

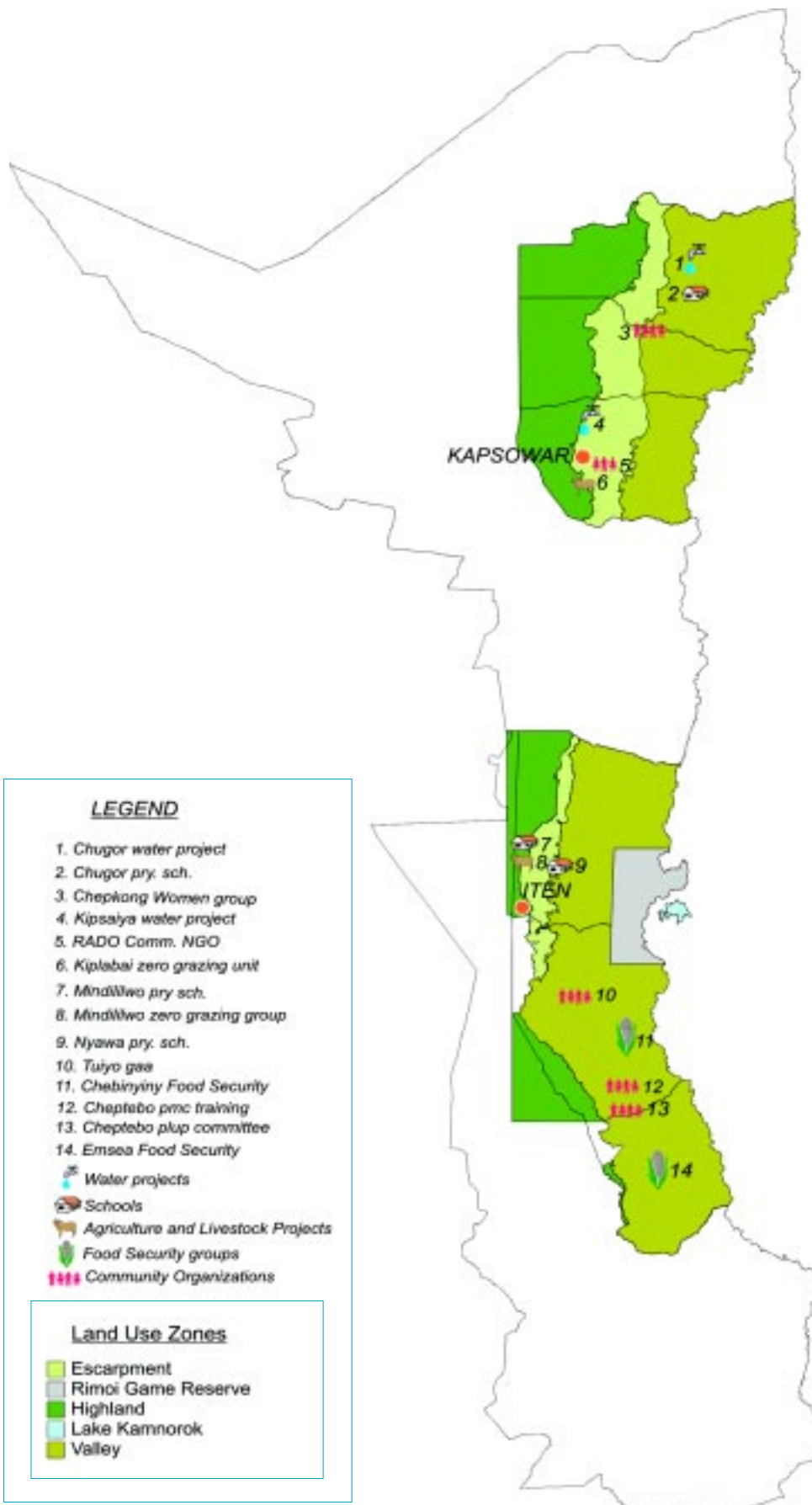
Women Speak Out on Gender Mainstreaming



THE FINDINGS OF A
GENDER OPINION POLL
FOR SARDEP KEIYO AND MARAKWET



GENDER OPINION POLL SITES IN SARDEP K/M PROJECT AREA



This report is published by the Netherlands Development Organization (SNV) Kenya and the Semi Arid Rural Development Programme, SARDEP (Keiyo & Marakwet) based in Iten, Kenya.

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Contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	4
FOREWORD	5
ABOUT SARDEP KEIYO&MARAKWET	6
PART I: INTRODUCTION	7
WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT BECOMING A REALITY IN KEIYO AND MARAKWET	7
<i>Mainstreaming Women's Needs</i>	9
<i>Engendering SARDEPK&M'S Project Cycle</i>	10
<i>The Gender Poll</i>	11
PART II: THE FINDINGS	13
POSITIVE RESULTS ACHIEVED IN SOME UNEXPECTED AREAS	13
<i>A. Access to and control over resources</i>	13
<i>B. Division of Labour and Time</i>	17
<i>C. Women's Physical Autonomy</i>	19
<i>D. Education</i>	20
<i>E. Women in Leadership</i>	23
PART III: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	25
CONCLUSIONS	25
<i>1. General Conclusions Arising from The Gender Poll</i>	25
<i>2. Specific Conclusions Related to the SARDEPK&M Policy</i>	25
RECOMMENDATIONS	26
<i>1. General Recommendations arising from the Gender Poll</i>	26
<i>2. Specific Recommendations related to the SARDEP K&M strategy</i>	27

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FOREWORD

It seems sometimes that any progress made in community development raises yet more issues to address.

We in SARDEP Keiyo&Marakwet found ourselves in this position recently following a generally positive impact assessment of our programme activities. We now knew that our agricultural and livestock projects were generating income and improving food security. Our gravity schemes had, without a doubt, provided many households with water. Our support to the education sector had similarly led to improved performance in schools across the two districts. And so on.

What we did not know for sure was whether women had actually benefited from these projects. Although we believed that we had mainstreamed gender concerns in our interventions, many questions regarding the actual impact remained unanswered.

In the area of women's practical needs, SARDEP support for women's horticultural, water and dairy projects had undoubtedly increased women's productivity. But had it also reduced their workload? If not, did women still believe that the benefits outweighed the increased workload? Were men taking on additional domestic chores to ease women's tasks? And, had the project actually increased women's access to cash or was it their male partners that were now in control of the sales?

And what about women's strategic needs? SARDEP favours projects with more women in key management positions. However, the question remained whether these women were being empowered or if they were merely figureheads, placed into these positions in order to attract funds.

The only way to find out was to ask the women themselves about the impact of the SARDEP interventions on their lives. The results of the gender opinion poll are revealed in this publication.

We trust that the lessons we have learned from this exercise will help us to refine our gender analysis and will also be of use for other development practitioners.

Heinz Greijn,
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About SARDEP Keiyo & Marakwet

SARDEP Keiyo&Marakwet (SARDEP K&M) is one of three district sub-programmes implemented by SNV-Netherlands Development Organization-Kenya under its Semi-Arid Rural Development Programme, SARDEP. The overall objective of the programme is "Sustainable reduction of poverty while conserving the natural resource base and enhancing overall gender equality in the Districts of Kajiado, Keiyo&Marakwet and Laikipia." SARDEP is implemented under a bilateral agreement between the Government of Kenya and the donor, the Government of the Netherlands, with an annual budget of approximately US \$ 3,000,000. To maximise its effectiveness, the programme concentrates its implementation in geographic concentration areas that cover approximately 25 % of each district and works closely with government agencies, community based organizations, non-government organizations, and the private sector.

The target group for SARDEP K&M is the agricultural and livestock smallholder - male and female - whose livelihood largely depends on the use of the available natural resources. SARDEP K&M recognizes that the resources, on which this target group depends, particularly soil and water sources, are steadily being degraded, making the predominant livelihood systems unsustainable. The Programme believes that what is required is a change in farming systems from the predominant shifting cultivation and free range cattle holding. Instead, farming systems that generate more income, make more efficient use of the resources available and in which women have an equal access to and control over resources and cash should be supported.

