

Gender Assessment and Action Plan Report:
**BUILDING THE ADAPTIVE CAPACITY OF SUGARCANE
FARMERS IN NORTHERN BELIZE (BAC-SUF)**



**Submitted to Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre
(CCCCC)**

Prepared by Agricane Consulting Limited



*Agricultural Development
and Management Specialists*



July 2023

Contract Number: Contract#101/2020 GCF/Belize PPF/CCCCC

Report for: CCCCC



Table of contents

Introduction	1
Methodology and Process	2
Desk-based study.....	3
Stakeholder consultation	3
Structured Interviews (questionnaire).....	4
Thematic areas of information gathered.	4
Sugar industry context from a gender perspective	6
1.1. Country Gender Context.....	6
1.1.1. Poverty and access to resources from a Gender perspective	13
1.2. Industry Stakeholders and existing Gender programs.....	18
Belize Sugar Industries Limited (BSI)	21
Sugar Industry Research and Development Institute (SIRDI).....	21
Sugar Industry Control Board (SICB)	22
Sugar Cane Production Committee (SCPC).....	22
Belize Sugar Cane Farmers Association (BSCFA)	22
Progressive Sugar Cane Producers Association (PSCPA)	23
Corozal Sugar Cane Producers Association (CSCPA)	23
Northern Sugar Cane Growers Association (NSCGA).....	23
Gender Insights/Response	24
• Development Insights.....	24
Financial Insights.....	25
Gender Role Insights	25
Asset Ownership Insights.....	26
Crosscutting Insights.....	27
• Survey Insights.....	28
Vulnerable Groups Insights/Response	29
Barriers and Opportunities	1
Gender Inputs for successful Project Implementation	1
1.3. Policy Actions	2
1.4. Organizational Actions.....	2



1.5. Constituency Actions	3
1.6. Delivery Actions.....	3
Gender Action Plan.....	0
Conclusion.....	0
Annex 1: Key Gender Questions	0
Annex 2: Questionnaire	1
Annex 3: Focus Group Session Attendees.....	5
Annex 4: Interviews Held	7
Annex 5: Assessment Tool	8
Annex 5: Survey Results	17
Annex 6: Report on the Youth Perspective in the Sugar Industry.....	19
Annex 7: Youth Focus Group Guide	25

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ASR	AMERICAN SUGAR REFINING INC.
BELTRAIDE	BELIZE TRADE AND INVESTMENT DEVELOPMENT SERVICE
BSCFA	BELIZE SUGAR CANE FARMERS ASSOCIATION
BSI	BELIZE SUGAR INDUSTRIES LTD.
CCCCC or 5C's	CARRIBEAN COMMUNITY CLIMATE CHANGE CENTRE
CSPCA	COROZAL SUGAR CANE FARMER ASSOCIATION
CGA	COMPREHENSIVE GENDER ASSESSMENT
CGA	COUNTRY GENDER ASSESSMENT
CPA	COUNTRY POVERTY ASSESSMENT
DFC	DEVELOPMENT FINANCE COOPERATION
EPZ	EXPORT PROCESSING ZONE
EU	EUROPEAN UNION
FI	FINANCIAL INSTITUTION
FFS	FARMER FIELD SCHOOL
FDI	FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT
GAD	GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT
GAP	GENDER ASSESSMENT PLAN
GDP	GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT
GOB	GOVERNMENT OF BELIZE
HDI	HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX
MSM	MEN WHO HAVE SEX WITH MEN
MSME	MICRO, SMALL, AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES
NGP	NATIONAL GENDER POLICY
NSCGA	NORTHERN SUGAR CANE GROWERS' ASSOCIATION
PSCPA	PROGRESSIVE SUGAR CANE FARMER ASSOCIATION
SCPC	SUGAR CANE PRODUCTION COMMITTEE
SICB	SUGAR INDUSTRY CONTROL BOARD
SDG	SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS
SIB	STATISTICAL INSTITUTE OF BELIZE
SIMIS	SUGAR INDUSTRY MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM
SIRDI	SUGAR INDUSTRY RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

Introduction

This Gender Assessment and Gender Action Plan (GAP) has been developed to inform the gender response to the project "Building the Adaptive Capacity of Sugarcane Farmers in Northern Belize (BaC-SuF)" (known as "the project"), which is being developed for financing from the Green Climate Fund (GCF).

The project is to be implemented through three components as described below:

1. Sugarcane variety diversification with climate-adapted varieties, increasing of seed cane availability, planting in a climate-smart manner, and mechanical harvesting scale-up.
2. Moisture management and improved crop husbandry
3. Knowledge and knowledge management and transformation of agricultural systems

Where possible, any systemic gender imbalances in the project's sphere of influence need to be identified and addressed. The project needs to consider Gender in each of these components during the project design and implementation process to ensure that the impacts are distributed fairly across all genders.

This report provides an assessment of the sugar industry (project's sphere of influence) in Northern Belize concerning Gender. It provides specific actions on how the project can impact the drive towards gender mainstreaming. The document is laid out as follows:

Introduction: This section sets the context for the project, the project components, and the goal of the Gender Action Plan.

Methodology and Process: This section describes the methodology and processes used to gather the information about Gender in Northern Belize, focusing on the sugar industry, making an informed gender assessment, and providing achievable project actions in the action plan.

Context: This section lays out the gender context in Belize, Northern Belize, and the sugar industry. It provides a comprehensive account of the social norms and inequalities within the project sphere of influence.

Gender Assessment: This section presents the results of the gender assessment gained through specific insights from assessing the gender context.

Barriers and Opportunities: This section identifies the specific barriers in the Northern Belize sugar industry that show resistance to change towards gender equality. Similarly, this section also provides specific opportunities within the Northern Belize sugar industry that the project could leverage to ensure greater equality.

Actions and Action Plan: This section details the actions necessary for reaching the goals, objectives, and outcomes identified in Section 3. It specifies responsibilities for delivering these actions. The section also provides an action plan in the form of a log frame, budget, and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework. The action plan describes the specific milestones and corresponding budgets, while the M&E framework describes the methodology of measuring and monitoring the outcomes of the GAP.

It is important to note that the awareness of gender issues in the Sugar industry has been an ongoing area of focus for a long time. The introduction of Fairtrade in the country in 2010 and



the certification and payment of the first Fairtrade premium in 2011 gave real momentum to this aspect of the sugar industry. All associations in Belize except for the newest one (which is in the process of certifying) are Fairtrade certified and are audited regularly. The Fairtrade theory of change has as one of its impacts "Increased cooperation & gender equality within communities." Each farmers association needs to develop an action plan which addresses Gender as a crosscutting thematic area. It is further expected (and happens) that a certain percentage of the Fairtrade premium (around 9%) is spent on social issues, including projects that address gender equity in the industry. This is audited as part of the certification process.

A report¹ (unpublished) written to understand the impact that Fairtrade on the sugar industry in Belize based on the Fairtrade theory of change concluded from a gender perspective:

"Women felt that they were generally included and appreciated at a household level. When asked if they felt things had changed since the introduction of Fairtrade, they felt quite strongly that nothing needed to change at a household level as everyone in the household understood their roles from a gender perspective and executed accordingly. They did, however, feel that Fairtrade had made a positive impact in allowing their voice to be heard at association meetings. They also felt that men and women had equal opportunity to attend training and other Fairtrade organized events."

These insights are essential for this assessment, as people are sensitized to the gender issues in the industry, and many of the key industry stakeholders have ongoing initiatives that are looking at Gender mainstreaming in the industry. It is important that the assessment and action plan developed as part of this initiative therefore supports and compliments the initiatives already taking place in the industry.

Methodology and Process

For this project to be gender-responsive and for Gender to be mainstreamed in all its phases, women's realities need to be assessed to understand the cultural and societal background, which created any identified inequality or barriers. Planning needs to be intentional with a strategic focus directed at addressing how women's needs can be fulfilled without exasperating their already heavy burden of care in their households (including care for children and the elderly) and communities.

A mixed data and information collection methodology was employed to enable a comprehensive collection of information from different sources for a detailed and evidence-based Gender Assessment. The assessment focused on three primary data collection sources: desk-based research, stakeholder consultations, and structured interviews, and finally, structured questionnaires, which were used as a verification tool.

The analysis exercise was guided by the Gender Analysis Framework (GAF)². The GAF is a tool that is used to organize information about gender roles and relations. This allows for the

¹ EVALUATION AND BASELINE RESEARCH WITH SMALL PRODUCER ORGANISATIONS PRODUCING FAIRTRADE SUGAR Belize country report, 2019. ODI and RMI services

² https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/form-09-gender-assessment-and-action-plan-template_0.pdf



visualization and understanding of gender differences and consequent differential impact across socio-economic spheres.

Desk-based study

The first method, the desk-based study, entailed reviewing relevant documents, policies, and reports from the Government, International Institutions, and other Development actors to allow a deeper understanding of critical aspects of the gender context in the sugar industry.

The following is a list of the relevant documents and literature that was used in the review process:

- Arundo Donax Gender Analysis (Humes 2018)
- Belize's National Gender Policy (Revised, 2013)
- Belize Poverty Analysis
- Belize Sugar Cane Industry Act (2003)
- Country Gender Assessment (IADB 2016)
- Evaluation and baseline research with small producer organizations producing Fairtrade sugar: Belize country report(unpublished) (2019, RMI and ODI)
- GCF Toolkit
- Downloads/IntSugarJournalPhysiology.pdf

The desk-based study provided a good understanding of the issues that needed further in-depth analysis with the various stakeholders and women farmers. Further questions and questionnaires were designed to probe the issues raised based on this understanding and alignment with the Gender Analysis Framework.

Stakeholder consultation

A number of stakeholder consultations were conducted. Consultations were held with female cane farmers residing in the target communities, BSI/ASR staff and management, and members of the four cane farmer associations, including the executive board members, Development Finance Cooperation, La Inmaculada Credit Union, and Belize Bank (the banking institution staff that actively processes loans for sugarcane grower operations in the area) SIRD and general citizenry was carried out. This diverse group ensured that an unbiased response was received to indicate the context, barriers, and opportunities within Gender and Gender mainstreaming in the sugar industry in Northern Belize.

