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| Name of project: | Integrated Initiatives for Economic Growth in Mali (IICEM) |
| Donor: | USAID |
| Implementing Organization: | Abt Associates Inc. |
| M&E Organization: | Program staff supervises, validates, and treats data; implementing partners collect data. |
| Project start date: | January 1, 2010 |
| Project end date: | December 31, 2012 |
| Geographic Coverage: (countries) | Mali |
| Status of impact assessment: (when are/were baselines to be conducted, what quantitative or qualitative assessments have been done, etc.) | This is a follow-on to a program implemented from 2007 - 2009, so baseline information was established immediately upon start-up using past program data. Qualitative and quantitative assessments are annual, with this year's assessment currently under way. Related to gender specifically, as described below, we are currently reviewing the impact and potential impact of our activities on men and women within each value chain to integrate a gender action plan into each value chain plan. This process will lead to the identification of new activities to resolve any significant gender-related imbalances within the manageable interest of the project, which will in turn require new, specific indicators, baselines, and target values to track progress towards resolving the imbalances. |
| To what extent is the project targeted to women? | The program significantly targets women, although IICEM's resources and activities are integrated and not divided up per sex and we therefore cannot say X percent of resources target women specifically. The program aims to increase both men's <i>and</i> women's participation in significant agricultural development. Women have historically been excluded from large-scale, transformational agricultural development in Mali, yet potential exists to either build on traditional roles or create new opportunities to ensure women's participation in Mali's agriculture-based economic growth. As examples, since agro foods processing is a traditional task for women, IICEM increases technical skills or organizational capacity building so women can better participate in larger-scale processing activities to generate higher-quality, value-added products; however, at the same time, IICEM looks at new opportunities, such as potato farming in the north. While potato farming in southern Mali is traditionally a lucrative men's activity, men in northern Mali are more occupied with cash crop development, and women are interested in working in potato farming, so IICEM has developed a technical assistance package targeting their needs and interests. |
| Does this project aim to directly build assets, or would increases in assets be a | We may not fully understand this question, but we believe this project directly <i>and</i> indirectly builds assets. |

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| secondary effect (e.g., project aims to increase incomes, but people might then invest in assets)? | |
| What kinds of assets might have observable changes (for men or women)? | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural capital (e.g. land, water): | Land, surface water, natural resources in certain forests and protected areas |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical capital (e.g. housing, equipment, cell phones): | Farming tools, processing equipment, diesel powered water pumps, storage facilities, irrigation infrastructure |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial capital (savings, credit, remittances): | Credit |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social capital (e.g. group membership, connections, either within communities or within outsiders): | Associations, unions/federations, connections between producer associations and processors; connections between processors-traders and buyers; connections between both of those and transporters. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human capital (e.g. education, skills, health, nutritional status) | Education (as practical training and basic literacy/numeracy to support business management tasks), labor (time savings) |
| <p>Brief abstract about the project—what is it trying to achieve, what is the strategy being used for integrating gender into project implementation and in M&E/impact evaluation? (max 1 page)</p> <p>IICEM’s vision is to achieve transformational impact on agricultural development that boosts the number of rural Malians sustainably and profitably linked to significant markets with the end objective of increasing income and food security for rural Malians. In three regions in Northern Mali, and three regions plus the District of Bamako in southern Mali, the program employs a value chain approach to its work in maize, millet/sorghum, rice, mango, potato, shallot and horticulture, helping to improve the technical and organizational skills of key value chain actors. The program also works in cross-cutting areas such as fish and rice-fish farming, improved natural resource management and biodiversity conservation.</p> <p>Since start-up of the original program in 2007, IICEM has recognized that women in Mali traditionally have limited access to and control over resources. Further, women have limited access to education, extension services, and other sources of information, which chronically skews their ability to find and successfully participate in income generating opportunities. In response to these challenges, IICEM implements a three-pronged approach to increase women’s involvement in agricultural development: 1) implementing activities parallel to areas along a specific value chain where women traditionally have experience and cultural acceptance in working; 2) finding new areas for women to break into that build on women’s availability or interests in a particular value chain and in a particular region; and 3) finding solutions to challenges posed by systemic gaps in women’s access to resources that increase women’s ability to participate in agricultural development.</p> <p>IICEM must be aware of the impact of activities on both men <i>and</i> women, and resolve unintended impacts or imbalances for either group in activity planning and supervision. This requires a more in-depth analysis within each value chain than what is being implemented now, followed up by regular activity monitoring and tweaking. The value chain experts on staff and implementing partners are the leaders for this process at IICEM. Therefore, IICEM held an initial introduction to USAID’s approach and processes presented in USAID’s handbook <i>Creating</i></p> | |

Gender-Equitable Opportunity in Value Chain Development for technical staff, and is currently coaching staff and implementing partners in applying the training to develop gender plans within each value chain analysis.

Regarding the integration of gender into project M&E, first, of 35 total performance indicators, the IICEM program has established separate targets for women and men within 10 indicators, and 16 indicators track information disaggregated by gender. In addition, as a result of the gender plans mentioned in the paragraph above, new activities will be identified to resolve significant gender-based imbalances, which will require the development of additional, highly-focused indicators, baselines, and target values to track progress towards resolving the identified imbalance.