SARDEP K&M's strategies towards achieving its objectives can be summarized as follows:

- In the transect areas (geographic concentration zones) SARDEP K&M builds the capacity of community based/rooted institutions that work towards economic development, the sound management of natural resources and education. Such capacity building also entails developing an appreciation for the interlinkages between these and other sectors so that community development is undertaken in an integrated and environmentally sustainable manner;*
- SARDEP K&M empowers women to participate in the decision making, management and administration of these community based/rooted institutions. This is accomplished through preferential treatment to projects with a larger percentage of women in their membership and in management positions;*
- SARDEP K&M introduces new production systems that enable men and women to equally generate more income, improve their food security and that do not further deplete the natural resource base. In practice this boils down to making investments, water supply schemes, water efficient horticulture and dairy farming. All these investments are accompanied by making investments in soil and water conservation structures;*
- The above mentioned strategies only work in a secure environment, therefore, SARDEP K&M also contributes to conflict transformation initiatives.*

PART I: INTRODUCTION

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT BECOMING A REALITY IN KEIYO AND MARAKWET

“In my area men were running projects such as cattle dips, and they were collapsing. They're now leaving them to women.”

Male member of River Aror Development Organization (RADO), Marakwet District

Women are on the move in Keiyo and Marakwet, and in the process, they are turning gender stereotypes in their head. Women are generating significant incomes from dairy cattle, poultry and farming enterprises and girls are doing consistently better in school than they used to. More and more women are being elected as leaders of community development projects. The amount of time spent in heavy and unproductive work (such as fetching water and firewood) is being addressed through water projects and improved skills in agroforestry, leaving women with more time to engage in economically rewarding activities.

These were among the sometimes surprising findings of a gender poll of SARDEP funded projects in Keiyo and Marakwet districts in November 2001. The tentative projections made in the SARDEP Keiyo&Marakwet (SARDEP K&M) strategy document had been exceeded, more so because the felt benefits of SARDEP K&M funded projects had spilled over into the private sphere (the gender division of labour at household level and the self esteem of women and men).

Women repeatedly said they felt better about themselves, were more in control of their households, were managing resources better, had more ideas, were more respected by their men folk. Men confirmed these reactions, saying they



A member of the Kipsaiya-Sisiya water projects washes the hands of RADO gender representative, Benetista Yano. Improved status of women is contributing to shifts in gender relations

SARDEPK&M Support for Women's Groups: Towards Mainstreaming

Of the 207 community managed projects supported by SARDEP Keiyo&Marakwet, with whom the Programme signed funding agreements in the period 2000-2001, 42 groups with 699 women members explicitly referred to themselves as women's groups. Most of these groups were small and active in horticulture, dairy farming or roof water catchment. SARDEP K&M's commitment to these 42 projects amounted to a total of over 8 million Kenya shillings.

However, the vast majority of women that benefited from SARDEP K&M funding during the same period were from mixed (male and female) groups. In the period April 2000-December 2001 SARDEP K&M disbursed over Ksh 48 million (NLG 1,510,000) to community managed projects benefiting approximately 15,9000 women and 17,900 men.



Top: Members of Tuiyogaa Multi Purpose Group. Mixed groups provide opportunities for men and women to address gender issues in their community. Bottom: A young girl boarder at the newly built boarding section of Nyawa Primary school. Provision of boarding facilities helps girls to concentrate on their studies

were more willing to take on some tasks in the home. Others conceded that the initiative shown by women in generating additional income for the family had forced men to work harder and to stop 'drinking and loitering around.'

Nevertheless, the battle is far from won. Women seem to be valued primarily for their hard work and their role in income generation. At the meso-level in particular, women are still underrepresented in the top leadership positions. The only women elected into the management committees for the newly formed NGOs¹ in the two districts were for the positions that were reserved for women.

Women also face real barriers in increasing their access to decision making due to their generally lower education, their confinement at household level and

their lack of exposure. But these challenges can be overcome as has already been demonstrated in the enthusiasm that women have shown for the confidence-building workshops and the improved statistics for girl education -- both in terms of enrolment rates and performance. Cultural practices that perpetuate women's inferior status such as Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and early marriage, are also being attacked and are on the wane. This report documents the findings of the gender poll and the perceptions of community members on what needs to change, or be reinforced so as to encourage the growth of vibrant communities in which there is gender equity.

¹ The NGO elections were facilitated by SARDEP Keiyo and Marakwet as part of the process of transforming the Transect Area Committees (responsible for coordinating SARDEP funded projects in the field) into autonomous bodies answerable to the communities. Communities in the six transect areas: E, FG and H in Keiyo District and M, M and P in Marakwet District developed constitutions to guide the formation of these coordinating bodies, which will be registered as independent NGOs.



Mainstreaming Women's Needs

SARDEP K&M's development strategy incorporates as a central objective, the goal of empowering women. The point of departure is that on most fronts, women are more burdened and have less access to resources and decision making than men, at both household and community levels. To address this reality, SARDEP K&M adopts a two-pronged strategy aimed at increasing productivity and improving women's access to and control over resources. This strategy draws from Moser's (1989) framework for gender planning, which recognizes women's triple roles of reproduction, production and community management and distinguishes between their practical and strategic needs.

As part of its strategic planning exercise in 1999, SARDEP K&M made a calculation of the anticipated impact of its policy on gender balance in the target communities. A matrix was used in which the women's tasks were combined with women's needs (see table below). The vertical axis reflects women's tasks, categorized into productive tasks, reproductive tasks and community tasks. The horizontal axis reflects women's needs, both practical and strategic. At each cross section of tasks and needs the SARDEP management formulated the expected gender impact.

WOMEN'S TASKS	WOMEN'S NEEDS		
	Practical needs	Strategic needs	
<p>Productive tasks Women do most of the farm work while men control farm assets and sales.</p>	<p>Women need technologies that increase the productivity of labour. This will enable them to do more with less effort and thus ease the burden of labour.</p>	<p>Women need more access to and control over resources (land, capital).</p>	<p><i>At that time it was difficult to foresee whether increased productivity by women would result in increased control of the cash or the additional produce.</i></p>
<p>Reproductive tasks These are almost entirely women's tasks . They include: raising children, preparing food, fetching water etc.</p>	<p>”</p>	<p>Women need more gender balance in reproductive tasks. Men need to take on part of these tasks.</p>	<p><i>It was not expected that SARDEP's policy would have much impact in terms of a shared burden of reproductive tasks.</i></p>
<p>Community tasks Women contribute labour but are only marginally involved in decision making.</p>	<p>”</p>	<p>Women need equal participation in decision making.</p>	<p><i>It was expected that SARDEP's policy would substantially improve women's participation in decision making especially at project group level.</i></p>
<p><i>It was expected that SARDEP's interventions such as water supply schemes, the introduction of dairy farming, horticulture etc. would increase the productivity of women's labor. It was difficult to foresee whether this would also reduce the work load. Production and consumption might increase without reducing the women's workload.</i></p>			



Engendering SARDEP K&M'S Project Cycle

SARDEP K&M's gender policy entails mainstreaming women's needs through the project selection procedure. When projected proposals are solicited from communities, the target group is broadly informed about the deadlines and on how to fill the proposal forms. During desk appraisal, which all submitted proposals are subjected to, the proposed community projects are screened on a large variety of criteria. One important category of criteria is related to gender balance. Groups with a larger percentage of women in the general membership get higher marks in the scoring. In addition, groups with a higher percentage of women in management positions (chairperson, treasurer or secretary) get higher points. The preferential treatment given to groups with more women members has led to the current situation where nearly 50% of the project management committee (PMC) members are women.