The consultations were mainly conducted through key informant interviews (KII), focus group discussions, and direct phone calls. Specific categories of women, men, and youth were reached to generate general views, opinions, and perceptions about the gender gaps in the industry and general suggestions on how these could be bridged.

The main aim of the stakeholder consultations was to obtain the views, opinions, and aspirations of critical stakeholders who can influence policy and practice in the sugar industry of Belize with regards to improving Gender mainstreaming. It was also essential to gather information through these consultations regarding previous work (projects and initiatives) undertaken to

understand Gender mainstreaming in the industry and to understand current projects being implemented to map and triangulate overlaps and remove redundancies.

These consultations with critical stakeholders helped inform the project design and the changes recommended within this project's scope to improve efficiency and outputs as per the three outcomes of the concept note from a gender perspective. It also endeavours to ensure lessons learned are captured and to prevent duplication of effort.

Stakeholder consultations paid particular attention to the status of women and men and girls and boys. Underlying determinants of the status of women were analysed, as well as implications of the status of women and men, and girls and boys, to women's wellbeing, the achievement of national development targets, and overall sustainable development in the country and the sugar industry.

As part of the methodology, stakeholders in the private and public sectors provided inputs to the assessment report through a validation workshop organized by ASR. This was a critical aspect of this investigation as it allowed a broad audience to input into the assessment. The comments and suggestions made by stakeholders during the workshop have been incorporated into this report.

Structured Interviews (questionnaire)

Finally, structured interviews were conducted using a questionnaire (see Annex 2 for questionnaire) to triangulate and verify information gathered during the desk-based study and stakeholder consultations³. These structured interviews were done at the community level with a stratified sample of men, women, and non-binary persons in the footprint communities of sugar cane farmers, as listed by BSI/ASR and SIMIS, and to provide a representative picture of the gender status of the wider sugar industry. Appointments were made where possible with the sector organization and associations utilizing calls and WhatsApp messages. These different mediums were made to ascertain the availability of the persons at the offices and home for visits as well as interviews as necessary.

Data collected during the structured interview process was used to confirm the understanding and baseline assessments based on information gathered during the desk reviews and stakeholder engagement process. The structured interview process was not designed to be statistically significant in any way. The information collected was quantified to give a broad assessment of where most respondents stood on the different issues investigated and access gaps and opportunities against what stakeholders are saying. Certain cross-cutting areas may seep over into the Social Assessment and may be found duplicated within that chapter.

Thematic areas of information gathered.

Information gathered using the three methods described above focused on getting answers to the following:

1. Female farmers knowledge attitudes and perceptions with a focus on the following – women's attitude about self and others, problems, personal attacks, - professional growth, aspirations, and barriers

³ Interviews were conducted to gain a better understanding of conditions on the ground and verify the research conducted. The results are not considered to be statistically valid.



2. What is the division of labour among women and men in the project/program footprint area?
3. What is the participation between women and men in the formal/informal economy, and how can the project change this?
4. What are women and men's socio-economic and cultural situation in the specific sector of intervention or the project/program footprint area?
5. In terms of the proposed project/program, will there be any anticipated differences in men's and women's vulnerability and adaptive capacity to climate change? If so, what are these?
6. Are there existing gender inequalities exacerbated by climate change impacts in the proposed project/program footprint area?
7. What are some of the inequalities that exist between different social groups in the project/program footprint area? How do these inequalities affect people's capacity to adapt to climate change?
8. What roles women and men are anticipated to play in the context of the project/program? What will these entail in terms of time commitment and need for mobility?
9. What resources (economic, financial, physical, natural, other assets) do women and men have access to? Who manages or controls access to these resources? Specifically access to financial services.
10. Do women and men from vulnerable communities have equal access to information and opportunities necessary to participate and benefit fully from the anticipated outcomes of the project/program?
11. Do women have equal access to education, technical knowledge, and skill up-gradation?
12. Will services and technologies provided by the project/program be available and accessible to both women and men?
13. To what extent do women and men from vulnerable communities participate in decision-making processes? What types of decisions are made by women? What constraints (social, cultural, economic, political) restrict women's active participation in household and community-level decision-making processes?
14. Are there any opportunities to promote women's leadership in local governance/political systems and formal/informal institutions? If not, what are some of the constraints that hinder women from assuming leadership roles? Conversations with Chairmen of the Sugarcane farmers associations verbalized interest.
15. What are the differential needs/priorities of women and men in the context of the project/program? Will the project/program be able to address their individual needs and priorities? If so, how?
16. Have the needs of specific (and vulnerable) sub-groups been considered by the project/program (e.g., children, girls, women, and men with disabilities, the elderly,

widows/widowers)?

17. Has the project/program recognized the distinct vulnerabilities of women and men and developed specific response strategies for each target group?
18. Do women and men's specific knowledge and skills, mainly from vulnerable groups, contribute to project/program outcomes and solutions?
19. Has the project/program identified opportunities to challenge gender stereotypes and increase positive gender relations through equitable actions? If so, what are these opportunities and actions?

For this project, unless visiting the women in their respective villages, formal focus group and interview sessions were conducted late afternoon after fulfilling care roles and domestic work. This resulted in total attendance by all invitees and all to be on time. This is unusual in the male-dominated environment, which was usually late to their sessions, frequently interrupted with calls, and poor attendance despite agreeing to the schedule produced.

Sugar industry context from a gender perspective

Sugar cane is Belize's leading agricultural export. The Corozal and Orange Walk District is the core of the northern "Sugar Belt" where most of the country's sugar is produced. Competition has now developed from Santander Farms in the west, but for the purpose of this study, that sector of the sugar industry is not considered. The industry is aware that efficiency and value-added is the only way to drive revenue where quotas are no longer provided under EU preferential status, and that is why there has been a move to produce more higher-value direct consumption sugar. Maximizing yields and increasing productivity from existing fields from current yields of 17 tons per acre to the possible 27-30 tons per acre is the real game-changer regarding farmers' revenue and income from sugarcane farming operations.

The sugar industry is in a transition phase, where improved practices such as the proposed mechanical harvesting methodology and higher yields need to be the outcome to ensure the viability of the farmers. It is just as important to include in this transition gender equality to unlock the potential that women have in the region to contribute to the farms, the farming operations, and the broader economy. This transition of the industry is one element of the paradigm shift envisaged for this project. Putting a gender lens on this transition will ensure that it is a fair and just transition.

This section of the report is divided into several sub-sections. These sub-sections provide a clear description of the gender context and, collectively, will provide a comprehensive description of the gender realities in Belize, starting at a national level, social and economic norms and finally, describing gender from the sugar industry point of view.

1.1. Country Gender Context

Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) commissioned a Country Gender Assessment (CGA) for Belize in 2016. It was prepared by utilizing public policy documents, available statistics, interviews, and focus group discussions with technical experts in Belize to assist in planning, developing, and implementing gender-responsive interventions to promote poverty reduction



and economic growth in Belize. The CGA explored traditional systems and structures rooted in patriarchy and male dominance as the core of persisting gender inequalities in Belize, limiting the capacity to promote a transformative gender equality agenda. These patriarchal notions of social organization systematize and institutionalize a gender hierarchy with various manifestations that cut across race, ethnicity, culture, and age.

The CGA used three specific resources to base its assessment on, namely: the 2010 National Women's Commission's Situational Analysis of Gender Issues in Belize (SAGIB), which provided critical insights into the core manifestations of gender inequality; The 2010 National Census; and National Gender Policy (2013): health; education and skills training; wealth and employment generation; violence producing conditions; and power and decision-making. The assessment of these resources sought to explore how deeply rooted prevailing ideas and practices are linked to broader economic realities, thereby challenging the advancement of gender-equitable outcomes and the effective mainstreaming of Gender in development processes.

The CGA presents a statistical profile outlining some of the core indicators of gender equality across the household, family, and economic areas. These are highlighted under the country gender demographics, schooling, head of households, labour, and earnings as detailed below.

Country Gender Demographics

The 2010 National Census estimated the total resident population of Belize at 324,528 persons, with 1,957 living in institutions and 118 living on the street. Most Belizeans live in rural areas, except those living in the Belize (69,041) and Cayo (54,197) districts. The household population was re-recorded at 430,191 in 2021. Two hundred fifteen thousand ninety-nine (215,099) of those recorded in the 2010 Census were male (50%) and Two hundred fifteen thousand ninety-two (215,092) (50%), indicating an absolute sex parity. Overall population growth of 3.4% was noted from the 2000 Census record (Statistical Institute of Belize, 2021). Current postcensal statistics 430,191 (215,092 (F) / 215,099(M)) (SIB, 2021).

Education

The completion of primary schooling is low in Belize, at a total of 73 %. According to the Belize Abstract of education (2018-2019), the percentage of males who complete primary schooling is lower than that of females, at 38% and 48%, respectively, despite a high enrolment rate of both males and females, at 87.5% for males and 82.8% for females. The family expects many men and boys to go out and earn for the family, which causes this imbalance.

