








# OPPORTUNITIES TO PROGRESS WOMEN'S ROLES | Commercial Maize


In 2014, ÉLAN RDC partnered with commercial farm Mbeko Shamba in Haut-Katanga to pilot an out-grower scheme that targeted women. This **gender-responsive contract farming model** demonstrated promising results in improving the roles of women AND maize production.

WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT CONSTRAINTS	MARKET CONSTRAINTS	INTERVENTION	RESULTS	ROLE CHANGES*
<b>INPUTS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Land tenure severely limited; land registered to men</li> <li>Labor-intensive tasks; no access to mechanized tools</li> <li>Less control over productive resource spending</li> </ul>	<p>Existing business practices <b>underutilized female talent, missing out on productivity gains and improved supply chain reliability due to farmers side selling, which translates into commercial losses.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use of concession land</li> <li>Preparing ground using a tractor</li> <li>Access to quality inputs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mbeko Shamba scaled this successful pilot to more female farmers the next maize season</li> <li>Reduced burden on women's heavy manual labor and time</li> <li>Equal access as men to quality seed</li> </ul>	 Improved Conditions
<b>PRODUCTION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Domestic responsibilities limit availability for ag work</li> <li>Community perceptions of lower productivity levels</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to labor saving technologies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Women provided an untapped talent pool with equal or greater productivity and quality</li> </ul>	 Improved Conditions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Viewed as "helpers" not farmers</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to extension services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing regular training for women</li> </ul>	 Access to Capacity Development
<b>MARKETING / SALES</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contract farming agreements with commercial farms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Women had lower levels of side-selling</li> <li>Greater income security &amp; influence over it for women</li> <li>Greater respect for women involved in this program</li> </ul>	 Labor Recognized & Rewarded  Improved Status

## ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

 **Win-Win Opportunity:** Increased maize production via improved women's roles met domestic demand and improved business performance. As registered contract farmers, women sell their own produce and receive direct income.












 **Lesson:** The pilot showed the business case, but challenges remain for other actors to 'crowd in'. IPs should select highly-influential actors to model the business case and exert influence over shifts in business practices and norms.

 **Caution:** ÉLAN RDC found that "Men recognize women's skills in commercial agriculture and are accepting of their involvement as contract farmers, but men also fear women's genuine financial independence, with the potential for violent reprisals." To mitigate GBV risks, social norms also need to change.


\* Role Change categories based on ELAN RDC's Role Change Framework


# OPPORTUNITIES TO PROGRESS WOMEN'S ROLES | Coffee Sector


In 2014, ÉLAN RDC partnered with coffee cooperative Muungano and NGO TWIN to **pilot sales to ethical trade markets from female producers**. Proven successful, at least two other neighboring cooperatives adopted the business model.

WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT CONSTRAINTS	MARKET CONSTRAINTS	INTERVENTION	RESULTS	ROLE CHANGES*
<b>PRODUCTION/POST HARVEST / PROCESSING</b>  Not registered as cooperative members; land in husbands' name  Rarely recruited in 'lead farmer' role; absent in coop leadership  Viewed as "helpers", limited access to extension  Poor working conditions; no safety equipment	<i>Commercial performance of the coffee cooperative is constrained by quality issues and low-value contracts, with limited knowledge of how to secure contracts in high-value export markets.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engaging men and women in shifting gender dynamics</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>55% of men granted plots to their wives, registered in their names</li> </ul>	 Improved Status
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leadership training</li> <li>Cultivating confidence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 of 7 coop board positions, and 30% of coop leadership, are women</li> </ul>	 New Positions
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstration plots and training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase in cherry quality</li> <li>Women seen as genuine, productive farmers</li> </ul>	 Access to Capacity Development
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to labor saving technologies</li> <li>Safety training (e.g. applying pesticides)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Less time needed for labor-intensive tasks</li> </ul>	 Improved Conditions
<b>MARKETING / SALES</b>  Concentrated in low value-capture roles  Not involved in marketing		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Traceability to female farmers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>70% of female coop members involved in trading</li> <li>Increase in and control over women's incomes</li> </ul>	 Labor Recognized & Rewarded
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Marketing women-only produced coffee</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Muungano successfully sold women-produced coffee at a premium</li> </ul>	

## ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

 **Win-Win Opportunity:** By targeting women and improving roles in production, the private sector increases coffee quantity and quality; diversifies products; increases revenues; and improves supply chain reliability. Women access lucrative end markets, improving incomes and status.

 **Lesson:** (1) The pilot showed the business case but requires up-front investment. Without donor support, cooperatives may not have the \$\$ or risk appetite to pilot/adopt the model. (2) Their target segment (high-end, ethical trade for women-only produced coffee) has limited absorptive capacity – so need to test, expand market channels.

 **Caution:** ÉLAN RDC found risks in stirring up social tensions and exacerbating women's time poverty by privileging women's labor. In the future, consider improving women's engagement through more mainstream, non-segregated models, complemented by work to shift social norms that improve women's labor burdens.

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