Another set of criteria focuses on performance potential, for instance the potential of the proposed project to improve the income of farmers or to supply safe water. Other criteria are related to the group's motivation and capabilities to implement the project, including group cohesion, size and proof of membership, community contribution etc. After having scored all projects on all the criteria, the projects are ranked and the ones with the highest score are selected for the next appraisal round. In theory it is possible that groups with men only get SARDEP K&M support. In practice however, this is very rare.

After the desk appraisal, the proposals are subjected to a field appraisal. The purpose of the field appraisal is to check whether the claims made in the proposal are matched by facts on the ground. A condition for SARDEP K&M support is that at least 90% of the members attend the field appraisal. The list of participants is compared with the membership list attached to the proposal.

If the proposal is accepted, the rule of 90% attendance continues to be applied to all important decisions taken by the group, including the design of a detail project implementation schedule, the signing of a funding agreement with SARDEP K&M and the project's evaluation. The reason is to prevent influential individuals from 'high-jacking' the project and marginalizing women and other people who are traditionally not as well entrenched in community decision making.

The project group management committees have a large number of responsibilities. They are signatories to the bank account on which project money is banked, including the contribution by SARDEP K&M, they have to mobilize community labour and funds. They also have to make procurements, keep the book of accounts and report to the group as well as to SARDEP K&M. They have to attend SARDEP K&M procurement committee meetings for procurements that exceed Ksh 50,000. Because of the large responsibilities vested on their shoulders SARDEP K&M invests considerably in the training of the management committees.



The Gender Poll

While gender balanced development is a key goal of SARDEP K&M, it is difficult to assess the actual impact of the programme's interventions in hard data. Evidence of changes in the balance of power between men and women is difficult to obtain through "scientific" observation within the households or group meetings because the observer would have to infringe on the privacy of people and this would also distort reality. SARDEP K&M therefore decided to carry out an opinion poll, primarily among women, to find out what their needs were and what the programme could do to meet these needs. Two consultants were recruited to carry out the exercise.

The findings of the gender poll were to reflect:

- The actual situation on gender balance and women's empowerment;
- SARDEP K&M's contribution to this situation;
- Recommendations about SARDEP K&M's strategy to address gender's needs;
- A number of illustrative case studies.

Methodology

In consultation with the SARDEP K&M team, a selection was made of the representatives from the target groups to be invited for interviews. In order to cover the diversity of community projects, it was decided that a relatively large number of groups should be consulted. The sample of groups and individuals to be interviewed took into account the various institutional levels at which SARDEP K&M works, the geographical concentration areas (transects) and the sectoral diversity of projects on the ground. Accordingly the groups chosen included two of the recently formed community NGOs (formerly known as Transect Area Committees (TAC) and community based project groups from both districts. The project groups polled were primarily women's groups, but a number of mixed (male and female) groups were selected (see box 2). The sectors represented by the groups ranged from agriculture and livestock activities to large water projects and school development.

The Poll was mainly carried out through semi-structured interviews. In a few cases where the groups were large, a variety of tools were incorporated to help stimulate and structure the discussions. Each group discussion started with a general briefing on the history and the functioning of the group, followed by questions on a selection of gender related issues. The

large sample led to a restriction on time available per group, however, and not all gender related issues could be addressed with each group. The facilitators tried to formulate the questions as openly as possible but some of the nuances might have been lost, as translation into the local language was sometimes necessary.



Members of Kiplabai Women Zero-grazing Group meet at the home of one member. The project has vastly increased women's confidence as they are now generating a significant additional income for the household.



During the first interview, round information was gathered about the actual gender situation, the gender impact of SARDEP K&M's strategy and the recommendations for future strategy. The second round of interviews was more in-depth and covered the issues of education and insecurity, women in leadership and two food security groups identified by SARDEP K&M as being particularly vulnerable.

The numbers of women and men consulted is presented in the table below, but it does not necessarily reflect the participation from both sexes during the interviews. In some cases, where men tended to dominate the discussions, it was necessary to explicitly ask women for their views. In other cases both men and women contributed equally.

Name of the group	Sub-Location and District	Composition of PMC with gender ratio (women-men)	Number of members with gender ratio (women-men)	Number of members interviewed with gender ratio (women-men)
KISADO (NGO)	Transect FG, Keiyo	9 (4-5)	/	4 (1-3)
Tuiyogaa Multipurpose Group	..	7 (4-3)	13-10	23 (12-11)
PLUP committee, Chepsigot	Chepsigot, Transect E, Keiyo	6 (0-6)		33 (2-31)
Nyawa Primary School Committee	Anin, Keiyo	13 (4-9)	②	3 (1-2)
Mindililwo P. School Committee	Iten, Transect H, Keiyo	13 (3-10)	②	3 (1-2)
Chugor Water Project	Transect P, Marakwet	3 (2-1) ①	146-54	5 (3-2)
Chugor P. School head teacher	..	13 (4-9)	/	/
Chepkog Women's Group	Transect N, Marakwet	3 (3-0) ①	13-9	12 (12-0)
RADO (NGO)	Kapsowar, Transect M, Marakwet	9 (3-6)	/	6 (3-3)
Kipsaiya Sisiya Water Project	Kipsaiya, Transect M, Marakwet	13 (7-6)	200-100	10 (4-6)
Kiplabai Zero-grazing Women's group	Kapsowar, Transect M, Marakwet	7 (7-0)	24	18 (13-5)
Mindililwo Zero-grazing Group	Iten, Transect H, Keiyo	9 (4-5)	26-26	14 (5-9)
Chebinyiny Good Security Group	Chepsigot, Transect FG, Keiyo	3 (2-1) ①	32	22 (-)
Emsea Food Security Group	Emsea, Transect E, Keiyo	3 (2-1) ①	25	11 (8-3)
Women PMC members	Cheptebo, Women's confidence building workshop		/	28 (28-0)

- ① For these groups only the three key executive positions within the PMC are given
 ② School meetings are open to all parents in the school

PART II: THE FINDINGS

POSITIVE RESULTS ACHIEVED IN SOME UNEXPECTED AREAS

In order to paint a coherent picture of the gender situation in Keiyo and Marakwet the gender opinion poll participants were asked to reflect on a number of factors that indicate the gender situation within a society. The factors discussed were:

- A. Access and control over basic resources (income, land, knowledge, natural resources)
- B. Division of labour and time between men and women
- C. Education (enrolment and performance of girls and boys)
- D. Women's physical autonomy
- E. Women in leadership

For each of these factors, the prevailing situation and the gender related impacts of the SARDEP K&M programme are given below.

A. Access to and control over resources

According to impact assessment statistics for SARDEP K&M, there has been an improvement in the numbers of women in project groups -- rising from 48% of membership in 2000 to 53% in 2001. In terms of leadership of projects, the percentage of women in Project Management Committees (PMCs), was 47% in 2001, a decrease from the figure of 57% in 2000.

The politics of 'women only' vs mixed groups

One of the things that strike a visitor to many project groups in Keiyo&Marakwet is that the membership is composed of both women and men. While this is not significant in itself, many of the groups have an interesting history. Most groups started off as women's groups, known as 'merry-go rounds' where members contributed small amounts of cash as well as labour to help each other with domestic projects. With time the groups began to invest in larger income generating projects, using their savings and contributions from SARDEP K&M. It is at this stage that many of the groups 'invited' men to join in. The reasons for this are varied and complex. At Chepkog Women's Group for instance, "when men saw that the women wanted a fruit and tree nursery, they also wanted to benefit, by getting tree seedlings. They offered to help with fencing, fetching heavy materials and so on and we accepted," explains a member. The women insist that the role of the male members is very clear ... the group is still called women's group and the men cannot hold positions in the management committee.

