

# TOMAK LEARNING PAPER

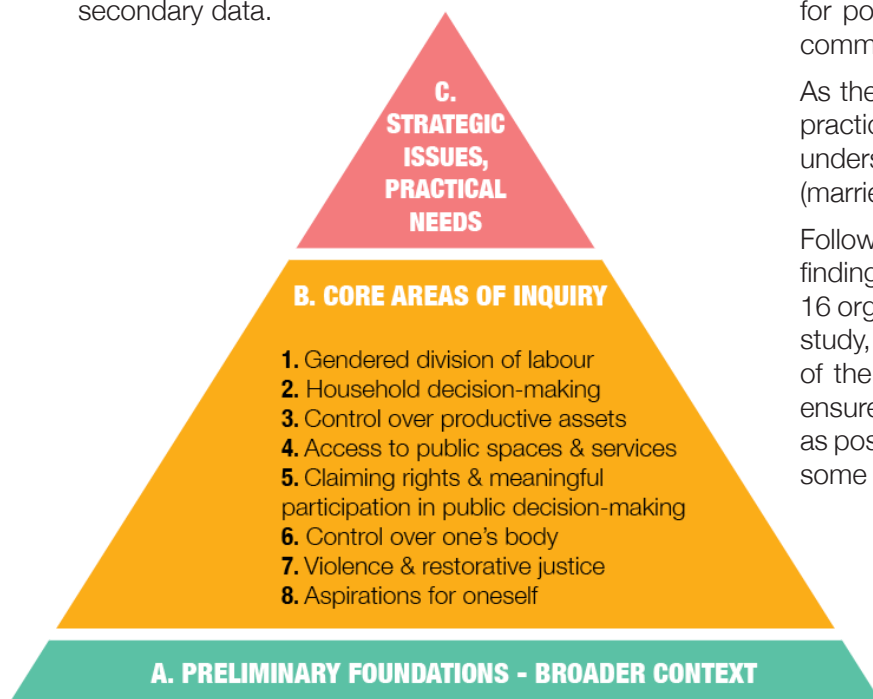
## *Undertaking gender equality and social inclusion analysis (GESIA) in a market systems and nutrition-sensitive agriculture program*

**Gender analysis is a very important step when designing and implementing projects that aim to maximise inclusion.** TOMAK, an agricultural livelihoods program in Timor-Leste undertook a gender equality and social inclusion analysis (GESIA) during its inception. The GESIA used a global empowerment framework incorporating aspects of women's empowerment broader than solely economic empowerment. The process explored social and cultural norms and highlighted factors other than gender that can impact on inclusion, such as age, status, ethnicity and disability. Cross-generational gender analysis was also undertaken to highlight differences between men and women from different generations.



### What was involved

The GESIA built on what was already known about gender norms and relations in Timor-Leste, then dug deeper. Using the following framework, a desk study was undertaken to better understand the broader gender context focusing on eight core areas of inquiry. The desk study reviewed a large number of sources and secondary data.



Targeting the knowledge gaps identified through the desk study, field assessment methods were then selected. These included a mix of tools including targeted interviews, focus group discussions and participatory rural appraisal techniques such as transect walks and peak-time observations. The sites selected allowed for points of comparison between peri-urban and rural communities.

As there are two dominant forms of marriage exchange practices in Timor-Leste, the field analysis sought to understand gendered differences between patrilineal (married-out) and matrilineal (married-in) communities.

Following the fieldwork and data analysis, preliminary findings were presented to key stakeholders representing 16 organisations that had been involved in the initial desk study, tool development, and/or field work. The purpose of the workshop was to obtain critical peer analysis to ensure findings were relevant, reflective and as accurate as possible. Most of the findings were validated, although some findings require additional analysis.

TOMAK has now shared findings from the GESIA with a broad audience. Key stakeholders have reacted positively to the analysis and this has helped internal audiences to feel more comfortable with the GESIA recommendations, even on more sensitive issues such as violence.

### What it showed us

Prevailing beliefs and attitudes held by men and women regarding the expectations of their roles and rights is the biggest barrier to gender equality and social inclusion in Timor-Leste. Traditional custom and marriage exchange practices dominate and set gender role expectations that cascade down to other aspects of life, including inheritance of resources, domicile, domestic/productive roles and household decision-making practices.

The GESIA overwhelmingly highlighted the need to undertake and continually reflect on gender and social inclusion factors underpinning human behaviour as well

as societal norms when developing program activities. In many cases these factors will be the reason why change has not occurred in the past and/or is difficult to challenge.

The GESIA remains a living document, and signifies a long-term commitment from TOMAK to reflect, learn and adapt to gender and inclusion information throughout the life of the program. The results of the GESIA provide TOMAK with an excellent foundation of analysis required to develop gender-sensitive and transformative approaches, relevant to the key project outcomes.

## Linking GESIA to technical analysis

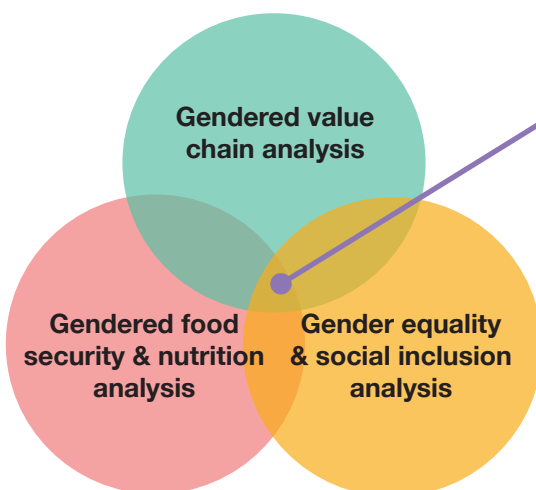
TOMAK's GESIA was complemented by a gendered value chain analysis and gendered food security and nutrition analysis, which were carried out simultaneously. This provided a wealth of gender and social inclusion findings across the program, and allowed for a high degree of triangulation. It also enabled the identification of common gender challenges and opportunities relevant to the program as a whole.



One area that emerged as a gender challenge is the lack of joint gendered household decision-making over the use of economic and food resources. This is especially so if a resource has multiple uses of consumption, sale, safety net and cultural gifting. This type of decision has a lot of tension in it and there is the possibility of increased family conflict and violence. Knowing this, TOMAK is making sure men and women together are making the most informed farm and family decisions that they can.

## We have used GESIA findings to:

- **Adjust and enhance our theory of change.** This includes a sharper focus on gendered and balanced household decision-making, and the engagement of women's organisations as critical implementing partners
- **Support improvements to value chains which benefit women** and seek opportunities to contribute to broader gender equality.
- **Consider and factor in socio-cultural norms**, and better understand the interplay with social inclusion.
- **Incorporate higher level gender approaches** including: violence prevention, women's empowerment (not only women's economic empowerment), transformative gender approaches, integration of women's leadership and ongoing GESI analysis.
- **Better engage women's organisations**, bringing agriculture service providers closer to women's organisations and vice versa.
- **Ensure women's voice is being better heard in policy and regulatory reform.** This includes promoting women's voice in policy and regulatory reform as well as increasing the role of women in sectoral decision-making.
- **Influence program management and program workplace culture for the better** - including normalising and celebrating gender from the beginning of the program.



### Clarified cross-over barriers & opportunities

- Household decision-making over use of economic & food resources - link to violence (Family Team Approach)
- Women's participation is high in all areas - increased visibility & recognition needed, not increased participation (Visibility Campaign)
- Need for across the board support for women's agency & leadership in all activities.
- Men's participation low in food security & nutrition - increased participation needed.

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