



USAID Okard ໂອກາດ

Gender and Livelihood



USAID Okard (ໂອກາດ) supports Disability Inclusive Development in Lao PDR

USAID Okard ໂອກາດ Gender and Livelihood Handbook

Summary: USAID Okard Training and Capacity Building Approach CBID Demonstration Model

I. USAID Okard Activity

USAID Okard Activity, a five-year project funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), aims at improving and sustaining the independent living and functional ability of persons with disabilities and their household regardless of factors such as age, sex, gender expression and ethnicity. The Activity partners with the Lao government, civil society organizations and the private sector to develop and implement national disability inclusive policies so that no one is left behind.

USAID Okard promotes equal access to health and related rehabilitation, economic opportunities and social services in the Lao People's Democratic Republic and interventions will be targeted in Vientiane Capital and in the provinces of Xieng Khouang and Savannakhet.

To ensure long-term sustainability, USAID Okard uses **a systems-centered approach** by focusing on government ownership of disability inclusive policies and of rehabilitation services and mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS). The project also applies **a person-centered approach** particularly through case management to address the individual needs of persons with disabilities and the communities that support them, and most importantly to assess and remove barriers for persons with disabilities to become self-sufficient and to achieve their optimal functional ability.

Persons with disabilities are often among society's most vulnerable and marginalized populations. Some of the major causes of disabilities in Laos are unexploded ordnance accidents (UXO), road traffic crashes and increasingly, non-communicable diseases such as Type 2 diabetes, stroke and stunting. Equal access to health and social services will foster inclusion of persons with disabilities in their communities and allow them to contribute more effectively to society on an equal basis with others.

The Activity works towards creating an environment in which persons with disabilities are empowered to actively participate in society, with the following outcomes anticipated:

- Improved access to health and rehabilitation services for persons with disabilities and their households.
- Strengthened health systems with rehabilitation and MHPSS included in the continuum of care
- More persons with disabilities and their households employed or self-employed.
- All stakeholders including persons with disabilities actively involved in creating and enabling a more supportive and inclusive environment for the sustainability of health and economic empowerment improvements

2. USAID Okard Overall Training and Capacity Building approach

World Education believes in working through local partners for sustainability, so the USAID Okard Activity will be implemented through sub-recipients from the Government of Lao PDR, INGOs and NPAs. In order to ensure quality and consistency across the project's interventions

and to build capacity of the partners both technically and in terms of organizational development, World Education places great importance on training and capacity building, which will be operationalized through the Training Unit, headed by a Training and Capacity Building Coordinator and guided by the Technical Management Committee.

The training unit will oversee all training and capacity building development and implemented by USAID Okard, primarily in three main areas:

1. **Capacity building for GoL ministries, departments, and service providers** through technical assistance and mentoring as well as formal training so that institutional processes are created and staff developed to continue to deliver inclusive services beyond the life of the program.
2. **Targeted capacity building, training and mentoring (including organizational assessments and capacity building plans) for sub-recipients, including DPOs and NPAs** to strengthen the ability of organizations to manage sub-grants, navigate USAID regulations, manage their organization in a sustainable and accountable way, so they can sustain their fund raising to deliver disability inclusive services and provide effective advocacy on disability rights, laws, and policies that influence GoL policy implementation.
3. **Training and ongoing capacity building for the Community Based Inclusive Development (CBID) teams of QLA and ARMI** so they can effectively deliver quality case management and build awareness and engagement in communities for community action and mobilization towards more inclusive communities.

Measurable capacity-building is one of the core components of USAID Okard, and inputs by World Education and Humanity & Inclusion will take many forms. One approach is individual coaching, where a USAID Okard staff member who has the required expertise works closely with one or several members of an organization regularly over a longer period of time, to discuss a specific issue, either by phone, email or in person, or a combination of those methods. Other times, the training unit organizes formal trainings for all sub-recipients, for example USAID Regulations, Financial Management, Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning, and Gender Inclusive Development.