In a number of other predominantly female groups, men have been elected to the project monitoring committee (PMC), particularly in the position of secretary. This is typical of many groups where the women do not feel confident and ask men to take on certain roles. In one group, it was apparent that this approach was causing conflicts. When the (woman) chairperson explained that the group wanted to acquire a piece of land where members could start a joint horticultural project, the male secretary interjected and said that it was not useful to work as a group as individual members needed to spend time developing their own farms.

From these and other cases it seems that men mainly value membership of groups for the access it gives them to valuable resources such as water, livestock, agricultural inputs and training. By contrast women view groups as serving a broader purpose. Over and over women spoke of how being together with other women and discussing common problems gave them confidence. Women seem to require a space where they can discuss issues, broaden each others' knowledge and just relate to other women, away from the stresses of their household responsibilities.

The crucial question is whether the presence of more women in projects translated into greater access to and control over resources. The Poll investigated the extent to which women had gained more control over resources such as money and land.

1. Income

Many of the women interviewed said their incomes had increased as a direct result of SARDEP K&M's intervention. The feedback received both from female and male members of project groups further confirmed that

positive changes had occurred in the position of women within their homes concerning access to and control over money. By favouring women dominated groups in the selection of community projects, SARDEP K&M support had enabled women to access capital, technical support and other resources, enabling them to develop economically viable projects and thus to control significant amounts of capital. The added income came from a variety of sources from the sale of milk from dairy cows to easier access to water near their homes, enabling women to plant vegetables for sale.



Members of the Chepkog Women Group guide visitors around their productive vegetable farm and tree nursery. Working together in a group provides a space for women to learn together and builds their confidence

The fact that the women are now bringing in substantial incomes was said to have affected power relations within the household. With women bringing in money, they now

play a larger role in deciding how to spend household income. Women said they felt more in control of household finances, although in many cases this control does not extend to all income, but only that which women have brought in. Their self-esteem had also increased because they did not have to ask their husbands for everything and were able to plan for household needs. For instance, in homes where the man would spend most of his money on alcohol, the woman could take care of household necessities and present only the 'left over money' for common decision-making.

What women gain from groups

The kinds of statements made by women pointed to their increased options and ability to take care of their immediate needs as a result of the additional income:

“I now have enough cash to meet my needs and I can even help out a friend...”

I get ideas from other members...

I get motivated to excel — for example to extend my fruit trees and vegetable garden at...

I get advise on how to solve problems in the home from other women...

I did not have even a tablecloth before I joined the group. Now I can make my house beautiful...

I have learned how to dress because we go on tours and I try to emulate other smart women...

I used to borrow sugar and salt all the time. But my eyes were opened and now I have many ideas on how to earn money for myself. Everything is now clean in my house...

I was attracted to join the group because I noticed that members managed their families well and their children were disciplined ”

“Some men only bring a little of their income while women discuss how to use the income with the men.”

A women's group member in Marakwet

The practical need for access to money is thus being directly addressed by SARDEP K&M, while at the same time contributing to more equitable control over household finances. This improvement is crucial for women's self-confidence and directly addresses a strategic gender need as it challenges the traditional division of power between men and women.

2. Land

"It is understood here that land belongs to the men. In our community it is the elderly men who make decisions. It is believed that they cannot lie." These final and matter of fact statements made by one women's group member illustrate the extent to which women and men accept the prevailing land tenure system as 'untouchable'. Land ownership (through inheritance) is strictly vested in male descendants in order to 'protect the family line,' an age-old custom that still prevails today.

The majority of women interviewed said they had no problem with the current system as they had access to land for their use. (It is notable that most of these women were married and living on their husbands' family property). By contrast the women members of the two specially targeted groups of 'food insecure' households -- where there was a larger proportion of single women and female headed households -- mentioned lack of secure access to land as a constraint. But even among the poorer groups, women generally felt that they cannot change the way things are, even when they have to depend on the charity of relatives to survive.

With population pressure, rising numbers of female headed households and continuing erosion of the traditional land tenure system, the plight of women is increasing. This is exacerbated by women's generally low education levels and their lack of legal awareness. Many of the women interviewed believed, for instance, that they cannot legally own family land and that their only option is to buy land. Some women thought that even land bought with their own income would have to be registered in the husband's name. However, there is no law that stops women from registering land in their names.

Land Tenure

Traditionally, in Keiyo and Marakwet districts, land was communally owned and managed through the clan system, although individual families did mark out their land using stones and other boundary markers. The head of the family or sub-clan was the custodian of the land on behalf of family members and gave user rights to both male and female members. Thus when surveying of land commenced, first in the highlands and later in the escarpment and valley (this is still continuing to date) the clans were able to identify the property of individual families.

Under this system, unmarried women were able to access land easily. The predominant farming method was shifting cultivation and family heads could allocate daughters one of the many pieces of land that belonged to the family. With registration of land and consolidation of such scattered pieces into one continuous piece of farmland, the situation became more complex. According to Francis Cheplaiti, a prominent farmer in Tambach, Keiyo District, it is traditionally unacceptable for the male line in a family to 'adopt' outsiders as this would 'finish' their own lineage. Offering an unmarried sister a piece of family land was seen as a threat as her male children might eventually take over the family property. Thus women were expected to turn to their husbands' family if they had children. "Even very well educated people today will hesitate to allocate land to their daughters. In my case I would rather sell part of my land and buy another piece elsewhere so as to settle my daughter," Cheplaiti explains.

Despite this uncompromising stand, it is commonly accepted that families will 'take care' of their daughters. In cases where her immediate family is unable or unwilling to help, a woman can approach her clan elders as they represent her broader family. In order to be able to retain their power to make such decisions the common practice was for family heads to register land in their name rather than have their children allocated individual pieces. It also prevented some sons from selling off their share.

While this practice is noble and seems, on the surface, to provide safety nets for dispossessed members of the community, cracks are starting to appear. Under modern land tenure laws, land boards provide the main platform for discussing land issues thus sidelining traditional structures such as mediation by clan elders. Chiefs, who are political appointees and often not indigenous to the community, wield most of the decision making powers. This makes it easy for ill intentioned individuals to acquire large properties at the expense of the rightful owners and sometimes against the express wishes of the local community.

According to Mr Francis Cheplaiti, a land rights campaigner , “... if your clan, or family allocates you a piece of land, then you should ensure that you register it in your name.” He cited the example of ‘more enlightened’ families that realise it is in the best interests of their sons and daughters to leave clear wills that explain how family property is to be shared.

3. Knowledge

SARDEP K&M enables women to access knowledge by favouring groups that have a higher number of women members in their project monitoring committees (PMCs). As PMCs attend numerous training workshops and interact regularly with extension staff, it has been recognized that this has been crucial in facilitating ‘exposure’ for women and thus for information sharing. While this does not guarantee their involvement in decision-making, the requirement that 90% of project members attend all meetings in which decisions are taken has enabled women to be better informed about group activities. The target group thus perceived this as a positive change brought by SARDEP K&M’s approach.

Training is not only important for acquiring technical know-how, it also contributes to the empowerment of women. The series of confidence building workshops that were conducted at the same time as the Poll was singled out by female PMC members, who expressed their gratitude to SARDEP K&M for providing the training and giving them practical skills that would improve their performance as project managers.

Achievements concerning control over knowledge were not mentioned explicitly by interviewees. However, the active involvement of women in projects had made them more aware of the need for training and information sharing, for instance the interest shown in visiting successful women’s projects. Training was frequently mentioned as one of the existing needs for both women and men. The impact of the demand driven extension services introduced by SARDEP K&M in 1999 was not mentioned, in spite of the fact that more than 100 groups had requested, and paid for, training. The reason for this could have been due to confusion among the target group on the difference between pure demand driven training and all the other training that members have to pay for as part of their project implementation schedule.

4. Common Natural Resources

While they are key indicators of access to resources, the gender aspects of common resource use were not addressed because of lack of concrete projects implemented in this field at the time of the Poll. Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM)



Farmers from Transects E and FG in Keiyo District on a tour of horticultural farms in Embu district. Project group members gain access to knowledge and information. Photo courtesy of AIC Cheptebo

“I take my milk to Mala Plant and I sign for money ... something I had never done before. I can even afford to pay labourers and my children are happy.”