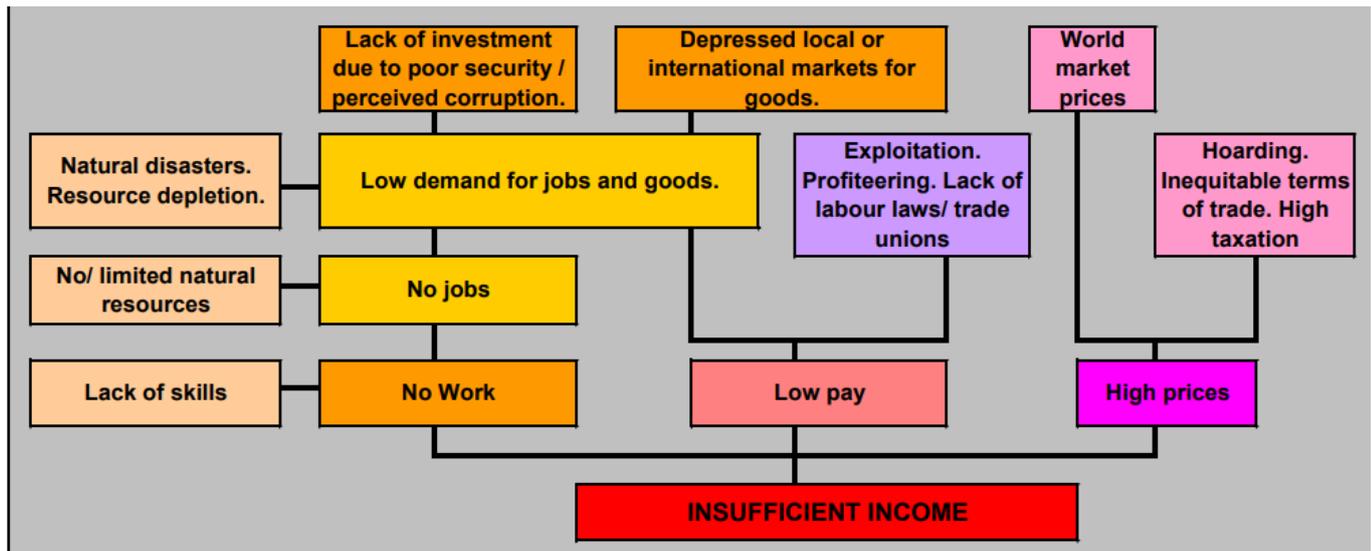
Heads of Households

Seventy-nine thousand four hundred ninety-two households in Belize were reported in the 2010 Country Poverty Assessment (CPA), with 27.6 percent (21,939) headed by females, compared to 24.0 percent as aggregate in the 2000 Census. Of the population surveyed for the 2010 CPA, 70% of males declared that they were the head of household, while 30% of females declared that they were the head. This percentage composition was consistent across all consumption quintiles. This may be representative of the growing single-parent homes being led by women.

Of the 207,205 persons above 15 years of age surveyed in 2010, 119,265 declared never having been married, 75,849 being legally married, 3,199 being divorced. As the survey did not provide statistics on the common-law, visiting partner, married but not in union relationships, the CGA assumed that many non-marital and other types of unions are also present.



Figure 1



Labour

According to the April 2021 Labour Force Survey the national labour force was estimated to be at 181,734, this is almost 60% of the working age of the total population. About 72.9% of working age males were in the labour force in April 2021 compared to just 47% percent of females within the same age group, revealing distinctive sex segregation in the formal labour market. Moreover, the unemployment rate among females was at 17.4 percent, more than double that of their male counterparts whose unemployment rate stood at 7.0 percent. In Orange Walk and Corozal districts, the labour force participants rate was 59.8% and 64.2% respectively. The unemployment rates were 7.2% for Orange walk, this was the lowest unemployment rate experienced due mostly to an increase in informal employment. Corozal had an unemployment rate of 11.8%.

The Impact of covid-19 on the labour force: In April 2021, there were approximately 19,477 persons who were not working because they had lost their jobs due to COVID-19. Of this group, 43.8 percent or 8,530 persons were actively seeking work and classified as unemployed. Notably, the number of job losses reported in April 2021 are due to the pandemic.

Earnings

Belize's economy remains driven principally by primary agricultural production (sugar, citrus, bananas, and marine products); tourism is the most important foreign exchange earner; manufacturing (led by crude oil production) has increased significantly since 2005); and international business services. All primary and tertiary industries have enjoyed increases, while secondary industries have yet to be restored to pre-2008 levels. The CGA found that the growth and sustainability of Belize's economy are heavily dependent on male labour. Unique to CDB's Borrowing Member Countries (BMCs), Belize has a significantly sex-segregated and male-dominated labour force, exemplified partly by male participation in the primary industries outnumbering female participation by nearly 19-to-1. The male-to-female employment ratio diminishes from primary to secondary, to tertiary industries, at 3.9-to-1 in secondary industries and 1.2-to-1 in tertiary industries. The CGA revealed that male earnings follow the trend of their participation in the formal labour force, with greater earnings than that of females. Belize ranked 103rd out of 136 countries in the female to male ratio of estimated earned income, with female (annual) average income estimated at \$4,475 and male (annual) estimated average



income at \$10,317, for a ratio of 0.46:1. The CGA findings supported CDB's assessment that Belize's commendable economic gains have not translated into commensurate social and Gender equity gains.

Despite the country's steady GDP growth over the past five years, the 2010 CPA showed an average increase in poverty from 33.5% in 2002 to 41.3% in 2010 and increase to 52% in 2018. Poverty is manifested by region and ethnic group, with the Mayas represented amongst the poorest. The 2018 CPA identifies 9% of the population as critically poor (indigent), 52% as living in poverty, and another 11% as vulnerable to poverty, indicating that over 52% or 201,616 of the population lived in vulnerable poverty. The percentage of persons living in poverty is also higher in rural than urban areas, in 2018 the poverty rates of Corozal and Orange Walk districts are 45% and 57% respectively. Moreover, Belize encounters an ongoing inequitable income distribution across all productive sectors.

Furthermore, Belize continues to be an import-heavy country, with imported goods increasing annually. This has further been compounded with a lack of foreign exchange because of COVID-19. The cost of business is rising, especially for fuel which the sugar business is heavily reliant on.

Policy and Institutional Frameworks

The imperative of considering gender equality in development policymaking, planning and programming was put on the United Nations' agenda in the 1970s. The idea that equality between men and women is a human rights issue, a social justice issue, and an economic efficiency/growth issue has evolved over the last four decades through different approaches:

Women in Development (WID), Women and Development (WAD), Gender and Development (GAD), and Gender mainstreaming advanced by the UN, and 'gender equality as smart economics' promoted by the World Bank. The pursuit of gender equality is anchored in international instruments such as the Convention on eliminating all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The Ministry of Human Development, Families and Indigenous People's Affairs has the mandate to spearhead the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment, reduce vulnerability and promote social inclusiveness through effective mainstreaming of Gender in all national development processes, programmes, policies and laws. First and foremost, the Constitution of Belize guarantees gender equality for all its citizens and provide them protection from discrimination based on race, place of origin, political opinions, colour, creed or sex.

The Belize National Gender Policy, 2013 sets out a broad vision and aims to advance the achievement of de jure and de facto gender equality and equity in Belize. The policy also sets out five priorities which are:

1. Health
2. Education and Skills Training
3. Wealth and Employment Generation
4. Violence Producing Conditions
5. Power and Decision-making

The policy also sets out specific crosscutting strategies and commitments and outlines society-wide institutions' specific roles and responsibilities. They have tried to establish commissions and



partner with UN agencies to make a dent in this area where Gender-based violence and discrimination continue to rise, especially since the onset of COVID-19.

Gender equality is key to eliminating poverty and creating equity, and this has been consistently demonstrated by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). Reducing gender inequalities in the sugar cane industry is essential. Only by closing the gender gap can sustainable agriculture and rural development strategies reach their full potential.

As the CGA underscores, the systemic socio-cultural, economic, and political disadvantages faced by women and men have not significantly informed the development process in the country to today's date. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Index (HDI) ranks Belize 84th among 187 countries, with a value of 0.732 for gender equality.

However, the CGA found that the participation of women in Belize may be underestimated, thus creating further gender-based challenges. With males traditionally ordained as leaders, especially in the northern districts where sugar is grown, women's experience of establishing ownership of land and productive resources is precarious.

Cultural and economic norms

To appreciate the inherent nature of the gender-based challenges faced in Belize; it is vital to understand the country's cultural norms. These practices are deeply rooted, and in order to change, a fundamental shift has to occur. This section describes the cultural norms and associated poverty outcomes that most Belizean women have unfortunately grown accustomed to.

Cultural norms defining gender roles in Belize

The CGA found that Belize's ethnic and cultural diversity presented a potential for varied understandings and practices of the roles and responsibilities of men and women in society. However, patriarchy is deeply embedded in key and influential social institutions.

The faith-based community has pushed for reinforcing patriarchal household organization, rigid definitions of male and female social roles, limited sexual and reproductive health rights, and the restriction of rights to vulnerable populations, including sex workers and men who have sex with men (MSM). Gender inequality is widely considered a crosscutting issue and a critical analysis of social, cultural, economic, and political life. It is critical to understanding the economic and social factors driving Belize's economic growth, poverty reduction and sustainable development. Differences between men and women observed in economic, social, and political life are not viewed as the result of sex (biology) but rather from social relations that ascribe different roles, rights, responsibilities and obligations to males and females. Differing gender roles are primarily understood as social constructs. Actual and perceived differences between women and men are subject to processes of social valuing, resulting in classifications of social hierarchy.

Primary and secondary research confirms the findings in the Arundo Donax report by Icilda Humes in her gender assessment for renewable biomass fuel in Belize for CCCCC in the area of project influence, Corozal and Orange Walk,

"Women's access to resources and their relegation to household duties present the introduction of an array of inequities. The participation of women governance within the sugar cane farmer



associations is non-existent at any level. While women are considered essential to local faith-based institutions' operation, their roles are mainly cleaning, fundraising, choir membership, and Sunday School teachers. Consequently, not only the household but also collective community power and decision-making is predominantly male-centric."

The CGA adds to these frameworks that males and females are not homogeneous groups in the Caribbean. Other factors such as race/ethnicity/colour, socio-economic status, age, urban/rural location, (dis)ability, etc., deeply affect gendered experiences and outcomes. The ownership of productive resources is critical to understanding the differential opportunities, benefits and challenges experienced by men and women in the sector. While accurate data on sex-disaggregated land holdings, for example, is difficult to determine, the perception is that more men than women own land, or are holders of land titles, or have lived on parcels of land for years without a title (Pebbles, 2011). The precariousness of establishing ownership is particularly disadvantageous to women, recognizing the power dynamics of households, with males traditionally ordained as the leaders. Thus, men tend to have default control of the critical resources and decision-making processes surrounding these resources. These further limits women's potential to gain credit and other inputs to grow their businesses, where land is required as collateral.