All USAID Okard trainings are participatory, reflective and allow as much time as possible for 'learning by doing' and practical application of skills and knowledge. The Training Unit and Technical Management Committee (TMC) carefully develop curriculum outlines and materials that reflect clear learning objectives and build on other trainings. In addition, USAID Okard recognize the importance of reflection, goal setting, and the long-term, regular follow up needed for effective capacity building, and the need for effective measurement of capacity building to demonstrate result

3. **Community Based Inclusive Development (CBID)**

One of the key features of the USAID Okard Activity is the **Community Based Inclusive Development (CBID)** Demonstration Model. Community Based Inclusive Development

(CBID) is an approach that aims to build and promote an inclusive society by bringing about changes to the lives of persons with disabilities in local communities, working with and through persons with disabilities themselves, local groups and institutions. CBID strategy encourages inclusive, resilient and equitable communities where persons with disabilities are empowered to contribute to address the challenges they and their families face.

The CBID demonstration model is an evidence-based approach that includes two key components – case management and community mobilization. The CBID demonstration model districts in Xieng Khouang (Kham District) and Savannakhet (Xayphouthong District) will be conducted by civil society organizations Quality of Life Association (QLA) and Association for Rural Mobilisation and Improvement (ARMI) respectively, with the technical support of WEI and HI and overarching technical guidance by the USAID Okard Technical Management Committee (TMC).

The CBID teams of QLA and ARMI will directly support persons with disabilities to identify barriers to their economic self-sufficiency and optimal functioning, and work with families, communities, local authorities and relevant service providers, so they understand these barriers and interact together to remove barriers and meet these needs.

4. Competencies required for the CBID team

To effectively implement the CBID demonstration model using a family centered approach for case management and being a good advocate for community mobilization toward disability inclusion, CBID team members (CBID facilitators, IGA officer and CBID team leader) need to have the appropriate knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors focused on five (5) core competencies; (1) professionalism, (2) ethical practice, (3) embracing and respecting human diversity, (4) equality, and (5) critical thinking and professional judgement.

By acquiring and mastering the required range of knowledge, attitudes, skills and behaviors, over time as part of a continued learning process, the CBID team will be competent to engage in an ongoing, interactive process with persons with disabilities, their families, the community, local authorities and organizations on sustainable disability inclusion development.

Core competencies expected of a CBID Team member

I. CBID team members practice with professionalism.

- advocate and organize access to the needed services for the person with disabilities and their household that contribute to increased independent living, optimal functioning and wellbeing;
- demonstrate a professional manner in behavior, appearance, and communication with persons with disabilities and their household members, and with community actors;
- engage in learning and reflection with team leaders and USAID Okard technical unit for continued professional development.

2. CBID team members practice in an ethical and respectful manner.

- have an obligation to conduct themselves ethically and to engage the household members in ethical decision-making.
- demonstrate respect, empathy and effective compassionate communication when working with individuals with disabilities, families, local authorities, organizations, communities and colleagues.
- are knowledgeable about the rights of persons with disabilities, the value of disability inclusion and relevant disability policies and laws.
- Become knowledgeable about the individual circumstances of person with disabilities and their family and are sensitive to that person and family's cultures and values.
- Recognize the limitation of their skills and knowledge and make careful decisions about doing no harm to the person with disabilities and their families.

3. CBID team members use critical thinking and professional judgment.

- be curious, creative, persistent, and innovative to find meaningful solution to remove barriers to disability inclusion.
- reflect on, apply and integrate knowledge and skills learned in USAID Okard training packages in day to day work, including personal experience and practical knowledge.

4. CBID team members embrace and respect human diversity¹.

- understand and respect that disability is part of the human diversity and behave accordingly.
- appreciate that, because of difficulties in functioning and sometimes difference in appearance, persons with disabilities may experience shame, stigma, abuse, harassment, bullying, exploitation, discrimination, stigmatization, poverty, marginalization, that result in psychosocial issues and alienation;
- be aware of their own beliefs, attitudes and behaviors on disability to ensure they do not influence the work they complete with persons with disabilities, their families and the community.