A member of the Kiplabai Women’s Zero-grazing Group

committees were formed only recently following the participatory land use planning exercises and had not yet implemented any projects. Nevertheless, one CBNRM committee was interviewed. The members were not able to make a link between gender and access to common resources, although they stressed that both women and men were involved in the various environmental activities. Significantly, only one woman was present out of more than 30 men. Members were interested in coordinating community environmental activities such as tree planting, soil conservation and protection of water sources. Community elders, both men and women, were identified as playing a major role in environmental conservation as they are responsible for guarding sacred forests (used for ceremonial rituals).

B. Division of Labour and Time

The traditional division of labour in the household was often identified as a limiting factor for women as their heavy workload leaves them little room for undertaking other (development) activities and confines them to the homestead. Women are responsible for the majority of the reproductive tasks that are time-consuming and undervalued, as they do not generate income or status.

Time spent in fetching water, one of the most mundane and time consuming daily tasks for women, has been reduced considerably in many places, due to SARDEP K&M support for a variety of water projects. These include large scale gravity schemes that provide water points near members' homes and individual roof catchment systems. The time saved is channelled into more productive activities, such as the growing of vegetables. The women therefore feel they still have a heavy workload, although they appreciate that their labour can now go into income generating activities.



Water projects form a major component of SARDEP K&M support for community groups, which has greatly eased women's burden for collecting water. *Above Left:* Stella Kipyator, a member of the Koike Food Security Group, Keiyo, is happy to assist an elderly neighbour. *Right:* A water jar at the home of a Kiplabai Zero-grazing Project member, in Marakwet.



In general, women did acknowledge that men nowadays do more in the household than they used to. Although women's workload is still greater, many interviewees said that their husbands were now willing to take care of the home if the wife had to attend a meeting. Judging by the examples given, it appears that men will only take over such domestic tasks on an exceptional base and that when both of them are at home, these tasks immediately shift back to the woman. One man said he would be willing to cook "...if we would have a modern kitchen where it gets less smoky and dirty." But the kitchen was one domain that even the women did not want the men to take over.

The fact that there has been a shift, no matter how slight, in the division of tasks within the household, is an important first step towards attitudinal change. This indicates a crack in the traditionally defined division of household duties, a crack that might widen with time.

At the community level, the traditional division of labour has been challenged by SARDEP K&M through giving support to women groups and women in management positions. Despite these steps forward, it appears that men are still mostly involved in community leadership roles while women are left with community managing roles. The community managing work is characterized by the responsibility for the organization and management of local level groups. Men on the other hand are involved in community work through positions that are (indirectly) more valued in status and power, such as NGO positions.



A man at work on a zero-grazing unit. Men are starting to take on tasks that were traditionally left to women

“Wife beating has gone down by 80% because men now see that their wives are making a contribution!”

A male project group member, Marakwet

Escaping FGM

15 year old Martha from Marakwet District arrived tired and dusty at the World Vision compound in Tot, Marakwet District, accompanied by two younger girls. The girls had escaped with only the clothes they were wearing on realizing that their families were about to force them to undergo FGM [The traditional ceremonies take place for both girls and boys every December]. One of the girls, only nine years old, had spent three nights alone in the bush before reaching the centre. The girls had heard that there was a woman in Tot (a headteacher) who provided shelter to girls and they had come to ask for her help.

Her older sister, who had undergone the ritual, had told Martha, that circumcision was bad and she was determined not to undergo it. She lied to her family that she would finish her exams and then go for the ritual with other girls from her village. Her teacher took her to the local pastor, who in turn sent her to Tot. The girl's harrowing experience was made worse by the fact that her family was responsible. "My brothers threatened to burn the house of my sister who was helping me and my mother sent people to tell me she would kill herself if I went through it," she says. Martha was particularly upset about the cultural instruction that girls undergo as part of the ritual. "They teach girls how to be with men and some are as young as eight years," she explains. As a born again christian she said she was confused because "why would Jesus pour his blood for my sake and then I have to spill my blood again?"

The girls were among a 'lucky' few that had escaped the ritual, at least for the moment. Mrs Rose Kilimo, the anti FGM activist and headteacher of Tot primary school received 11 other girls who had run away from their homes last December. She organized with local churches to host the girls for the whole month. In addition, the girls underwent an alternative rite of passage that is facilitated by the World Vision Centre at Tot every December. But the girls face a bleak future. They would have to go back to their homes in the new year, hoping that their families would accept them back. Some might have to live with relatives and may be unable to go back to school if their families refuse to support them.



C. Women's Physical Autonomy

Domestic violence remains a delicate subject that is hardly discussible in larger groups. One group, with a majority of female participants, even denied its existence. The little information gathered does not allow for any estimation of the 'weight' of the problem and a more in depth analysis would be needed. From the responses received it can be concluded that domestic violence is more common in the less fortunate sections of target group where poverty leads to tensions in the households, alcoholism and domestic violence.

In general, the decrease in domestic violence was attributed to the reduction of poverty (through better water availability, income generation) as the tensions in the household then decreased. The general perception seemed to be: "*Women bring in money now so they are less beaten*". Another factor that could have contributed to the decrease in domestic violence, although it was not explicitly mentioned, is the empowering effect on women of their involvement in income generation. Women's increased self-confidence, as they realize their key position in boosting their family's financial status, could have subtly altered power relations in the home and made men treat women more respectfully.

Female genital mutilation (FGM) and boy circumcision are traditional rituals that are still commonly practised in Keiyo and Marakwet. FGM however can cause a lot of pain and health complications, both during the intervention and at delivery. FGM also contributes to school drop outs and early marriage for girls as they are considered mature once they have undergone the ritual, which can be carried out on children as young as eight years. However, FGM was said to have stopped among christian families, which can be attributed to sensitization efforts by churches. Where FGM is still practised, the general belief that it is imposed by fathers on their daughters does not seem valid. According to one group from the Kerio valley, mothers usually have the power to prevent their daughters from undergoing the ritual as they can '...help the girl to escape.' Anti-FGM activist from Marakwet confirmed this saying that mothers are the most difficult to convince as they do not want to talk about it, "... but fathers are at least curious and want to find out why I am so opposed to the practice."

As with girls, circumcision for boys and the related cultural ceremonies, is considered the start of their adult life. Unlike FGM, circumcision of boys is accepted across the board and the only problems that were raised in relation to boy circumcision were disciplinary ones that can result from an arrogant attitude after the ceremony.

When asked to list their most pressing problems, the female members of one food security group raised their concerns about the lack of **family planning services**. Three of the women, aged between 30 and 40 years, had 7, 8 and 12 children respectively. The mother of 12 spoke emotionally of being pregnant with yet another child. Two other women, in their early twenties, already had four children each and expected to continue having more. Once the issue was out in the open the women expressed their lack of hope in dealing with the issue of unwanted pregnancies. All of the women, even the younger ones, were not using contraceptives and had not received any family planning advice, despite the fact



A young Keiyo mother with her children. SARDEP K&M does not have the capacity to address reproductive health issues



that some had visited the local health centre several times. Their frustration was eloquently summarised by one member who said that all the women wanted was “to be told about all the options that there are, so that we can make the best choice for ourselves.”

In Marakwet a female teacher brought up a related problem of early pregnancies, and the high numbers of unsafe abortions that are being conducted locally, as a result.

Unlike FGM and family planning, which were brought up naturally by interviewees, HIV/AIDS was not tackled during the Poll, as interviewees were reluctant to talk about it, even during meetings with female participants. While SARDEP K&M has made an effort to understand the implications of HIV/AIDS in the two districts through initiating discussions with the Health Department, it does not have the capacity to make interventions in this area.