Women's roles include managing the income, whether meagre or otherwise, taking responsibility for house upkeep, caregiving for children and the elderly, and paying all bills. Women are generally viewed as playing a supportive role in the sugar cane farming sector, such as food preparation and clothes washing duties for their male partners and workers. While some women are registered as sugar cane farmers, in most cases, this is superficial and for the benefit of maximizing load quotas. Other cultural norms include:

1. **Marriages dictate** that wives live with their husbands' families, which is common in the sugar industry, where farming is done in rural areas. Within this traditional marriage, women often do not claim their ownership rights over land, either within their own families, to avoid any possible confrontation. Although women are the registered farmers, the land is not in their names; they are merely listed for quota reasons. The SICB controls quotas for sugar delivery to the BSI for processing with set and varying limits established per farmer each year. This practice thereby limits the annual revenue potential for any single farmer, directly determined by their respective quotas. In order for farmers to artificially extend their respective revenue capacities, farms are registered under the names of immediate family members, and -in order to meet Fairtrade recommendations for women inclusion-it is not uncommon for the registration of farms to be under the names of family members such as mothers, daughters, or other close female familial relations. This registration refers to registration of the farms with industry bodies for quota purposes and does not necessarily reflect women's land ownership or ownership of revenues generated from farms. Industry data regarding the number of registered 'female farmers' can therefore be described as skewed and may not necessarily reflect the actual situation on the ground.
2. **Inheritance practices give preference to gift land to male descendants**, especially in marriages, where sons typically remain in the household and are expected to manage the family, holding and caring for the mothers should the fathers die. Girls are married off and move to live with their husbands' families, which is the norm in the sugar belt. In the industry, however, women's roles are shifting as they pursue higher



education and branch out into other areas of meaningful employment. They are now becoming less inclined to marry and/or possibly have more significant roles in the business or inherit land and quotas, as seen by the growth of female farmers and harvest group leaders.

3. **Lack of knowledge** on women's ability to access land. This is common within rural populations and among land professionals and civil servants. Farms are listed under female names for the sake of claiming more acreage to meet sugar quotas and the apparent benefits of having a female gender assigned to farmland, but it is merely for practical purposes; this is shifting as women are asserting their roles for further inclusion.
4. From the male perspective, boys are not provided with a choice in most cases within family structures. **They must work in the sugar fields as a passage of rights.** (The issue that this now raises in line with sustainability is that the young men are no longer interested in becoming a part of what they deem to be a problematic industry fraught with issues such as; climate resiliency, political upheavals and associations semantics with little economic return.) Alternative livelihoods such as fishing yield greater returns and are now attracting the immigrant population who serve as cutters and harvesters in the industry.
5. **Land acquisition and registration processes can be cumbersome and gender insensitive**, which exacerbate this issue. A single unaccompanied woman is not prone to ask a House of Representatives member for a piece of land (the norm in Belize) to travel to Belmopan to apply on her own. The fact that many women do not hold a driver's license exacerbates this issue.

1.1.1. Poverty and access to resources from a Gender perspective

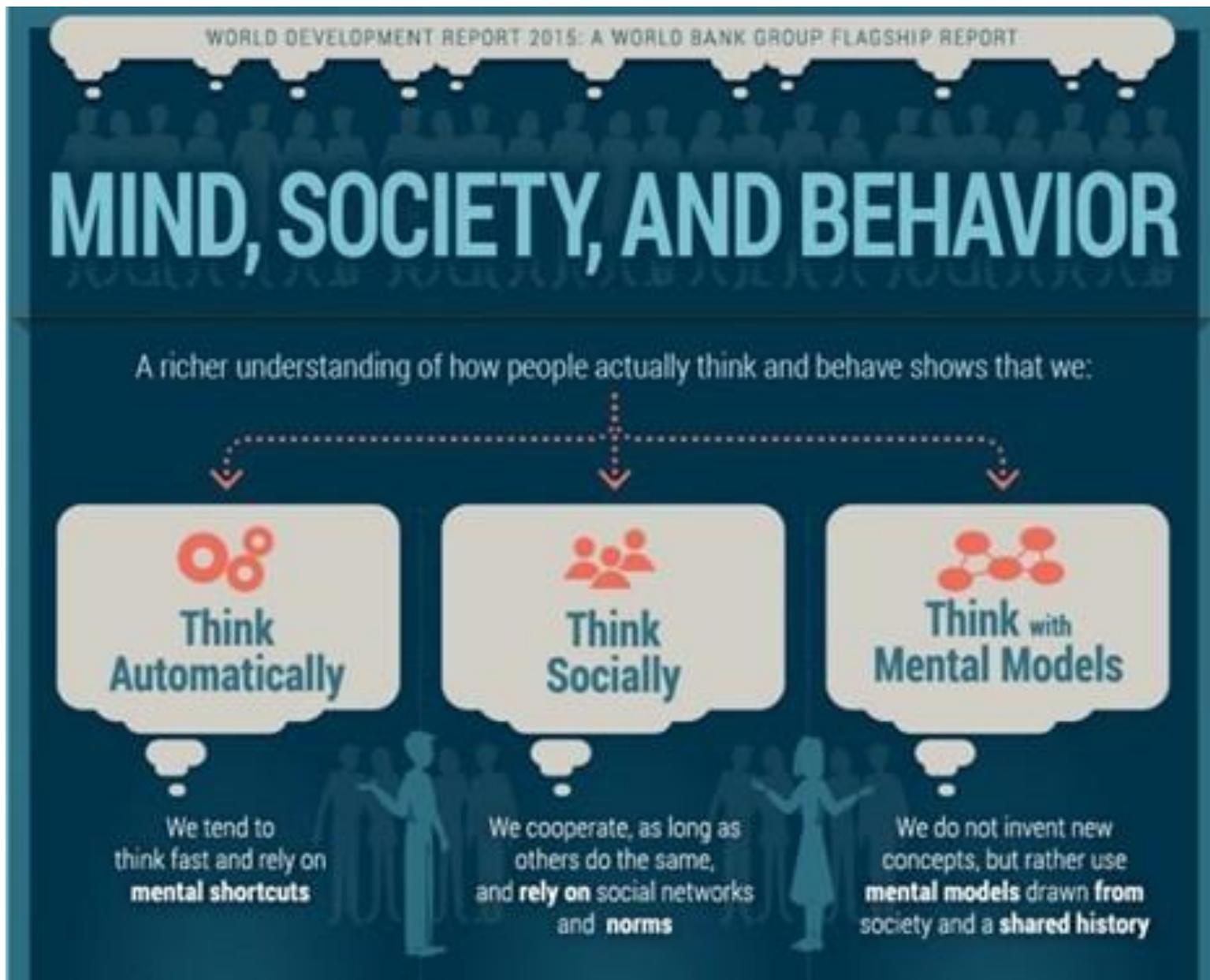


Figure SEQ Figure * ARABIC 2 World bank report understanding behaviour

The four main dimensions of poverty encapsulated by the World Bank (2001) – Opportunities, Capabilities, Security, and Empowerment – provide the main framework for the CGA. This framework incorporates the 'entitlements/capabilities', 'social exclusion, and 'rights-based approaches utilized within the Caribbean context, which enable theorizing the multi-dimensional aspects of poverty identified in the World Bank framework.

Within this context, the following table represents household poverty rates for the years 2002 and 2009.



District	Year	Indigent	Poor	All Poor	Not Poor	Total
Corozal %	2002	5.0	14.9	19.9	80.1	100
	2009	15.7	30.4	46.1	53.9	100
Orange Walk %	2002	4.3	18.9	23.2	76.8	100
	2009	11.4	25.3	36.7	63.3	100
Belize %	2002	3.7	14.7	18.4	81.6	100
	2009	3.9	17.0	20.9	79.1	100
Cayo %	2002	3.1	17.4	20.5	79.5	100
	2009	7.1	22.7	29.8	70.2	100
Stann Creek %	2002	4.9	21.0	25.9	74.1	100
	2009	11.9	19.8	31.7	68.3	100
Toledo %	2002	45.0	22.3	67.3	32.7	100
	2009	37.5	8.9	46.4	53.6	100
Country %	2002	7.5	17.0	24.5	75.	100
	2009	10.4	20.6	31.0	5 69	100

Figure SEQ Figure * ARABIC 3: District-level poverty rates 2002-2009

Corozal, the northernmost district of Belize, has a common border with Mexico and is predominantly Mestizo and Spanish-speaking. The main economic activities are cultivating sugarcane and the Corozal Free Zone (CFZ) on the border with Mexico. The most significant change between 2002 and 2009 has been in Corozal, where poverty has doubled, and indigence has almost tripled. Its poverty level approaches that of Toledo, whereas poverty in Toledo has fallen substantially, although it remains the poorest district in the country with the highest indigence level.

Poverty and indigence have also both increased substantially in Orange Walk and Cayo. Immediately to the south of Corozal, Orange Walk is based around a town of the same name. Its economy is also dominated by sugar cane. However, small scale agriculture prevails in the



western areas and potatoes, onions and soybeans are grown for sale. Orange Walk contains several Mayan cultural sites, and like Corozal, it is predominantly Mestizo and Spanish-speaking.

Assessing the poverty rates in Northern Belize, it is apparent that poverty is both currently prevalent and increasing. On average, the population in the region that live in poverty have increased by nearly 100%. This is also exacerbated by natural disasters and financial recessions, which push citizens already on the edge over into poverty.

District	Change, 2002-2009	Indigent	All Poor	Comment	Likely Reason(s)
Corozal: Rank in 2002: 2, Rank in 2009: 5 ***	Absolute*	10.7	26.2	Significant increase in poverty; poverty now almost as high as Toledo, although indigence much lower.	A decline in the sugar cane sector and some areas very severely affected by the 2008 floods and hurricane Dean in 2007 caused an estimated \$115 million of damages.
	Relative*	213%	132%		
Orange Walk (4,4)	Absolute	7.1	13.5	Sharp increase in indigence, 60% increase in poverty.	As in Corozal but to a lesser extent.
	Relative	165%	60%		
Belize (1,1)	Absolute	0.2	2.5	Little change in indigence but 14% increase in overall poverty; remains least poor district.	A sluggish economy whose impact was partly offset by the construction boom in San Pedro. Some villages badly affected by flooding. Less affected by problems in agriculture.