5. CBID Facilitators advance rights of persons with disabilities

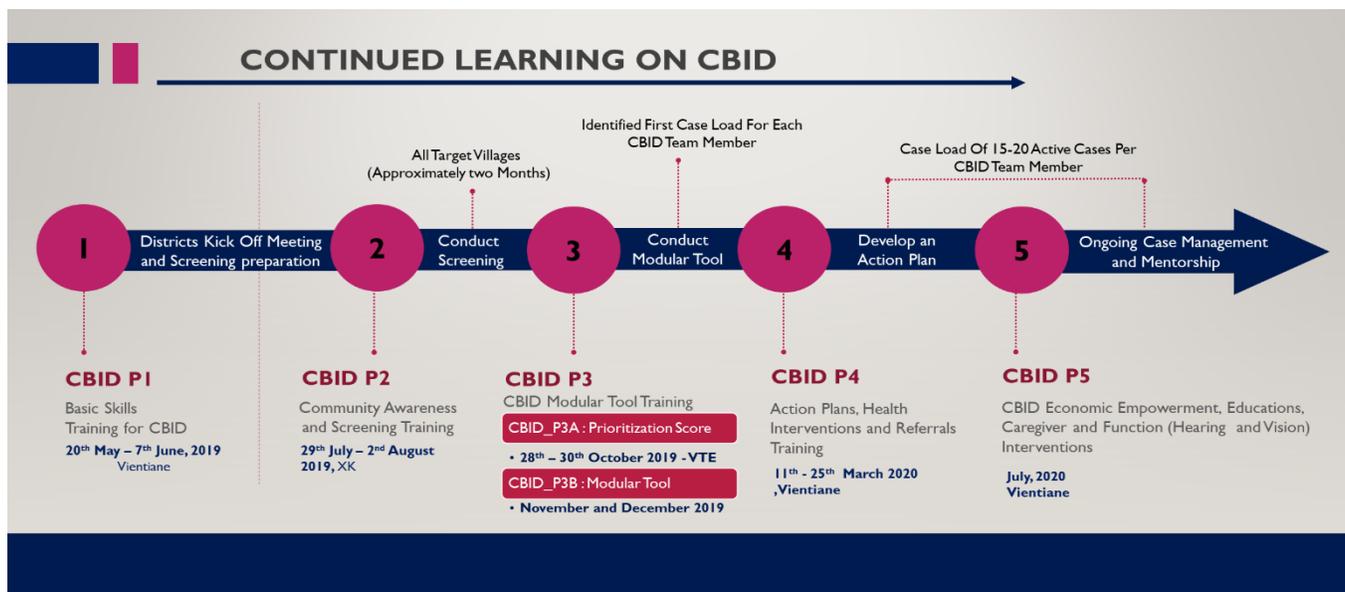
- understand that each person with disabilities has the same basic human rights, such as freedom, safety, privacy, an adequate standard of living, health care, and education like others.

5. Continued Learning on CBID

¹ The dimension of human diversity covers multiple factors including age, class, color, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, political ideology, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation.

During the first months of the implementation, CBID team will receive several intensive training packages organized and provided by the USAID Okard Training Unit. These training packages are designed to gradually build core competencies. Each training package is designed to provide a set of knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviors that support the CBID facilitator to be able to mobilize community actors on disability inclusion and to implement the case management steps.

In between training packages, the CBID facilitators and IGA officer will be working in the community gradually applying knowledge, practicing skills and reflecting on their progress under the supervision of team leaders. Below are the planned training packages for the first year of implementation and how they interact with the first few steps of case management and community mobilization:



The participant handbooks developed for each package were used in the CBID trainings for QLA and ARMI teams during the USAID Okard Activity. They are available in print on request from World Education (Chief of Party: Bernard Franck bernard_franck@la.worlded.org) or on the World Education website <https://laos.worlded.org/our-resources/>.

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Learning Objectives

| Gender in livelihoods | |
|-----------------------|---|
| 1 | Discuss the benefits of women’s participation (for women, their families and the expected results of the project) |
| 2 | Discuss the approaches to support women to effectively participate in the CBID Demonstration Model EE interventions |
| 3 | Describe how to promote the benefits of activity gender bias to male household members |
| 4 | Discuss how to mainstream gender and make it happen in EE activities |

What are the benefits of women’s participation in livelihoods?

Global evidence suggests that female *and* male citizens of more equitable societies are, on average, wealthier, healthier and better educated than in others. Often the focus of gender in development is about ‘equality’ or ‘rights’ but there are benefits of women’s participation specifically related to livelihoods.