*Going the Extra Mile —
the role of schools in promoting gender equity*

The proactive approach undertaken by Mindililwo Primary School in Iten is noteworthy. The school addresses the unequal division of work between boys and girls by ensuring that responsibilities at school, for instance serving school lunch and washing dishes after the meal, are shared equally. This is extended to sharing of tasks at home by initiating discussions with parents on the need to assign more domestic chores to boys to allow girls to spend more time on their homework and thus perform better in school. This was independently confirmed by members of a nearby women’s group who said that they were giving more domestic tasks to their sons as a result of discussions on this issue initiated by the Mindililwo headmaster.

Among other initiatives, the school has opened a guidance and counselling office to help students with personal problems. It also organises remedial classes for weaker students and has introduced a school feeding programme, which not only ensures that all pupils get an adequate meal during the day, but also enables older girls, who would otherwise rush home to make lunch, to have a break during the day. Like other progressive schools, the Mindililwo management has avoided the temptation of forcing weaker students to repeat unnecessarily to ensure that pupils do not get discouraged by having to attend classes with younger students. The school encourages pupils in other ways by giving incentives for good performance. The school also pays a lot of attention to extra curricular activities (‘letting pupils play’) and an old pupil’s association, MISWA, which seeks out role models among older students.

While SARDEP K&M did not have a direct influence on these measures, the headteacher cited SARDEP K&M support as playing a crucial role by building the skills of teachers and the school management to improve the academic and general welfare of the school.



The Mindililwo headteacher, Mr Joseph Serem poses with pupils having their lunch under the school feeding programme

Although the interventions of SARDEP K&M are contributing to general awareness of these issues (through, for instance, the increased access to and control over resources by women and thus their growing self-confidence) the Programme does not currently undertake projects to specifically address women’s physical autonomy. The subjects are too complex and culturally deep-rooted to be influenced as a side effect of another intervention, or by general gender awareness. The solution seems to lie in increased networking with other agencies that have the capacity to work on these issues.

D. Education

The representatives of school committees interviewed agreed that on the whole, there is a strong awareness on the need to educate both girls and boys. Enrolment ratios and other education statistics

“ The SARDEP ‘airlift’ gave me the opportunity to fly for the first time. It is the girl who ‘took’ me to Nairobi by plane.”

Mindililwo headteacher talking about a SARDEP incentive of airtickets for the best performing pupils

seemed to bear this out, with an almost equal participation of boys and girls in primary school. One of the arguments mentioned in favour of educating girls was the increased chance of 'a good marriage,' with a higher dowry. A girl's education is thus considered to be a good investment, based on the traditional assumption that the girl is to get married after school.

Significant differences were noted, however, between the Kerio valley and the highland regions. In the valley, traditional beliefs were mentioned more often as a factor affecting schooling for girls, with FGM and early marriage being responsible for dropouts among girls. The situation within the Pokot community in East Baringo, where SARDEP K&M has recently extended its activities, illustrates an extreme situation whereby only a minority of girls is attending school.

The Impact of Insecurity on Education

The impact of insecurity on education is real and immediate. Many children have been orphaned and families were forced to move away from the valley to stay with relatives in the highlands. Even among the families that remained, some pupils were reluctant to go back to school, with boys in particular becoming involved in the fighting. The added burden of providing security for their families was marked for the boys. One Marakwet education official says he found four boys with guns in one classroom during a visit to one of the makeshift schools on the escarpment.

According to Monica Kemboi, a teacher at Mogil Primary School in the valley, which was forced to relocate to the escarpment, life is hard for both pupils and teachers. A majority have to do with temporary shelters with whole families cramped into a tiny space. As the only female teacher with the additional responsibility of guidance and counselling, Monica witnesses first hand many of the problems that girls face. For instance children have to attend night preps (evening studies) at the school from 7.00 to 9.00 p.m., which was introduced in many schools to ensure that pupils have an opportunity to do their homework. Monica says that many of the older girls have to rush home after school to fetch water and firewood as well as cook the evening meal before coming back for prep. "Some of them have problems when they are walking home in the dark as the neighbourhood boys harass them," she says. The school tries to address the problem by encouraging the community to be responsible for protecting the girls and threatening to charge anyone accused of harassing girls to the police.

To address these problems, some school committees have decided to construct boarding schools for girls. Parents at Chugor Primary in Marakwet decided to construct a boarding school for girls in 1998 to provide a safe haven as many children were losing hope due to the difficult situation. The school currently has 141 girls and 151 boys. The boarding section will open in January 2002 with a capacity for 120 girls.



Top Left: Children studying in the open air at a makeshift school on the Marakwet escarpment. Insecurity greatly disrupted learning in the district. *Bottom Right:* buildings at another makeshift school. *Inset:* Monica Kemboi, a teacher at Mogil Primary school in the Kerio Valley, Marakwet District, which was also affected by the clashes.

Due to the perception that boys and girls were doing equally well at school, SARDEP K&M had not made specific gender interventions at the school level, with the exception of supporting a few boarding schools for girls. At the level of school management though, SARDEP K&M's insistence on equal representation of men and women in committees had enabled more women to join school management committees. The extension of the 90% attendance rule to schools supported by SARDEP K&M had also opened the way for many women to become actively involved in decision making, for instance during the presentation of School Development Plans (this is because mothers are more likely to attend school meetings than fathers).

With sensitization, school management can play an important role in promoting gender equity among pupils, as demonstrated by the Mindililwo School (See box on page 20). This should trickle down to the families and thus spread to the community.

School management and parents do complain, however, that it is becoming more difficult to keep children motivated to go to school. Boys are particularly affected by the prevailing economic situation as they have little hope of finding secure employment once they finish school. The options available for boys rather than girls, such as inheriting land plays a part in reducing their motivation to learn. Boys have also been particularly affected by insecurity in certain parts of the Kerio Valley (see box on page 21). It also seems that the prohibition of caning by the Ministry of Education brings a feeling of powerlessness as teachers feel they have no means to control the boys anymore. Some criticism was expressed in one school on a possible backlash to the promotion of girls' education, as boys were said to feel undervalued and threatened.



Top: School children from Kolowa Primary in East Baringo practice a song to raise awareness on the importance of education. Bottom: two young girls at Kolowa market. The feather on the head of one girl signifies that she is 'booked' to get married. Early marriage greatly contributes to the low education levels for girls in the Pokot community.

“A girl's life is a matter of 'luck'. If her parents are not willing to support her education then she will have no option but to get married.”

Kolowa
headteacher



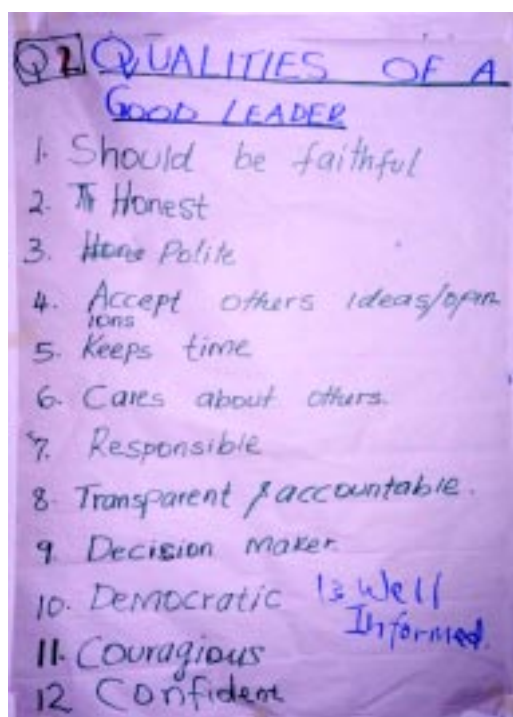
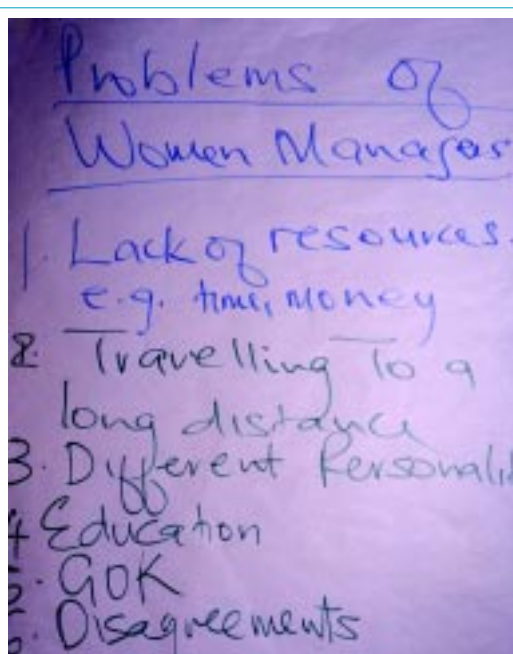
E. Women in Leadership

