



*A woman from Yaokouakoukro drawing
the roots of a Gender Balance Tree*

NESTLÉ GENDER DIALOGUE PROJECT: GENDER BALANCE FACILITATION SESSIONS

Report prepared by the Fair Labor Association
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Zaranou and Yaokouakoukro, Côte d'Ivoire



A male participant from Zaranou



A female participant from Yaokouakoukro with her daughter

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I. BACKGROUND

The Fair Labor Association-Nestlé Gender Dialogue Project focuses on the establishment of women’s forums as a dialogue platform for women to raise and address their grievances, and to give them a greater voice in two cocoa-growing communities in Côte d’Ivoire. As part of the project, the FLA conducted a facilitation session for the community members in each of the project intervention communities – Zaranou (Abengourou) and Yaokouakoukro (Gagnoa) – to address the issue of gender balance.

The baseline assessment carried out in March 16 – 27, 2015 and the baseline Social Impact Assessment (SIA) conducted during July 13 – 24, 2015 highlighted gender balance along with women’s economic empowerment and grievance mechanism as essential components to achieve the aforementioned objective. This report explains the methodology of the gender balance facilitations conducted during August 24 – 28 and August 29 – September 2 in Zaranou and Yaokouakoukro, respectively, and presents the findings of the sessions.

II. GENDER BALANCE FACILITATION METHODOLOGY

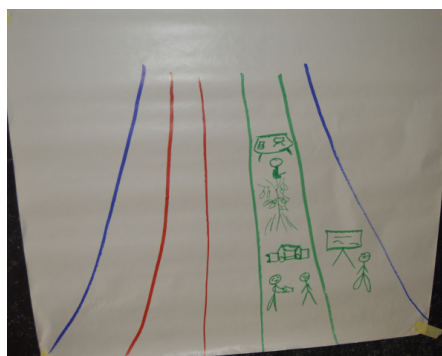
Throughout the facilitation sessions, the Gender Action Learning for Sustainability (GALS) approach was implemented through the use of the “Gender Balance Tree” tool. This activity involved men and women (from the same household) mapping their work, division of labor, property, expenditures, and decision-making. Once the mapping was done, they analyzed the imbalances in these activities, and examined the underlying causes of those imbalances. They then discussed and outlined their desired changes in their current situation to achieve balanced gender relations so that both can reach their full potential as human beings. Finally, they identified specific areas and strategies for change that can be monitored over time.

Given the facilitation’s expected objective to bring about social change at both the household level between spouses and at the community level between men and women, the FLA facilitators proceeded with a two-step approach. First, the participants were invited to apply the analysis to their own reality at their household on a sheet of paper distributed to them prior to the session. As a second step, they were asked to aggregate the results as a group of men and women on a shared paperboard. All sessions were conducted in local languages (Agni, Baoulé, and Malinké).

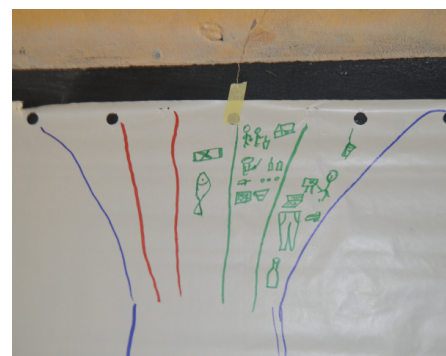
Gender Balance Tree - trunk, roots, and branches



Trunk



Roots



Branches

III. PARTICIPANTS

The gender balance facilitation sessions were open to all community members from Zaranou and Yaokouakoukro who wished to attend. In particular, men and women from women’s associations located in Zaranou and Yaokouakoukro, and from both cooperatives COOPAZA and USCRG supplying cocoa to Nestlé, were the main target groups. A total of 58 participants (56 women and two men) attended the session in Zaranou, while 115 participants (91 women and 24 men) took part in the session in Yaokouakoukro.



A woman from Zaranou analyzing gender balance issues in her household

TABLE 1: PARTICIPANTS IN GENDER BALANCE FACILITATION SESSIONS			
	ZARANOU	YAOKOUAKOUKRO	TOTAL
Women	56	91	147
Men	2	24	26
Total	58	115	173



A man from Yaokouakoukro reporting gender balance analysis on the board



Female participants in Yaokouakoukro



Male participants in Yaokouakoukro

IV. OUTCOMES

The gender balance facilitation sessions focused on the four main factors of imbalance identified by the gender balance tool and confirmed during the baseline assessments: work, property, expenditures, and decision-making. Session facilitators encouraged each participant to apply the analysis to their own household situation; this report summarizes only aggregated results, by gender.

1. Who contributes the most work to generating household income

In both Zaranou and Yaokouakoukro, the gender balance tool revealed that both men and women contribute to the household work to generate income, each typically conducting different types of work. In general, men are more focused on perennial crops such as cocoa, rubber, coffee, and palm oil, while women concentrate on food crops like cassava, peanuts, and eggplant, though there is some overlap from time to time. Depending on the tasks to be conducted, both men and women are involved in the farming of crops such as yams, rice, and maize.

2. Who spends the most for the household or benefits the most from household income

According to the participants' analyses, both men and women are responsible for household level expenses; however, participants found that men spend the most for the entire household. According to the participants, men are responsible for a large part of household expenses including children's schooling, family healthcare, and meals. Women contribute to these expenses, but participants reported that they regard women's contributions as support for men, who are perceived as primarily responsible for managing finances. In addition to expenditures for the family's interest, the gender balance tool identified expenditures that tend to be specific to men or to women. Women's expenditures focused on clothing, shoes, and cooking utensils, while the men's expenses related to alcohol, funerals, and supporting other relationships outside the family. Participants generally agreed that expenditures on behalf of children are considered to be a family's highest priority, and participants agreed that most of their household expenditures are used to support children's care.