Of all disac Figure SEQ Figure * ARABIC 4: Poverty Rates in Northern Belize 2009

societal and cultural norm, determining actual Gender disaggregated data is difficult. Based on the information gathered by the CGA, the distribution of poverty rates between men and women appears to be similar, indicating that members within households and households with different household heads share a similar fate. However, this does not indicate the distribution of wealth, which could provide a deeper sign of gender inequality.

Poverty Rates by Gender, 2009

All Ages	Indigent	All Poor*	Not Poor	Total
	% of Age Group			
Male	17	42	58	100
Female	15	40	60	100
15 years and over				
Male	14	38	62	100
Female	12	36	64	100

* Including indigent.

Figure 5: Poverty Rates by Gender, 2009



The inequality in the distribution of wealth stems from the ability of women to become entrepreneurs and access the labour force (and all the resources required to succeed, such as access to finance). The CGA found that self-employment accounts for 30.6% of the country's total number of employed persons, with an estimated generation of over 70% of private-sector employment and income. Local economic and trade agencies suggest

that the MSME sector has yet to realize its full potential, with a failure rate as high as 80% among new entrants. While there are no nationwide sex-disaggregated statistics on MSMEs, anecdotal evidence points to male domination. Moreover, the CGA found gender differences in both the sectors of focus and growth among male- and female-owned MSMEs.

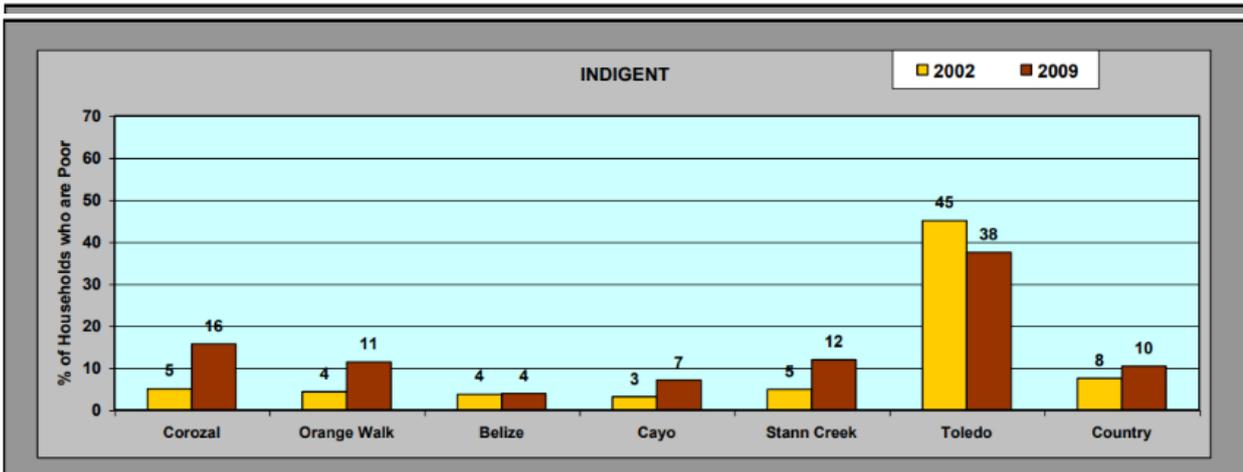
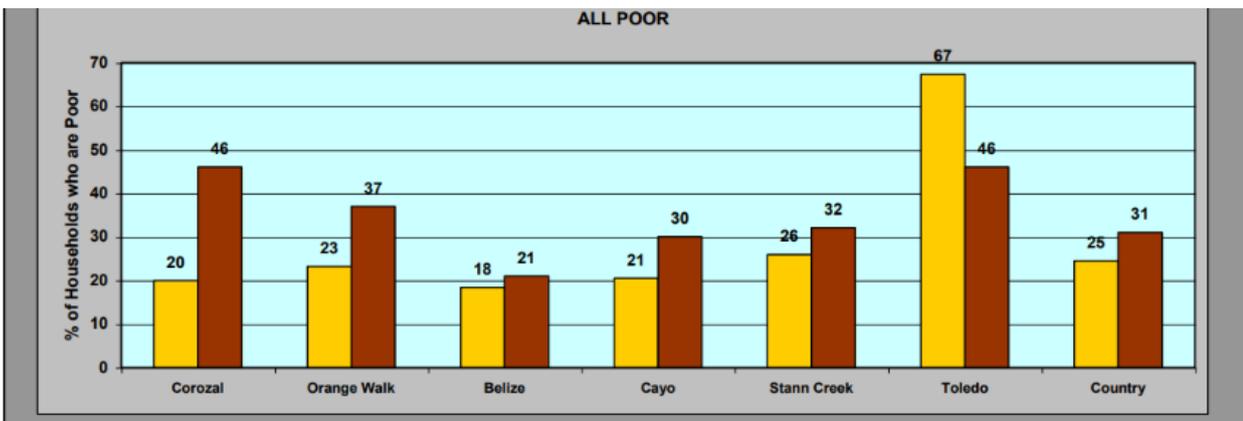


Figure SEQ Figure * ARABIC 6 Poverty at District Level





Country	Year	% Pop indigent	% pop poor*	Gini coeff.	Food as % of Poverty Line
Belize	2009	16	41	0.42	58%
Antigua	2005/6	4	19	0.48	39%
Dominica	2002	15	39	0.35	59%
St. Lucia	2005	2	29	0.42	31%
Trinidad & Tobago	2005	1	16	0.39	38%
Guatemala	2000	16	56	0.48	44%
Honduras	2006	24	51	0.46	51%
Mexico	2006	14	43	0.55	na

Figure SEQ Figure * ARABIC 7 Regional Comparisons of Poverty

Men and women also experience differential access to loans and credit. Many females led MSMEs to operate in the informal economy. Women are responsible for household money management and, in some instances, management of workers' payroll. While men are primarily responsible for income generation in the family, ensuring that all financial and social family needs are met is borne by women. Women are expected to save enough crop payments from carrying the family over until the next crop payment. This financial management does not include the acquisition of loans. This is seen as a male responsibility. The women interviewed reported that loan officers and lending institution staff are more amenable to lending to men. The Local Credit Union (La Inmaculada), one local Bank (The Belize Bank), and Development Finance Cooperation loan officers held interviews. All refute this claim. However, all believed that the women were not used to the bank's stringent demands (Central Bank of Belize enforced) to ascertain repayment capacity, nor were they privileged to see that men were treated equally in the interview process.

The CGA found that several institutions provide loans to women, and several micro-credit schemes support female-led enterprises. The Development Finance Corporation issued more micro-loans to women in 2009-2011, accounting for 52.5% of all micro-loans. However, it is critical to note that the loans issued to women were in production areas with significantly lower returns and were also issued for smaller monetary amounts. The figure shows the data shown to women in the agriculture industry, specifically, the sugar industry, from the Development Finance Corporation (DFC). Although women represent approximately 33% of the registered farmers, approx. 24% of the DFC loan portfolio consists of loans to women. On average, loan amounts to women are \$537.00 more than loans issued to men; however, it is critical to note that the loans issued to women were in production areas with significantly lower returns and were also issued for smaller monetary amounts. 2018-2021 has shown a change in the above grid where the Development Finance Corporation, credit unions and banks have sought to be



aggressive in its Gender mainstreaming strategy to the rising number of women in the Sugar Industry to ensure Fairtrade certification.

2018-2021	Total	Loan Amt	Acreage Replanting	Acreage Ratoon
Female	119	\$ 744,738.13	359.8	617.5
Male	375	\$2,145,749.01	1,013.95	1,797.10
Total	494	\$2,890,487.14	1,373.75	2,414.60

1.2. Industry Stakeholders and existing Gender programs

A short two years ago, there were only three female Harvest Group Leaders. Today the industry boasts twenty-one females, which is 700% growth in 2 years and is impressive though still low

Figure SEQ Figure * ARABIC 8 DFC loans provided 2018-2021

es. Our focus groups of the stakeholder consultations yielded much interest by women to be taken more seriously and become influential by taking on leadership positions. Interestingly in BSI/ASR, only 4% of the employees are female, with one female engineer and only two women in senior management.

This low level of gender equality presents a problem for growth in the sugar sector. Gender equality, a fundamental human right, is central to improving agricultural productivity and natural resource management and improving the lives of rural populations. Goals in these areas can be achieved only if they simultaneously work towards gender equality and support women's diverse agriculture and rural development roles. Gender equality is an essential means a basic human right.

FAIRTRADE

Fairtrade's vision is a world where all small producers and workers can enjoy secure and sustainable livelihoods, fulfil their potential, and decide on their future. Sustainable trade is fundamental to this approach. Fairtrade's 'Theory of Change' includes 'enhanced gender equity and inter-generational sustainability in rural communities as one of its six targeted impact objectives.

Fairtrade Standards are designed to prevent gender inequality, increase female participation and empower more women and girls to access the benefits of Fairtrade

Requirements for producer organizations include:

- No discrimination based on gender or marital status
- Zero tolerance of behaviour that is sexually intimidating, abusive or exploitative
- No testing for pregnancy when recruiting workers
- Programmes to support disadvantaged and minority groups, such as women
- Developing a gender policy, over time

Fairtrade is also working beyond the Standards to increase women's role in Fairtrade producer organizations and ensure they receive equal benefits.

- Producer networks are rolling out women's schools of leadership, enabling women to learn business, negotiation and finance skills. Many of these women go on to take on leadership and committee positions within their cooperatives and communities.
- Many Fairtrade Premium projects directly benefit women, enabling changes to decision making and governance structures in certified producer organizations and improving economic opportunities. For example, Nicaragua's Del Campo nut cooperative uses its Fairtrade Premium to support women's emerging businesses.