SARDEP K&M has played a major role in encouraging women to take on leadership positions in the public sphere. The programme rewards groups that appoint more women to PMCs (through a higher score at the project appraisal stage) and sensitizes community members on the importance of treating men and women equally. People are very honest when asked why women have management positions in PMCs. Invariably the answer is that this was a precondition for SARDEP K&M support. Although directive in character, the use of such conditionalities seems to have achieved the objective of raising the numbers of women leaders.

There is a growing recognition of women's capacities and the need for mixed collaboration in management of community organs. Women are recognized for being reliable treasurers, for having good vision and for managing their time well. This awareness has also been enhanced by sensitisation from churches and other development agencies.

In addition to the women in PMCs, other achievements cited by interviewees were the power associated with being a signatory of a project or TAC bank account, which has boosted the confidence of female leaders, and the fact that more women can now talk in public. However, the Poll also revealed that the gender balance in community responsibilities is still unequal. The majority of management positions remain in the hands of men, which means that it is mostly men that are involved in community leadership work (with more status and power) while women are left with community 'managing' positions, entailing mostly supportive activities. Some women complained of not being involved in decision-making, despite being PMC members. "The men wait until it is late and women have to go home, and then take all the decisions," stated one woman.

A mix of factors hinders women from free and self-confident participation in decision-making. The fact that women are still responsible for all reproductive tasks in the household makes it hard for them to leave their homes for extended periods.



Points raised by participants at one of the women's confidence building workshops organized by SARDEP K&M in 2001

“If SARDEP had left the gender positions open, the men would have taken those as well.”

A female PMC official supporting reserved seats for women in the new NGO management boards





This implies that they are not able to travel and that they are less exposed, which is reinforced by the fact that women are on average less educated. In addition women fear to gain a negative reputation as ‘those who move around’ (with its connotations of being promiscuous). Thus the examples cited about women that are able to travel freely seemed to be an exception to the rule. The economic status of families also comes into play as women who can afford to pay for additional house help are in a better position to take on duties outside the household. For women from less fortunate households this could be an obstacle, unless older children or relatives can assist. Several examples were cited of instances where women group members had to find someone to help a member at home in order to enable her to participate at an important workshop.

Lack of confidence is another important constraint for women in decision-making at higher levels. When asked why they only stood for the seats reserved for women and did not vie for any of the top positions (chairperson, secretary, treasurer) during the recent elections for community based NGOs in Keiyo and Marakwet, many women said that they feared the campaign process, which is heavily male dominated. Women said they favoured election processes that encourage dialogue and consensus building. They also felt that women need more exposure before they could start to take on such roles. This lack of confidence is said to be even stronger among women from the valley, which could be linked to their generally lower education levels and lower access to resources compared to women in the more productive highland areas.

Another issue relating to women in leadership is the almost routine ‘co-opting’ of men into women’s groups. While women said that this was done for practical reasons and that men accepted women’s leadership in these groups (see ‘politics of ‘women only’ vs. mixed groups on page13) there were instances during the Poll where male members of such groups seemed to dominate, or to have a very different agenda from that of female members. It is therefore important for women and men in such groups to explicitly discuss the reasons for incorporating men and to adhere to the agreed terms of collaboration in order not to compromise the fundamental goal of women’s empowerment.

During the confidence building workshops, women leaders urged SARDEP K&M to help create avenues for women to meet and strategise on common issues of concern. Women’s dialogue groups could provide an opportunity for women to exchange experiences both related to their private, and public life such as speaking in public. A concrete outcome of such a dialogue could be a campaign strategy that would encourage more women to stand for higher positions in community organizations.



Women leaders at one of the workshops

“ Women are not only starting successful projects, they are also scaling up... The very successful Mala Plant in Kapsowar started as a women’s zero-grazing group”

A member of RADO, Kapsowar



PART III: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CONCLUSIONS

1. General Conclusions Arising from The Gender Poll

It can be generally concluded, from the Gender Opinion Poll, that SARDEP K&M has succeeded in addressing a number of practical gender needs among its target group. Some examples of improvements that have resulted from SARDEP K&M interventions are water availability and the increased opportunities for women to earn an income.

SARDEP K&M has also succeeded in addressing a number of strategic gender needs. One of the most explicit changes that have occurred at household level is the change in power relations resulting from women's income generating activities. At the level of public institutions, women participation has increased. These achievements can be considered to be important first steps toward women's empowerment and gender equality.

The Opinion Poll also revealed that there is still scope for improvement, mostly in the field of strategic needs as women participation in public decision-making is far from equal to men's – despite the improvements that have been made- and women awareness creation is needed with regard to their rights. Women's organisation building was further identified as an area requiring attention. The following section presents recommendations on how this can be arrived at.

2. Specific Conclusions Related to the SARDEP K&M Policy

The Gender Opinion Poll aimed at reflecting the target group's gender needs and their perception of SARDEP K&M's effectiveness in addressing these needs. The information gathered thus does not allow for a complete assessment of the programme's strategy. Nevertheless, a number of lessons clearly emerged from the exercise. Three characteristics of the SARDEP K&M strategy appear to be very favourable to the gender strategy.

The first is the 'multi-level' approach of the programme. Gender equity and women's empowerment can only be achieved through attitudinal change, which requires a holistic approach, both at private and public levels. The position of women needs to be improved at household level as well as at community and institutional meso-level. Because the SARDEP-KM programme intervenes at these different levels, gender awareness creation can be integrated throughout.

For gender sensitive attitudinal change to occur it is also necessary to intervene in different sectors. This is another asset of the SARDEP K&M strategy. The Gender

Social Empowerment: Lessons Learned and the Way Forward

Important lessons were learned from the community group project cycle that commenced in 2000 and that ended for most projects in the course of 2001. Measures to improve PMC performance put emphasis on transparency and accountability. Since there are strong indications that this has considerably improved group performance as well as gender equity in terms of women's participation in decision making, these measures will be reinforced in 2002.

Although gender balance has been achieved in terms of the numbers of women and men participating in groups, field visits and meetings with PMCs have shown that while equal participation in membership and management positions is a necessary first step towards increased equity, it is not sufficient. In 2001 SARDEP K&M trained all male and female PMC chairpersons, secretaries and treasurers in project management and administration. Women are still timid, however, when it comes to participation in decision-making at PMC level. The next challenge is to capitalize on the gender balance achieved in terms of numbers and aim for increased gender equity. Local culture still frowns on women taking formal leadership positions. Much is expected from the confidence building workshops for female PMC leaders held in the last quarter of 2001. In 2002 a follow up workshop will be held to encourage more women to stand for elections for the transect based NGOs, which will most likely be registered in early 2002.

From the SARDEP K&M Keiyo&Marakwet Annual Workplan, 2001-2002

Opinion Poll indicates, for instance, that the improved water availability has strengthened the position of women within the household as it has created an opportunity for income generation. At the same time capacity building of school management has led to increased involvement of women in management. Just these two examples already illustrate that gender awareness is slowly infiltrating the communities from different sides and at different levels. The fact that this process is taking place is an important achievement for the SARDEP K&M programme.