3. Decision-making status

With respect to decision-making, the situation differs between Zaranou and Yaokouakoukro.

In Zaranou¹ the gender balance analysis highlighted two cases. On one side, the indigenous Agni women have an increasing contribution (similar to men) in decision-making. On the other hand, foreign women in this locality, mostly Malian and Burkinabe, have no rights to participate in decision-making.

In Yaokouakoukro, women contribute at a certain level of decision-making, but this contribution remains low, linked to specifics such as children's scholarship or the decision to build a house for the family. The results show that women are consulted as opposed to directly participating in decision-making.

4. Property status

The analysis emphasized that the gender balance regarding property was similar to that of decision-making. Agni women from Zaranou may have their own properties including a house, land, and perennial crops (such as cocoa, rubber, and palm oil). In Yaokouakoukro, men are the main property owners, and only a few women own cocoa farms.

1. Zaranou has a cosmopolitan population of about 33,539 inhabitants (<https://knoema.com/CIP2014/2014-general-census-of-population-and-housing-c%3%B4te-d-ivoire>), comprising the indigenous Agni and foreign Malinké, Lobi, Nigerians, Burkinabe, Malians and Ghanaians.

5. Status of Gender Balance Tree

The gender balance analyses in Zaranou and Yaokouakoukro revealed two different realities. In Zaranou, despite sparse participation by men, the analysis concluded that the household tree regarding indigenous people (Agni) is balanced between men and women. Meanwhile, the analysis found gender imbalance among Muslim people in Zaranou and throughout the population in Yaokouakoukro.

Despite the balance in the household tree regarding workload for all categories of participants in both Zaranou and Yaokouakoukro, and despite the contribution of women at some level to the household expenditures, the overall analysis shows that in Muslim households in Zaranou and Yaokouakoukro, a large part of household expenditures are made by men who also own major properties and influence decision-making. Overall, unlike men and indigenous women from Zaranou, women from Yaokouakoukro and from foreign households of Zaranou own little or no property. In addition to their participation in the tasks at their respective family farms, they are involved in many other small activities that generate low income and limit their contribution to household expenditures, and influence their participation in the decision-making.



Gender balance facilitation results

6. Commitments for social change

The household tree analysis allowed the participants to develop some concrete commitments, mainly in Yaokouakoukro. In total, 10 commitments to promote gender balance at the household level – including two common commitments for both men and women, five for men, and three for women – were registered at the end of the facilitation session in this locality. These commitments related to work, income management, decision-making, and property.

Men and women:

- Committed to look together at all of their income-generating activities and agree on prioritizing those which generate more wealth
- Agreed to prioritize essential household expenditures

Men specifically committed to:

1. Abandon activities that require more time but yield little revenue
2. Involve their wives in the management of the revenue generated by household family farms
3. Prioritize their spending, giving priority to the household expenses
4. Allow their wives to develop sustainable income-generating activities to ensure better revenue and increase their support to household expenditures, and also associate the name of their wives to the household's properties – mainly the house, farms, and land – in order to prevent the expropriation of their family (wife and children) in case of death, as currently observed in many communities

5. Guarantee the involvement of their wives in all major decision-making, mainly regarding household income management and children's futures



Men presenting their commitments

Women, similarly to the men, committed to:

1. Abandon activities that require more time but yield little revenue
2. Give priority to household expenditures rather than personal goods (such as clothes)
3. Agree to participate in decision-making alongside their husbands



Women presenting their commitments

V. CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

During the facilitation session in Zaranou, the facilitators were challenged by very low participation levels by men. Men expressed little interest in the project, understanding it as a women's initiative. Two men did ultimately participate in the session, but for such sessions to yield successful outcomes and specific commitments at the household level, they require the participation men and women from the same household.

Despite facing challenges in the sessions, the facilitators drew conclusions on how to approach such gender balance trainings in the future:

- The absence of men in Zaranou showed that in order to yield the most successful outcomes, it is necessary that these sessions to bring together both men and women.
- When gender balance training brings together a large number of men and women who are not necessarily from the same household, the outcomes are more general than specific. These outcomes can be used for general sensitization about gender balance and justice.
- Gender balance sessions can be used to solve specific issues of gender balance and justice within families. In this case, the session should directly focus on the target families, and the number of participants should be limited.

VI. NEXT STEPS

The completion of these sessions marks the conclusion of FLA facilitation and training activities within the framework of this Gender Dialogue Project. As a next step, FLA field staff will travel to the project communities to monitor the gender balance commitments made by the community members and observe on-the-ground application. During these planned visits, FLA field staff will meet with cooperatives' representatives to share the results and engage them to accompany community members in their commitments. The staff will discuss with cooperatives' representatives the ways to include the commitments registered during the facilitation sessions in their gender-related sensitization activities.

Finally, the FLA will conduct an end-line Social Impact Assessment to monitor the overall impact of the project. Based on the result of this SIA and on the different progress reports, the FLA will deliver a project-end report that will provide guidance on how to scale these activities. Finally, in agreement with Nestlé, the FLA intends to organize stakeholder meetings in both Zaranou and Yaokoukaoukro to formally close the project and communicate on the achievements, and to and get the buy-in of local stakeholders as well as the continuous cooperation with the cooperatives' staff and women's associations.