- Many producer organizations are undertaking gender analyses of their organizations and piloting new gender equality programmes, gender committees and policies.
- Through advocacy work and collaboration with trade unions and NGOs, we push for gender equality and interventions to enhance women's wellbeing and empowerment.

A new study from Fairtrade explores how women, in particular, have benefitted from Fairtrade certification, whether through standards that call for equal opportunities for them to participate in producer organizations, investments in women-focused projects, or programmes that train them to be leaders and entrepreneurs

- Access and inclusion: Significantly increase the active and equal participation of women in Fairtrade certified smallholder and hired labour organizations;
- Empowerment and Equity: Empower more women and girls with opportunities to access the benefits of Fairtrade equitably; and
- Gender transformative change: Address systemic issues that hamper the realization of greater gender equality in Fairtrade supply chains. (Analysis of the Impact of Fairtrade on gender-related aspects on producers, CIFOR, 2020)

The key findings from the study show that Fairtrade's gender approach is making a difference and identifies where more work is needed. Therefore, having the need to remain Fairtrade certified means Gender mainstreaming is already being discussed and applied in Belize's sugar industry, which means that the project can build on the practices that encourage gender mainstreaming in the industry.⁴

The Associations in the industry are all Fairtrade certified except for one working on certification. This means that they all prescribe to gender equity in their approaches and delivery. It is also important to note that 100 hectares is the indicator to define small farmers, the farmer with more than 100 hectares cannot benefit from Fairtrade, so it is important to keep plots and registrations below this level.

STAKEHOLDERS

The following presents the various direct stakeholders within the sugar industry, which include various stages of the value chain, including industry, research, sugar farmers (associations), and government bodies, which formed the scope of this study.

There are four farmer associations that the sugar cane farmers associate with for lobbying and advocacy and relationship building with all stakeholders. Of the total 5,002 registered farmers, 2,041 are women, and none hold executive seats within these sugar farmer associations

⁴ <https://www.fairtrade.net/news/new-fairtrade-study-highlights-successes-and-ways-forward-towards-gender-equality>

Association	Total Membership	Total Registered Females		Total Registered Males	
		#	% of Total	#	% of Total
BSCFA - CZL	1548	626	40.4%	922	59.6%
BSCFA - OW	1808	702	38.9%	1106	61.1%
CSCPA	619	241	38.9%	378	61.1%
NSCGA	402	162	40.3%	240	59.7%
PSCPA	625	252	40.3%	373	59.7%
TOTALS	5002	1983	39.6%	3019	60.4%

Figure 9: Distribution of female/male membership of sugar cane farmers associations. ⁵

The image below tags all female-owned or registered sugar cane farms in bright pink. This means that a little more than 40% of the sugarcane farms in northern Belize are registered as female. This data may be skewed as per registration practices that farmers engage in to extend revenue potential artificially. This, however, is a unique opportunity for women to challenge the status quo and be included in this industry's governance structures.

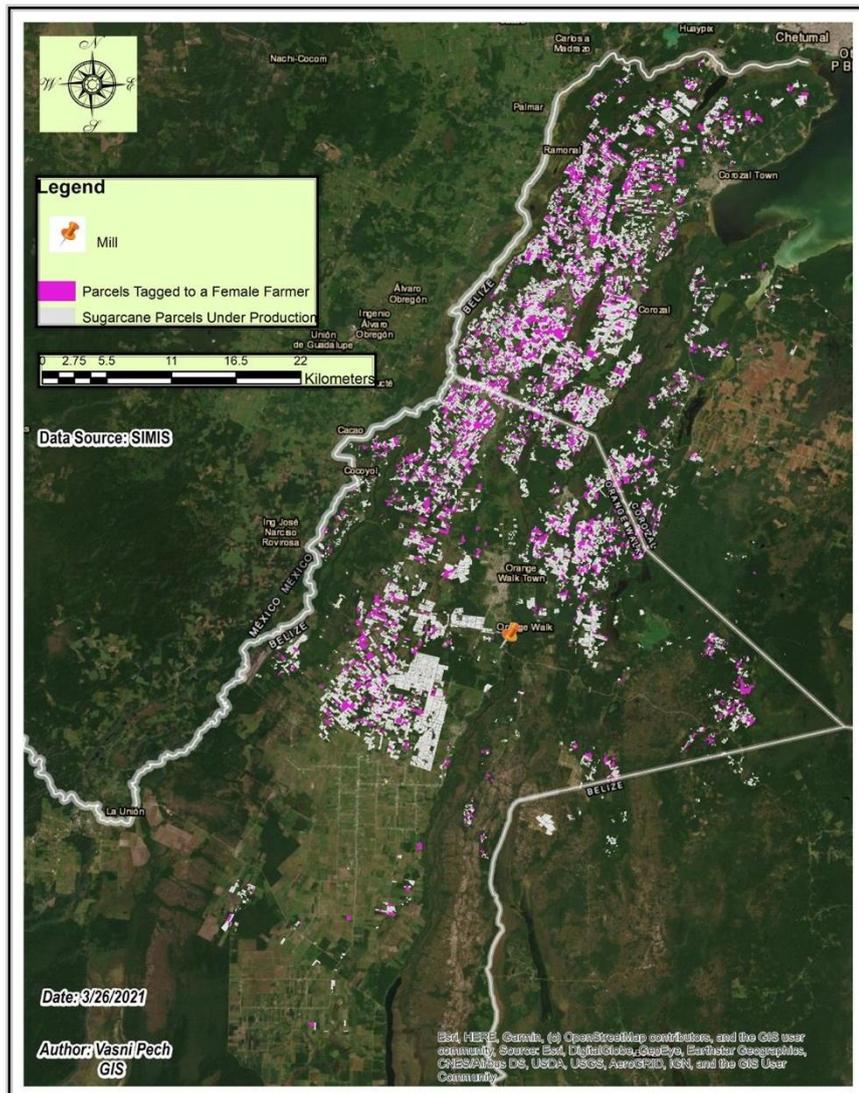


Figure 10: Geographic distribution of female owned farms

Belize Sugar Industries Limited (BSI)



BSI was founded in 1963 and has produced quality cane sugar products since 1967. Currently, it owns the only sugarcane mill in northern Belize and has an annual milling capacity of 1.3 million tons of sugarcane. BSI farms sugarcane and also receives cane from more than 5,000 independent Belizean

farmers. From these inputs, it produces white plantation sugar,

bulk (raw) brown sugar, standard demerara and molasses from sugarcane. It also generates renewable energy from sugarcane fibre, or bagasse, in its cogeneration plant, which powers the sugar-making operations and exports homegrown electricity to Belize's public power grid, generating approximately 15% of the nation's electricity demand.

This industry employs 690 persons; 660 are male, and 30 are female employees. Most of the females occupy administrative posts, with only two women in senior management positions; many of the women are submissive; this is a cultural issue of the north. BSI/ASR has seen growth in employment (skilled workforce) due to expanding the cogeneration plant.

BSI prides itself on being a sustainable and innovative company committed to growth, continuous improvement, its people, communities, and the environment in which it operates. BSI invests in social and community projects such as providing scholarships or assistance to schools and providing financial assistance for infrastructure improvements in villages and plantation projects. It receives good support from the Government of Belize via tariff waivers.

This enterprise, and the broader industry, support the livelihoods of approximately 20% of the population, with direct employment of more than 6,000 people and 40,000 people indirectly supported by the industry. The industry is one of the largest employers in the country and the only primary economic provider in the north of the country.

BSI/ASR has started a training program to empower and help these women to obtain skills, including self-confidence, public speaking, and accountability. Other subjects include financial management and understanding the sugar cane system and women empowerment etc.

Sugar Industry Research and Development Institute (SIRDI)

SIRDI manages the Sugar Industry Management Information System (SIMIS) and provides pesticide and varietal management at a lower cost to the industry.

SIRDI has 14 employees, 21%, or three are females and eleven or 79% males. The head of the department of the extension unit is a female who also plays the interim director's role. The other two females are accounts and admin.



Mission: To contribute to the development of a sugar cane industry that is an efficient, globally competitive and sustainable sugar cane industry, in alliance with its strategic partners.

Vision: Consolidate SIRDI as a centre for innovation and technology transfer for a competitive and sustainable sugar cane industry in alliance with its strategic partners.

SIRDI's Farmer field school program has female participation when the male finds he is unwilling or unable to attend, in which case, he would send his wife to do the training. The efficacy of this method of knowledge transfer needs to be determined from wife to husband, but women are being empowered by attending. SIRDI's Farmer Field School program supports all genders and youth.

Sugar Industry Control Board (SICB)

The SICB was formed under the Sugar Industry Act (Rev. 2003), which is responsible for macro-industry matters, including advising the requisite Minister on granting licences to manufacturers, exporters and importers, and the control of sales and prices for sugar and sugar derivatives.

Mission: Guarantee the continuous development in the quality of the cane and the delivery through effective implementations to improve the industry.

Women are not represented with this organization other than at the secretarial and janitorial levels.

Sugar Cane Production Committee (SCPC)

The SCPC was formed under the Sugar Industry Act (Rev. 2003) as an autonomous Committee with the general objective of implementing a deregulated system of cane production as the principal entity responsible for all aspects relating to the estimation of sugar cane production, harvesting and delivery, including responsibility for sugar cane field officers whom the SCPC may employ.

Women are not represented with this organization other than at the secretarial and janitorial levels.

Belize Sugar Cane Farmers Association (BSCFA)

This organization currently hires forty-two team members, 27 men and 16 women. Women are not represented with this organization other than at the secretarial and janitorial levels. However, it is interesting to note that when the Executive Director is out of office, his next in line is a female who holds over the office. He currently takes up to 3 months leave to ensure that the individual has the time to assimilate the responsibility and the respect of the all-male board.

Mission: To serve, promote and protect the interest of all its members transparently, representing and negotiating on their behalf, working in unison to improve the quality, quantity and efficiency of sugar cane production, processing, and marketing.

