



Graduation with Resilience to Achieve Sustainable Development

GRAD was a five-year USAID-funded project designed to help the Government of Ethiopia find sustainable solutions to chronic food insecurity. The project supported households currently enrolled in the government's Productive Safety Net Program (PSNP) so that they could access microfinance, improve on- and off-farm productivity, and establish links to markets. In addition, GRAD improved household and community resilience by increasing women's empowerment, improving nutritional practices; and introducing climate change adaptation mechanisms. CARE Ethiopia led a consortium that includes REST, ORDA, CRS, Agri Service Ethiopia, and SNV. The project worked in 16 districts in Amhara, Tigray, Oromia and SNNPR.

GRAD Learning Brief # 6

Gender Outcome Mapping

Background

GRAD believes that for a chronically food insecure household to succeed, the women in that household must play a significant role in economic activities and decision-making. GRAD employed a variety of approaches to empower women both economically and socially. The project built women's economic agency through skills trainings and participation in Village Economic and Social Associations (VESAs), provided leadership training to women, and used awareness raising sessions and positive male role models to encourage attitudinal and behavioral change in gender relations. In addition, GRAD worked with community leaders and key government actors to promote gender equality and combat gender-based violence and harmful traditional practices (HTP).

Findings from GRAD's 2014 Mid-Term Evaluation indicated that the project's deliberate gender strategy had been relatively successful (e.g. VESAs served as an effective entry point for facilitating change around gender norms and values). However, much of the evidence was anecdotal, leaving some stakeholders sceptical and pointing to the need for better gender metrics. In June 2015, in order to better understand these dynamics and the project's influence on them, GRAD conducted a Gender Outcome Mapping, with the aim of deepening understanding of the nature and scope of changes in social norms and gender relations so as to better shape programming and identify more sensitive indicators of change. The objectives of the review were to understand the following:

- How has the GRAD project contributed to changes in intra-household relations, including the division of labor, decision-making, and economic and social changes?
- What negative or unintended consequences have been observed, in terms of excess workload, backlash, or gender-based violence?
- What adjustments could be made to further gender equality and develop more accurate monitoring indicators of behaviour change progress in the area of gender relations?

What is Outcome Mapping

Outcome mapping is a qualitative, "actor-centered" monitoring and evaluation approach that focuses on identifying changes in the behavior of a targeted group or individual and understanding the progression of these changes among the target groups. The approach allows for open-ended exploration of locally-defined behavioral change indicators that might not otherwise be visible to project evaluators. Key informants included women and men from beneficiary households, male role models, and community leaders involved with GRAD. The three key concepts applied from Outcome Mapping were:

1. **Outcomes:** i.e. changes in behavior—including actions, activities, and relationships.
2. **Outcome challenges:** each actor's "ideal" behavior in order to contribute fully to empowerment, equity and productivity. The outcome challenge helps to define the "ladder" of progress needed toward the achievement of this ideal.

- Progress markers:** a set of “mini-indicators” of change—specific behavior changes, organized from the attainable, early changes a program can achieve, to the more progressive changes, and finally to the most transformative changes (the “love to see” changes) that indicate a more profound and lasting transformation.

Major findings

The review found that a number of attitudinal and behavioral changes had occurred in GRAD communities. For women, the most frequently reported changes were those related to the “culture of savings” and participation in income-generating activities within VESAs. Men most frequently cited changed workload sharing and both men and women reported that men were now more likely to engage in traditionally female tasks such as making coffee, collecting firewood, and fetching water. Participation of men in childcare and food preparation were also mentioned but less frequently.