In economic empowerment, three elements can be considered in relation to gender:

- **Equality vs Equity** for women
- Project impact (the change we seek) on **HH economics**
- Impact on **enterprise success**



“Equality between women and men (gender equality):

refers to the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys. Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same but that women’s and men’s rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female.” (UN (United Nations) Women)

Livelihood equality should consider both “Opportunity, Access and Control”

For example:

- Equal opportunities, access and making decision to training/ education (leading to productive assets)
- Equality opportunity in assessing workplace and contributing in the decision-making level at work
- Equal opportunities, access to job/ livelihood activities and make decision about the use of those results

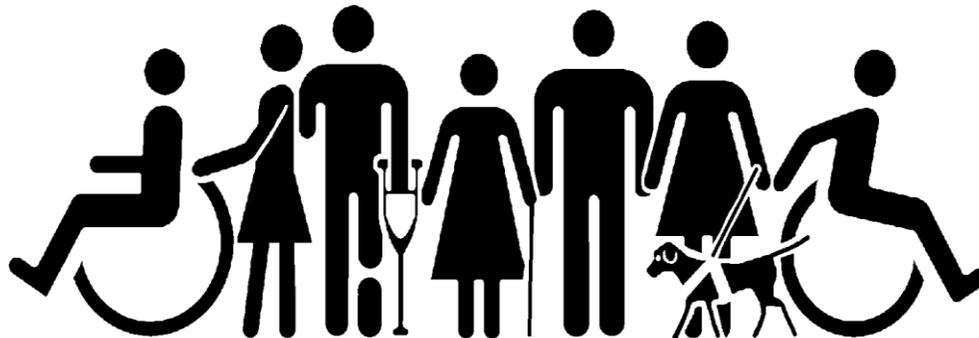
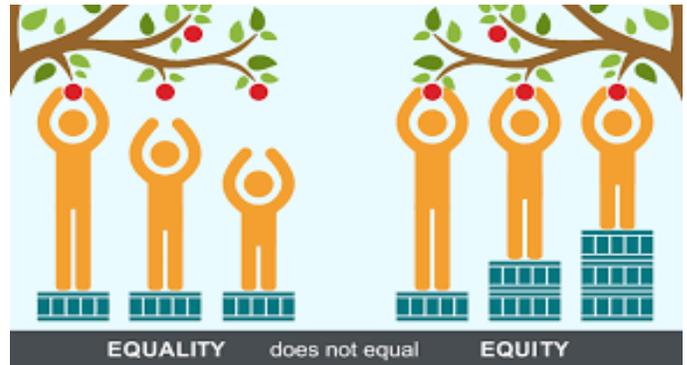


Gender: Equality vs Equity

Equity is giving everyone what they need to be successful.

Equality is treating everyone the same.

Equity is the focus for economic empowerment in USAID Okard and Equity related to decision making “Controlling”:



Equity in USAID Okard

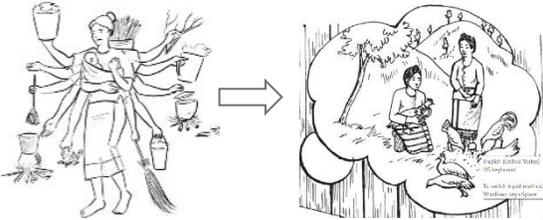
| Examples of equality and equity in economic empowerment | |
|---|--|
| Equality | Equity |
| Give every household in the village a chicken. | The project gives assets to poorer households to support enterprise; other households are not supported. |

| | |
|---|--|
| The household decides who are the core participants (assuming equal chance for all) | The project strongly promotes women or persons with disabilities to be the core participant. |
| Ask the household to decide who will get the training | The project ensures that women or persons with disabilities get the training ‘opportunity’. |

Women’s impact on household economics

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| Improve families’ lives | Women, more than men, tend to transfer improvements in their own lives into the lives of their children, families, and communities. |  |
| Household development | As primary caregivers, women are more likely to make decisions on expenditure that link to household development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • child nutrition • child health • female and male attendance in education • spending on needs not wants |  |
| Financial decision | Women’s work often is unpaid, e.g. housework, lab our for household level agriculture. Direct income brought into the household by women is low, so decision making on financial matters is low. Where women bring in income their engagement in decision making also increases |  |
| These decisions on income have a strong outcome on the wellbeing of their family. | | |

Decision-making by women can be increased in a number of ways:

| | | |
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| <p>Provide opportunities for earning the money</p> | <p>Making the money increases the decision-making about how it is used (Household financial control)</p> <p>Women will make <u>financial decisions</u> that favour improved health (reduced financial burden of illness) and school attendance for girls and boys.</p> <p>Increased financial literacy improves money management that supports household development (saving in an account gives more financial control over finances). This can include saving for the future education of their children which will impact on the children's future economic opportunities.</p> |  |
| <p>Reduce non-productive workload.</p> | <p>By reducing non-productive work (e.g. milling rice, making traditional fencing) women's time can focus on income generating tasks (and therefore earn/make decisions)</p>  |  |
| <p>Improve health and nutrition</p> | <p>Managing mother and infant health (related to workload, nutrition, health care) will result in more time for productive work (earning/making decisions).</p> |  |