Vision: To uphold the Sugar Industry as one of the pillars of Belize's economy by responding to changes in the market and new technologies, united as one entity to gain control of production, united as one marketing, and to provide better services to its members and represent them efficiently and effectively.

Over the past year and a half. The association has met its Fairtrade social obligations by providing women in the industry with medical screenings and launched a sewing program for masks production to mitigate the impacts of the pandemic and create alternate livelihoods during this challenging period.



Progressive Sugar Cane Producers Association (PSCPA)

The staff is made up of four women and five men. Women are represented within this organization as managers of projects and the environment; others are at the secretarial and janitorial levels.

Mission: The Progressive Sugar Cane Producers Association encourages the production of high-quality sugarcane to increase yields with a view of ensuring optimum returns in investment and categorically commits itself to work always for the best of its members and the country of Belize.



Vision: The Progressive Sugar Cane Producers Association, through its members, encourages the increase of production through dedication and commitment by implementing best agronomic practices through environmental, systematic and sustainable methods; promoting the involvement of its memberships through transparency, accountability and honesty in its administration procuring the welfare and economic growth for the industry's stakeholders.

Financial Literacy programming has been rolled out for young mothers. 10 % of the thirty attendees were single mothers. New programs will be rolled out this year into 2022.

Corozal Sugar Cane Producers Association (CSCPA)

Women are not represented within this organization other than at the secretarial and janitorial levels. However, plans are underway to correct this at the board and staff level, where currently, three men and two women cover the office.



Mission: CSCPA is dedicated to contributing to the development and continuity of socio-economic sustainability and wellbeing of small-scale cane farmers and their families.

Vision: A prosperous and sustainable future for members, their families and their communities in continuously thriving rural areas of Northern Belize by means of systematically supporting the maximization of members' agricultural productive systems.

Under its Fairtrade commitment, this association has been implementing a Nursery fruit tree program and making plans to roll out a sewing training and toolkit for women to prepare sleeves for cane cutters in the field.

Northern Sugar Cane Growers Association (NSCGA)



Women are not represented within this organization other than at the secretarial and janitorial levels. No organizational tenets or online presence exists at this juncture as it is a new organization working on getting off the ground and attaining its Fairtrade certification.

They are currently crafting their economic and social plan for submission and subsequent approval, including an assertive gender and youth inclusion strategy with innovative concepts.

COVID-19 in Belize

COVID-19 has also hit the region and farming community in Belize hard with eight male farmers who ran the sugar cane business that has lost their lives. The reality of a wife taking over responsibility without having ever seen the plantation is real. This has created an understanding of the need for information sharing across sexes to prepare families for the inevitable.



Women have been seeking alternate livelihoods such as sewing masks, fruit and vegetable vending, amongst other wholesaling and retailing of goods. They have also had to assist children with home-schooling since schools have been closed since April of 2020 to present via virtual or distance learning methodology set up by the Ministry of Education. Only one lockdown has affected this region's residential movement to other parts of the country as commerce has continued.

The positive side of COVID has been the ability for farmers to bond with their children through technology. The children have actively trained their families to set up and use virtual connections for meetings within the industry. This now means that the associations can hold meetings with most of their membership rather than the few who show up at the physical meetings. This cuts costs and creates greater inclusion and transparency in the associations when utilized. Oscar Alonzo, the Executive Director of BCSFA, says that "it has been transformative".

Gender Insights/Response

This assessment includes socio-economic participation, needs, and opportunities that this project could directly impact women's lives, men and non-binary populations in the sugarcane farming sector, specifically, farmers. The project must include a strategy to ensure that any technical and institutional changes to the sugarcane production landscape include elements of gender consideration. This means that these changes, where possible, begin to address any structural impediments women may find to their full participation in the sugar value chain. In this regard, a significant amount of work has been done in Belize with Fairtrade and many different Fairtrade and initiatives led by BSI and the farmers' associations, as noted in Section 3. This has led to a greater understanding and mitigation of structural barriers women face in the industry.

Many insights have been identified based on the country, population, and industry context described in Section 3. These insights are described within the theme of insights for development and insights based on the structured surveys.

- **Development Insights**

Critical development issues concerning gender constraints were identified through research and stakeholder engagements and verified through the assessment of the survey. These issues are categorized into five categories of insights: Financial insights, Gender role insights, Asset ownership insights, policy insights, and crosscutting insights. These categories and their specific

insights, which is based on the context identified through the research methodology, are described below:

Financial Insights

1. **Access to productive resources and finances for replanting**, especially land and agricultural inputs, such as mechanical equipment, fertilizer and credit, is primarily gender balanced even though the perception of the female farmers is different, the reality is that the difficulty in attaining finances is the same for men and women once they can provide the collateral to bolster the loan. However;
2. **Women cannot use their farms as collateral** since land is not typically assigned in the female's name. They work the land and are viewed as the owner per the sugar quota and registry; however, the Ministry of Natural Resources lists the landowner as the father, husband, or brother.
3. **Little consideration** of the potential of vulnerable farmers; Farmers harvesting below two thousand tons may not have the ability to scale up or prepare their land for mechanical harvesting capability, while large farmers with over 100 hectares planted cannot benefit from Fairtrade. **Education and information sharing could help shift this situation.**

Gender Role Insights

1. **Inadequate integration of Gender** into agricultural policies and programs within the sugar industry. The educational system may be an area to turn this around where boys and girls are exposed to opportunities in agriculture how they can fit in, and how different fields tie in.
2. **Inadequate gender mainstreaming** in sector decision-making at all levels; It is vital for a conscientious effort be made to change the mindset of men who see women only in cultural roles.
3. **Inadequate gender-sensitive research and extension linkages**; It is important that linkages not only be in traditional and cultural outreach such as sewing but instead efforts that show equity. Gender inequalities remain socially accepted and tolerated. This is particularly so in rural areas, where gender inequalities are more entrenched, thereby posing a challenge for implementing laws and policies on gender equality.
4. **Social mobilization and association** as forms of empowerment are limited in many rural areas. In the context of the perceived lower socio-cultural status of women, mixed associations tend to reduce women's voice and participation, this was observed during the stakeholder engagements as the women held back and did not express themselves in the presence of men. Once the men left the meeting there was full on participation. This is because they are often not allowed to express themselves in the presence of men, who regard them as 'wives rather than as individuals. There are four Sugar Cane Farmers Associations, and there are no women on their boards. There are only twenty-one women Harvest Group Leaders of the 274 that exists. This is 7.6%. As expressed in focus group sessions, women are interested in being placed

in more senior positions to help them further understand the industry and not only be forced to take over when a spouse passes. Some women want to step forward, while others outrightly say that they know where they belong, which is in the home.

It is important to note that women being nominated for or volunteering for leadership positions were not discovered throughout the various stakeholder engagements. The cultural norm of men as leaders appears to prevail despite desires for more equality. It is also important to note that most organizations see supporting their women as keeping them within cultural norms with sewing projects and home economic classes. Additionally, the industry has implemented various training initiatives to help inform the farmers; however, when the male farmer is unable to attend, he delegates that his spouse or daughter attends on his behalf. In many instances, the efficacy of knowledge transfer from female to male is yet to be determined.

5. **Women are over-represented in** informal employment, unpaid work in family farming and domestic and reproductive activities. This is mainly because:

- o Services for children's care is lacking in rural areas, resulting in increased women's domestic workload and reinforcing the gender-based stereotype of reproductive activities as purely women's roles.
- o In family farming, there is a rigid gender-based distribution of tasks. Male gender roles are associated with tasks that involve control over agricultural assets, mobility and decision-making.
- o Female gender roles are associated with banking/administrative duties and household tasks and other men's tasks as mundane such as attending Farmer field school training to add numbers and show interest when husbands cannot attend, driving is another gender role that limits their movements.

Access and Inclusion during this project will respond to this barrier by providing knowledge sharing that men, women and youth can benefit from, such as driving access.

Asset Ownership Insights

1. **Distributions of labour** have resulted in women's limited access to control over agricultural assets and decision-making. Many are forced to learn when the spouse's untimely death occurs with no male to take over the role or explain the process. Many women do not know where these agricultural



plots are located and have never seen them.

2. A rule of FAIRTRADE is to have a gender-inclusive approach, and all associations have created appropriate culture programs for the incorporation of women, such as sewing programs to create alternate livelihoods.
3. **Poor gender coordination** among key agricultural sector ministries, departments and agencies; This requires further outreach by associations and inclusion in a project such as this one.
4. There is a significant **gap between the perception and reality of** gender inequalities in rural communities and among policy and programme implementers. This poses a challenge to effectively addressing gender inequalities in Belize and, most importantly, in the Sugar Belt.
5. The critical challenge is **limited budgetary support from the Government**. This forces efforts to rely substantially on donor funds to implement unsustainable programmes and limit the capacity of these SDGs to gender priority/responsive programming and budgeting. There is, therefore, a need for more significant resources from the national budget for Gender mainstreaming.
6. Despite the above insights on the challenges that exist, verbalized political commitment addresses and incorporated women and men's social and economic issues into policies and programmes. However, most of the **pledges made by political leadership continue to be at the policy level**. To date, few of these have been effectively translated into real action on the ground. There continues to be a disconnect between policy conception and formulation on the one hand and implementation on the other.

Crosscutting Insights

1. Belize and Belizeans need to view gender and climate as an interlinked/crosscutting issue. SDG's will not be met if Belize does not integrate in all policy and decision making the role that climate plays in mental health and wellness, ageing, obesity, technology absorption, gender-based violence, crime and use and ultimately efficiency and productivity on the sugarcane farms.
2. Inadequate levels of infrastructure and technology in rural households directly impact women's unpaid workload because domestic and reproductive activities are linked to female gender roles. Rural women invest significantly more time than those in urban areas. Rural women also engage in more domestic and reproductive labour than rural men. This reduces women's economic and educational opportunities.
3. **Women have unsatisfactory access to technical knowledge** on agriculture due to numerous barriers to accessing information and benefiting from extension services and training. Some of the factors responsible for these, which require special attention, are:
 - o *Male-dominated communication channels* control the flow of information, failing to reach and mobilize women farmers.
 - o *Women's low self-confidence* in areas and roles outside socially stereotyped gender roles.
 - o Women in rural areas have *limited access to means of transportation*, often

depending on male family members. Driving skills is a simple need identified.