SARDEP K&M's strategy of **working through groups** contributes to organizational strengthening and provides a forum for women to articulate their needs. Affirmative action allows women's groups to realize projects, which helps address their practical, and possibly also, strategic gender needs. Supporting women groups also contributes to women's confidence building, as these groups appear to be important for the personal development of women. Mixed male and female groups can be used as a platform for sensitization on the existing gender roles and division of power and ways to improve gender equity.

Another asset of the SARDEP K&M strategy is the capacity building of project committees in sound and accountable project management. This is crucial for confidence building, something women still lack, and contributes towards the sustainability of the interventions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. General Recommendations arising from the Gender Poll

A. Women's Access to and Control over resources Income

It is recommended that a strategy be developed to improve access of women groups to funds from a variety of sources. Sustainability of the women projects could be enhanced through, for example, revolving funds.

1. Land

As women do not seem aware of their possibilities to own land, SARDEP-KM could consider sensitising women, particularly female-headed households, on the possibilities to have land registered in their name. In order to open communication channels, the programme could assist women to seek clarity from traditional elders and the local administration on allocation and selection of land they could legally occupy and have registered.

Another option that would be worth exploring is the possibility for women to register land in groups. SARDEP-Kajiado could be consulted for their knowledge in this field.

The SARDEP-KM team could also consider investigating the possibility of integrating women's land rights issues in the Participatory Land Use Planning process. This process could provide an interesting opportunity to discuss and raise awareness on women's individual land rights as well as on common land for women. This topic could also be addressed in confidence building workshops conducted for female leaders.

2 Knowledge

Increased exposure is recommended as one of the main objectives for future gender improvements. Exchange of experiences and knowledge between women should therefore be encouraged both for private issues as well as for community projects.

B. Division of labour and Time

It is recommended that SARDEP-KM develop project appraisal criteria for valuing the effects of the project on the division of labour and the division of power between women and men. Aspects that could be considered are: who will benefit from the intervention, who will be responsible, and who will do the labour. This is to be combined with sensitisation of the target groups on the division of labour and its consequences.



C. Women's physical autonomy

Gender related elements of physical autonomy seem to still need a lot of attention as lack of family planning, FGM, domestic violence, are still common in Keiyo and Marakwet. Realistically, HIV/Aids should also be included in this list although it was not discussed in Gender Opinion Poll. As these problems cannot be addressed under SARDEP K&M's current strategy, it is recommended that the Programme seeks partnerships with other agencies that work in these fields.

Physical autonomy could also be addressed in confidence building workshops conducted for female leaders.

D. Education

It is recommended that gender awareness creation be included in school management training, as one of the lessons learned from the SARDEP K&M experiences is that school management committees can play a crucial role in gender sensitization.

Another element of school management training could cover sensitisation on the role of school committees in awareness creation on FGM, early pregnancies and HIV/AIDS. Encouraging lessons could be heard from the headteacher from Tot Primary School, a pro-active anti-FGM campaigner.

Teachers, particularly female staff, brought up their powerlessness in relation to undisciplined students since the prohibition on caning. Training could therefore be considered on alternative forms of punishment.

E. Promoting Women in leadership

It is recommended that the main obstacles for women to participate in leadership be addressed in SARDEP K&M future strategy and interventions. Obstacles for women in leadership that came out of the Opinion Poll are the workload within the household, lack of confidence and prohibition by male relative.

For the household workload to diminish, the division of labour will have to be improved. (See recommendation under 'Division of labour').

To address women's lack of confidence, SARDEP K&M should consider more capacity building elements for female leaders as a follow-up to the confidence-building workshop (conducted in November and December 2001). This could be done, for instance, through exchange visits between women projects. The visits could be combined with discussions on the various aspects of female leadership. [Confidence building could also result from the women dialogue groups proposed in the next section].

Lack of confidence to stand for higher management position was said to be caused by fear of the campaign process. SARDEP K&M could support women to develop less intimidating campaign strategies for female candidates.

2. Specific Recommendations related to the SARDEP K&M strategy

The actual transitional phase of the SARDEP-K&M programme and the findings from the Gender Opinion Poll create an interesting opportunity for the programme's gender vision and strategy to be reviewed. Now that the picture is clear, further steps can be made to capitalize on the programme's gender achievements. This section presents elements that arose from the Gender Opinion Poll and that are recommended for consideration in the review of the programme's strategy.

1. Training

It is recommended that the SARDEP K&M staff be trained on gender and development, as well as the implementation of gender objectives.



2. Support for women dialogue groups

The challenges facing women leaders emerged strongly in the Poll. It is therefore recommended that SARDEP K&M support women to develop fora in which they can discuss and exchange experiences and information on gender-related issues. The cascade approach (through training of trainers) that is being used in the education sector could be applied to train facilitators in the whys-and-howsof setting up women dialogue groups.

3. Creating strategic partnerships

It is recommended that the approach of inter-agency partnership from the Peace and Development initiative in the Kerio Valley be used to address some of the gender needs. The Gender Opinion Poll has revealed a number of gender-related problems that cannot be addressed through SARDEP-K&M alone -- for instance issues of reproductive health and children sponsorship (for East Pokot).

4. Youth involvement

It is recommended that SARDEP K&M consider the possibility of incorporating the youth in its strategy. For the Programme's gender objectives this can be favourable as the youth is, generally speaking, less tight to traditions, more flexible, more educated and more gender sensitive. Their involvement could thus accelerate the process of gender sensitive improvements.

Another argument in favour of a youth focus is that the young section of the target population faces some problems that are comparable to the ones of the female section. For instance, young people are hardly ever involved in decision-making. The youth also lacks information on their rights and possibilities e.g. in relation to land ownership and reproductive health. Linking parties that are facing the same problems can enhance confidence building.

Gender Analysis in Pokot (East Baringo)

An in-depth assessment should be conducted for the gender situation in East Baringo. Because the socio-economic factors affecting gender balance are vastly different from those in Keiyo and Marakwet, a new approach should be developed to address gender issues in this region. The level of poverty in combination with the predominantly pastoralist lifestyle means that schooling, especially for girls, is given little priority. The strategy for this area will therefore need to focus on basic gender sensitisation, amongst other interventions, with incentives to promote girls' education. The Sigor Natural Resource Programme could be consulted about the gender situation in West-Pokot.



Members of the Koike Food Security Group in Keiyo District present gifts to SARDEP K&M staff.



The old-fashioned, 'hard-ware biased' development project is no more. Organizations working to improve agricultural production techniques, build social amenities, provide water and develop other productive infrastructure need to ensure that these services benefit and are owned by a broad range of target communities, in an equitable way.

SARDEP faces these challenges on a daily basis. As extension staff travel to far flung areas within the districts, they must not only transfer knowledge in the areas that they are trained for, but also to interact with communities and try to address the myriad of other questions that a development project must deal with. Marrying the 'nuts and bolts' aspects of delivering livestock, laying out water pipes and constructing schools with the social issues of access to resources, division of labour and empowerment requires diverse skills and an open approach.

Gender relations form a central component in the social analysis of development projects. Inevitably, any development intervention will impact on men and women in a different way. Even more complex, the effects on young people, household heads and the old will be further differentiated. In order to ensure that development resources reach the intended beneficiaries, and particularly those that are marginalized from existing resources, it is crucial to incorporate a gender analysis at all stages of the development project cycle.

The gender poll of SARDEP Keiyo&Marakwet sought to determine the extent to which these needs had been met by directly seeking the opinion of the target group members, both women and men. The diverse range of findings – both positive and negative – are captured in this report. It is hoped that these findings will serve as a guide for frontline extension staff and managers of development programmes, enabling them to incorporate gender sensitive approaches in their work with community groups.



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