Case story I: Ms. Nout raising goats <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ic6BsV6GIPg>

The short video was made about Ms Nout, a participant in the Resilient Livelihoods for the Poor (RLP) graduation programme. She is explaining her annual planning chart and how it links to her livelihood development.

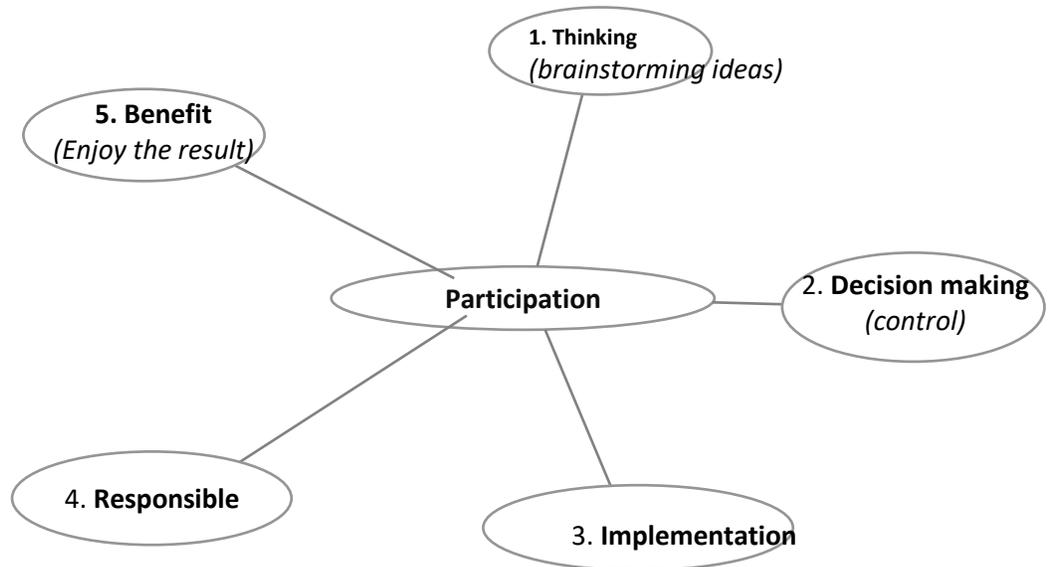
The key points to note are that:

- She has a livelihood plan with a goal – this helps her to have long term planning about her livelihood and motivation to progress
- She is using her technical training and finance training to improve her livelihood
- She has a bank account to keep the money safe, so she is saving and not spending (and has control over the money and decision making).
- She is making decisions about her livelihood, spending and savings



In summary, Nout has effectively participated in the 5 level of participation and has been successful as:

- She is thinking and having ideas about the IGA;
- She is **making decisions** and has control;
- She is doing the IGA activity **-implementation**;
- She is **responsible** of the activities;
- She is enjoying the results and **benefits** of the IGA.



What is the impact on enterprise success if focusing on women's participation?

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Nout became the core participant of a start-up business project to manage a goat raising enterprise (starting with 2 goats). She received:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Technical training (enterprise activity management)• Financial literacy coaching (enterprise/HH financial management)• Life-skills coaching (related to health management/HH economics) <p>When feeding the goats in the morning she noticed one was sick and immediately treated it (based on the training). Several months after this she sold the goat at Pi Mai when the price was high and put the money in the savings account. Later she used some savings to buy medicine when her child got sick. The second goat was pregnant, she fed it correctly (good nutrition including mineral blocks) and it had two kids. Her family now has savings, and 3 goats.</p> |  |
|---|---|

Note: significantly increasing women's workloads (including organizing meetings, training or visits during times when women are busy) should be avoided where possible.

