definition of community engagement for empowerment was proposed:

“Community engagement for empowerment and community-led collective action can be defined as an inclusive and participatory process that enables community members to become active agents of change in decisions affecting their lives, health, and environment. This process develops their capacity to achieve sustainable outcomes for improved rural livelihoods. Embracing a rights-based approach, it prioritizes the agency and participation of all community members, regardless of gender identity, sexual orientation, age, ethnicity, caste, socioeconomic status, political affiliation, migration status, or ability/disability. Indeed, inclusive approaches recognize the complexities of overlapping marginalization and discrimination that can exclude different community members from decision-making processes and implement strategies to foster their participation, agency and empowerment.”

We invite you to contribute to this definition. What would you add or change? Please share your thoughts, suggestions, and any additional elements you believe are crucial for a comprehensive understanding of community engagement approaches aimed at community-led collective action for inclusive rural transformation, people’s empowerment, and gender equality.

In our experience, community engagement must recognize both the individuals and the groups that make up a community, and adopt a socio-ecological model of working at multiple levels to shift norms. Our approach emphasizes women as individuals, women and men as part of households, and women and men as members of communities and producer associations. Collective action must address needs not only at the community-level needs but needs at the

<p>individual, community and household levels. We suggest adding in a reference to working at multiple levels of a community: individual, household, and community.</p>	
<p>12. Based on your experience, what gaps or areas for improvement still need to be addressed in the field of community engagement?</p> <p>Understanding how to ensure sustainability of community engagement remains a key gap or area for improvement. There is a need to better prepare communities to recognize their skills and ability to continue working independently, as well as to secure funding for evaluating post-project results 2–3 years after the engagement ends.</p>	
<p>13. What do you think is FAO's role in the field of community engagement? How can FAO support and enhance interventions like yours, if applicable? <i>Consider aspects such as policy advocacy, capacity development, funding, technical assistance, knowledge production and sharing, and fostering partnerships.</i></p> <p>As mentioned above, additional funding is needed to evaluate which aspects of community engagement remain sustainable 2–3 years after project completion. FAO could play an important role in addressing this gap by advocating for and mobilizing resources specifically dedicated to long-term impact measurement. This type of funding for post project evaluation can significantly improve our understanding of the lasting effects of community engagement practices and support the development of more sustainable and impactful interventions.</p>	
<p>Link(s) to specific references about your good practice (e.g. reports, communication products, videos, articles)</p>	<p><i>Please include attachment(s) or add here link(s) to documents/videos/podcasts/other with specific references.</i></p> <p>(All of this will be posted to our website)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Case Study: Gender Equality in Coffee Production 2. Photobook: The Women of Coffee 3. Videos: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5shiYMdSX-s o https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s5PGvixTaY o https://youtu.be/uFlz91akvl8?feature=shared 4. Press release 5. Full photovoice selection of images 6. Fact Sheet