The review also revealed subtle and meaningful changes in power dynamics between men and women. Respondents of both sexes noted that they consulted each other more frequently on decisions related to livelihood activities and children’s education. Men and women are eating together more often, spouses have begun greeting each other by name, and they share access to household savings. Given the importance of savings and income generating activities described by women and the accompanying improvements in men’s workload sharing, it seemed plausible that women’s new economic engagement served as a catalyst for many other changes in gender relations. The social acceptability and prevalence of gender-based violence and HTP appear to be on the decline in at least some GRAD-supported communities. This is due to a variety of factors, including external factors, but GRAD’s work with community leaders appears to have contributed to the stigmatization of gender-based violence in particular. The table below summarizes the most frequently reported behavioral changes as reported by women (both household heads and women from male-headed households), men, and community leaders.

Most Frequently Reported Behavioral Changes

Among women	Among men	Among community leaders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced culture of savings, via VESA participation • Increased family discussions with husbands and children • Better understanding of the value of girls’ education • Active participation in VESAs, community meetings, and public ceremonies • Changes in nutrition and eating habits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workload sharing • Family discussions and decision-making, particularly related to livelihood decisions • Changes in the husband-wife relationship e.g. respect and trust, particularly regarding financial matters • Increased recognition of the value of girls’ education and the abilities of the girl child • Reduced gender-based violence & HTP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workload sharing • Changes in their own relationships, including eating with their wives and sharing financial resources • Discussions with their wives pertaining to household assets (e.g. cattle) and family planning



What the beneficiaries say:

"Now we do not argue with our husbands like before. We discuss issues, especially about our resources like how to sell our land or cattle."

- 40-year-old mother from Hawassa Zuria

"I started to cook wat and take care of my children. When my wife gave birth, I prepared porridge. When I plow she works with me. We go together."

- 22-year-old husband and father from Arsi Negelle

"I have a big [cash] box. Now my wife and I share a common key."

- 55-year-old traditional leader, Shebedino

A summary of GRAD Learning

- Women's economic engagement appears to have been a stepping stone towards a number of other changes in gender relations, including women's greater involvement in household livelihood decisions. Women's participation in VESAs—often alongside their husbands—was an important catalyst for these changes.
- The subtle signs of more equitable relationships—such as men and women eating together or calling each other by name—are rewarding and can be self-reinforcing, leading to ever greater communication, understanding, and trust in the relationship. For programs that aim to shift gender dynamics, it may be that putting more energy and focus on relationship behaviors such as these (rather than, say, insisting that men begin to take on previously taboo tasks) could lead to a more profound process of renegotiation of power dynamics in the household.
- Women from female-headed households had an easier time achieving some changes, such as sending their daughters to school and participating in VESAs than women from male-headed households, perhaps due to greater mobility and autonomy. This indicates that there is still significant work to be done in working with both men and women towards greater gender equality and women's empowerment.
- Role model men were more likely to report behavior changes related to social norms around gender, while other male respondents focused more on changes related to their own improved livelihoods and well-being, including investment in assets and microfinance access.
- There was a notable discrepancy between community leaders who used their public platforms to *talk about* gender and those who were actively *demonstrating* gender equality through actions such as supporting their own wives and family with household work, and encouraging women to sit and speak in public fora. Hence it is important for program implementers and community leaders themselves to give greater emphasis to behavioral changes in community leaders' own lives rather than focusing on their advice to community members. These changes can not only foster gender equity in the leaders' own households, but can serve to model positive behavior change.
- The progress marker maps offered a roadmap of progressively more transformative changes, providing an initial guideline for recognizing early changes while setting sights on more transformative change. Engaging communities in discussion of such "roadmaps" can be a useful tool for securing consensus and support for transformative change. In addition, the identified progress markers from the findings are useful as a monitoring tool for behavior change progress in gender relations and women empowerment. In GRAD, the tool will be used as a supplement to the Participatory Performance Tracking (PPT) tool.
- The Progress Marker maps below correspond closely to the written data analysis and provide an illustrative glance at the wide range and progression of behavior changes that have been observed during the GRAD program to date. While the "expect-to-see" changes naturally relate closely to the incipient livelihood activities of the GRAD program (savings, income-generation activities, work load sharing), the "love to see" progress markers illustrate the transformative potential for the program, if further effort is concentrated on the processes of social norm change and gender equality.