BUT, what might have happened if Nout did not attend the technical training?

| Nout's alternative story |
|--|
| <p>Nout's husband decided to be the core participant of the AGM project and decided to ask for two goats.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• He went to the livestock raising training.• He then travelled to get work in the next province, leaving Nout to look after the goats.• He did not go to the finance or life-skill coaching. <p>When the goat got sick, Nout did not know what to do. The goat later died. Her child got sick after Pi Mai so Nout sold the second goat to pay for the treatment. There was no impact from the enterprise activity (no goats or money remaining) apart from extra work for Nout who was looking after the goats for several months.</p> |

The IGA officer and CBID facilitators need to use judgement to help decide the main participant. Ideally, the husband and wife should join the coaching and learn together if there is interest.

Case story 2: Toey growing mushrooms

Toey's household was selected to receive the AGM intervention. He decided to become the main participant and chose to grow mushroom as the income generating activity. He attended the training on how to grow mushrooms. The IGA officer made 2-weekly coaching visits. Toey was not always available as he did other wood cutting work. The household set up the mushroom house, but only one time, using the asset inputs from the project.



The enterprise provided less than 600,000KIP from selling mushrooms, which Toey kept. There was no effort to do a second round of mushrooms.

Toey was not interesting in further coaching from the IGA officer. 5-months later the mushroom house was still unproductive. There was no enterprise.

Investigation:

When the CBID team leader followed up with the household, it was found that:

- Toey's wife 'Chanta' had wanted to raise goats. She no interest in growing mushrooms.
- Toey went to the planning meeting without her. He did not know her idea to raise goats. He chose to grown mushrooms as he had seen a friend make quick money from some ready-to-go mushroom bags.
- Toey then focused on wood cutting work and other labour.
- Chanta had to set up and manage the mushrooms, but didn't get any training, and the harvest was low. She didn't know how to start a second round of mushrooms. The first round had been ready-to-go bags but to continue she would need to make her own bags. She had little interest in mushroom growing- she had wanted goats.

The CBID team leader persuaded Toey to use the mushroom income to buy a female goat for his wife to raise and breed. The main participant was changed to Chanta, she got training on goat raising and financial literacy. The goat was purchased and later had 2 kids. Chanta continued to raise goats.

This is an example, where if considering gender from the beginning to would have supported the enterprise better, increased the household income and reduced the need for the project staff to intervene.

Note: Consideration of gender in EE is a methodology to ensure an analysis is completed to find the balance of gender to bring a better outcome of the activity. USAID Okard promotes the empowerment of women especially women and girls with disabilities through project interventions so if there are appropriate opportunities for them they should be encouraged to join the activity.

What's in it for men?

'Household' enterprises are the concern of the whole 'household'. Women should directly engage with the project when possible and receive coaching, but the enterprise is for the family. **The aim is not to exclude men, but to fully include women.**

Family wealth

Men have seen that their families have benefited and been better off financially by giving women increased opportunity to be more engaged income generating activities.



Community standing

Income generation by women can increase women's ability to engage with the community and therefore increase the standing of the family in the community



Poverty reduction

Experience globally shows that empowered women – women who have the ability to make decisions – will act in ways that lift themselves, their families and communities out of poverty.



How to help MEN see the benefit of WOMEN engaging in economic activities?



“You and your family will be better off financially!”



It has been demonstrated that where women are engaged in managing and making decisions about livelihoods, they are more able to:

- Make decisions that increase productivity of the livelihood for the financial benefit of the family
- Have better financial management skills that support their household finances
- Have the technical skills to manage the livelihood (e.g. treating livestock, understanding market prices) which increases profit

Tips:

- Use compassionate communication to discuss with the whole family about the benefit of women leading EE activities. Talk friendly rather than directly about gender equality.
- Explain the benefit and outcomes that will benefit the whole family if women are empowered and contribute to EE activities. Do this with the male head of household or guide the conversation with the household to directly engage him in the conversation.
- Do not assume that women will have less participation. Try to talk with the husband and wife together and figure out what is the family situation. Support them to make a plan that works for their family.
- Encourage them to shift some of the roles if you see it is necessary for the family to consider shared and better-balanced workloads.

Mainstreaming gender

Mainstreaming gender is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, in all areas and at all levels.

This will support in making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences part of the project design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

How does it help?

By considering implications for women and men each time we implement part of a project, work in a new village, or support a new household, we are trying to understand the best way to implement and have the most positive impact.

Therefore, by mainstreaming gender in economic empowerment activities we can support:

- Equity for women (rights, access to resources, opportunities and control)
- Positive impacts on household economies from women decision making
- Positive impacts on families, nutrition, health and education
- Increased income from stronger enterprises

How do we make it happen? Here are some questions to ask when considering mainstreaming gender in the project.

- How do **responsibilities**, activities, and **priorities** of women and men, differ?
- What are the **inequalities** within the household/family (**opportunities**)? Who is making **decisions and who has access to resources**?
- What are the **views** of women as well as men about decisions that will affect the way they live?
- Have we made sure we do not assume that all women or all men share the same **needs** and perspectives?
- How is women's **access to** productive assets being considered? Remember, women are more likely to be in low-paid jobs (part-time, temporary, home-based), and likely to have less access to productive assets such as education, skills, property and credit).
- How is **shared workload being considered**? Women have many tasks in family care (laundry, cooking, childcare, care of the sick, cleaning, food production, water/ firewood collection). This can be an **obstacle** to expanding economic activities.



**Look through the
gender lens**

Access and Control

Checking **opportunity, access and control** are very important when doing gender analysis and monitoring inequalities. Receiving an **opportunity** means the creation of an **environment that facilitates the needs of all**. **Access to** opportunity means **reducing the barriers** that restrict opportunities that meets their needs.

Exercise: Read the following examples and answers the questions.

Scenario 1. A young woman has an opportunity to continue her education at the University. Her parents support her and will provide her financial support during the period. She would like to study IT but her parents and relatives said she should study accounting because it is better for a woman. She cannot negotiate with her parents because if she studied another field they won't pay her. So, she decides to study accounting.

Questions:

1. What are the issues related to access and control for this young woman?
2. Was she able to control her education?

Scenario 2. In a family, the husband and wife say they have equal rights. All the household income is managed by the wife. She manages and plans for day to day expenditures related to the family's priorities and urgent needs such as buying food and paying for childcare. She can make decisions if the expenditure related to small amount. But if it is a big amount she needs to ask her husband -he can agree or disagree. However, in other situations, when the

husband would like to buy a car or give some money to his relatives the husband can decide, and the wife has to agree because he is the head of the household.

Questions:

1. How is gender equality in this family related to access and control?
2. Is the wife able to access the family finances?
3. Is the wife able to control finances at the household level?

When promoting gender equality, opportunity and participation are more visionary but the more concerning challenges and interventions are how we could **ensure access and control**.

Mainstreaming gender in project cycle

1. During all livelihood **planning** stage, make sure you have:

- **Consult with the person with disabilities whether a woman and man with disabilities, and with the whole family-to make sure all family members including women, men, older men and older women, and youth have been able to share their opinions and decide what is the best plan to support the persons with disabilities.**



2. **Implementation** stage

- Encourage all household members (boys and girls, mother and father, both older men and women) in the family to support in the activity. **Equity in sharing tasks** should be clearly identified such as who does what, when, where and how, the value and benefit of the work, carefully checking and supporting the family to avoid gender bias.



3. **Monitoring**

- **Closely monitor** if the women and men, boys and girls with disabilities have shared the same **opportunities, access and control** over resources related to their rights and benefits.
- **Observe** if there are any issues concerning gender equality and equity?
- **Ask the opinions** from women's group and from men's group, analyze any barriers or opportunity that lead to a positive and negative impacts to the process of the activities.
- **Plan for mitigation measures** and how to empower women and girls with and without disabilities throughout all the process of interventions.
- **Plan** how you would monitor and evaluate changes.



4. Evaluation

- When doing **discharge plan** for the person with disabilities, both women or men are involved in the process, exchange the lessons they both have learned, and talk about what has improved collecting the different individual opinions of women and men in the household.
- Listen to their **opinions** and consider from both sides taking in consideration the different **needs** identified.

Watch the video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QButYSXmpKw>



Summary

What's the benefit to women, their families in the EE component of CBID case management?

- We want equity for women (rights, access to resources, opportunities and control)
- We want positive impact on HH economies from women decision making
- We want positive impact on families' nutrition, health and education
- We want successful enterprises that bring more income
-

What is in it for the men?

- More household income (+Increased productivity of HH livelihoods through technical skills and decision making, and better HH financial management)
- Increased community standing
- Better family health

How do we make it happen?

- Mainstreaming gender - assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, in all areas and at all levels.
- It helps us understand the best way to implement our work, have the most positive impact, and support gender equality.