- o Focus groups held with 50 women from 4 associations across Corozal and Orange Walk yielded *hunger for knowledge and apparent ignorance* of its existence. Both sessions held were oversubscribed, which is diametrically opposing in attendance for events held for male counterparts.

Education and Information sharing can address this area in terms of the use of technology education and use of technology for information dissemination, amongst other skills.

- **Survey Insights**

Based on the research methodology, the following significant insights were gleaned from the administered structured interview (See Annex 4). These insights corroborate previous findings in focus group sessions and desk research while showing clear gender roles in typical Belizean sugarcane growing families and sheds light on structural impediments to the full engagement of women in the industry, which need to be considered in developing the agricultural development strategy.

1. **Heads of Household:** There is no significant structural disparity between males and females as heads of households at a household level. 50% of survey respondents reported joint heads of households, with 32% reporting male-headed households and 18% female-headed households. This shows that 68% of all households' females are in decision making positions in household decisions.
2. **Women's Participation in Sugarcane Field Activities:** Very few (5%) women work and control sugarcane field activities. 17% of women work and control field operations in conjunction with men of their respective households. In comparison, 77% of women are not involved with field operations, this is despite relatively high rates of female registered farmers. This lack of involvement is, in some instances, through choice but in other instances is because female members have other household duties or other employment activities, including entrepreneurship (mask-making, sewing etc.). If these women could drive, they could play a more active role.
3. **Women's Participation in Business Activities:** According to the results of the survey, 62.5% of Female members of the household are engaged with administrative and business aspects of the business either alone or with other male members of the household, while 77.5% of Female members of the household perceive their knowledge of the business of sugarcane farming to be equal or more than male members of the household.
4. **Women's Engagement in Farmers Associations:** While 55% of females reported that they had some engagement with farmers associations, they also reported that there were some structural impediments to total engagements such as time and place of meetings clashing with household and childcare duties as well as the reception by men who did not engage when women were in the room. COVID-19 has now opened up the ability to participate virtually should the associations take up this mode of meeting fully, which would mean greater inclusion by women while they satisfy household duties and physical accessibility constraints.

Vulnerable Groups Insights/Response

Youth

Youth voices were key in this analysis. Initial stakeholder engagement exercises revealed that youth in the project footprint area were largely averse to joining family businesses in continuing in the sugar industry. Additionally, the assessors were interested in crossing the views of youth and adults to determine whether the perceptions of gender equality varied based on age and experience of the respondents. It was therefore imperative to hear directly from the youth and the barriers for continuing in the industry and to cross whether these barriers were differentiated by gender. Full findings of focus group sessions held with male and female youth are placed in Annex 6 of this Analysis report.

Generally, youth posited that farmers/owners do not operate unilaterally but as true family businesses with each member of the family including women, taking on different responsibilities and even incorporated in decision-making. The level of involvement in decision-making and financial matters of wives of cane farmers seem to vary across families with some very involved and some not as much. Children seem to be introduced to certain aspects of the business from an early age regardless of gender e.g., girls and boys are taken to the fields.

Ownership succession may be dependent on the individual families but culturally matriarchs are known to be well respected and would inherit if their husband passes. She may determine her level of involvement in the industry or relegate responsibility to one or more of her children. Traditionally, there seems to be a preference for males to inherit although these young males indicated that they have no expectation to inherit over their female siblings (where they have female siblings) but rather believe the decision would be made based on who exhibit more interest in the business. Their perception is that male children/siblings are more interested than female siblings, but this may be biased to only the field work aspect.

Similarly, discussions with youth in the industry revealed that fathers may discourage their daughters from joining the industry, not because of misogyny, but because they do not want their daughters to participate in laborious work linked to degenerative illnesses and an industry with diminishing profitability. Participants largely acknowledged that while the industry can be seen as a place of enabling machismo, at their own individual level, the discouragement from participating in the industry is largely due to their parents wanting a 'better' life for them. The manual labour associated with the industry coupled with the diminishing financial gains is seen as a disincentive and parents would encourage their children to take up more stable, formal employment consistent with their higher levels of education.

The seemingly dichotomous relationship between educational level and participation in the industry was further unpacked in conversation with youth. While it is agreed that many in the industry believe that once their children are educated, that they should seek formal employment, Participants were largely of the view that educated youth can transform the industry and add value to their family businesses by contributing their scientific and business management formal training. Participants demonstrated how being trained chemists and natural resource managers have added value to the work of their immediate family businesses.

The Sugar business is predominantly thought of in terms of physical work in the fields. The Business management side of the industry does not come to the fore. Participants spoke of the industry as primarily agricultural work. Therefore, when asked of women's participation in the

industry, the default response would validate the assumption of a male dominated industry. However, when the sugar business is unpacked, it reveals differentiated roles for males and females. Important to note, however, is that the face of the industry is male dominated because of men's physical presence in the field and male dominance in association leadership. This finding is reflective of the views of both male and female youth.

Ultimately, the industry presents opportunities for female and male youth, in varying capacities. Discussions with youth have verified segmentation of work, however higher levels of education of women in the project footprint area, encouragement at individual household levels for female youth's participation in decision making in the industry, as well as in continuing female ownership of quotas, provide opportunities to be transformative in breaking down barriers for women in non-traditional spaces within the industry.

Children

While children are taken to the field at an early age to be introduced to the family business, it is important to note that Belize Law and Policy restricts children below the age of 14 to work. Agricultural industries have been traditionally known as violators of this prohibition⁵. According to the US Department of Labour, 24.6% of children (5-14) work in the agriculture sector as a whole. Further disaggregation by crop type is unknown. A 2003 ILO Child Activity Survey found that 2.1 boys were engaged for each girl (the sex composition reflects the employed labour force) in child labour. Belize has not done a similar survey since 2010 and therefore makes it difficult to clearly determine the sectors and activities in which working children are engaged⁶.

As early as 2015 however, Sugarcane Farming Associations and their farmers have been making efforts to ensure that child labour is not present on farms. This followed a 2014 social audit of the Fairtrade-certified Belize Sugar Cane Farmers Association (BSCFA). According to fairtrade, the social audit found two children working on farms and not attending school⁷. While Belize sets a general minimum employment age of 14, fairtrade sets the minimum age at 15. Fairtrade standards prohibit work that interferes with schooling for those under 15 and consider it child labour, even when a country's law permits it⁸.

The audit findings resulted in a six-month suspension from Fairtrade for BSCFA, therefore it limited how much sugar the association could sell to Fairtrade buyers. The Association also had to put corrective measures in place⁹

The sanctions resulted in intensive and targeted training by Fairtrade International and UNICEF. The ultimate risk to business also meant that this ultimately uses Fairtrade premiums to implement two types of child labour monitoring systems: One for farm operations (member-based), the other for entire communities (area based). The Association's Executive Director identified that the internal controls and systems, as well as a whole of community approach is used for monitoring and effectively targeting cases of child labour¹⁰. *Youth monitors are also a critical strategy used to limit child labour.*

The Labour Department in Belize has the target to completely eliminate child labour in Belize

⁵ <https://edition.channel5belize.com/archives/248696> : accessed July 3, 2023

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ <https://www.fairtrade.net/issue/remediating-child-labour>, accessed July 3, 2023

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ <https://edition.channel5belize.com/archives/123778>, : accessed July 3, 2023



by 2025. Along with actions to achieve this target are training and sessions with rural communities and farming associations. Additionally, in 2022, the Department launched the Belize National Child Labour Policy and Strategy, 2022-2025. This policy calls for a child labour case management system through the development of relevant inter-ministerial protocols and the addition of a Child Labour module to the FAMCare database management systems "Such a module, coupled with BPD, Labour Department, *Immigration and Education Support Services data access will offer data in support of the coordination of child labour identification; the removal of children from child labour; remediation; and reintegration of former child labourers. The system could be further tailored to account for the child labour violations encountered in agriculture, specifically sugarcane*"¹¹.

Associations and larger scale farmers are obliged to adhere to restrictions or face legal and fairtrade related sanctions. There is recognition that there may still be violations on smaller farms who go under the radar. This is because the Northern districts still report high rates of children who are not in school compared to Central Belize. The Labour Policy identifies as part of the Most Hazardous work list.

The Child Labour and Forced Labour Report of 2021 by the US Department of Labour identified that

Government officials stated that there are anecdotal reports of Belize being a destination for child sexual exploitation, with reports of children being trafficked in areas frequented by tourists or seasonal workers, such as San Pedro, Punta Gorda, and Belize City. There have also been instances of the "sugar daddy" phenomenon, in which a wealthy male offers to pay school fees, provide cash payments, or purchase groceries or gifts for a family in exchange for sexual favours from a young, usually female, family member. Girls from impoverished communities and LGBTQI+ children are particularly vulnerable to commercial sexual exploitation and labour trafficking in Belize.

There has not been documentation on commercial or child sexual exploitation of children within the sugar industry.

¹¹ The Government of Belize, 2022, National Child Labour Policy and Strategy, 2022-2025



Sector and/or subsector	Task	Mitigate (16 - 17 years)	Mitigation requirements
Agriculture (continued)	Piling off truck	Yes	Weight limitations on chart must be followed
	Mechanical loading	No	-
	Transportation of seeds, cane, etc. on a truck	No	-
	Alignment of rows manually	Yes	Must have protective gear
	Alignment of rows with tractor	No	-
	Open fire path	No	-
	Milling and mill process activities	No	-
	Processing	No	-
	Traveling to and from farms in tractor trailers	No	-
	Consumption of alcohol	No	-
	Manual weeding	Yes	Must have protective gear
	Use of ladders	Yes	Limiting to a certain height
	Budding knives citrus sector is being removed because budding knives are used in other sectors such as the sugar sector.	Yes	With supervision and protective gear
	Shears citrus sector is being removed because shears are used in other sectors.	Yes	With supervision and protective gear
	Cutting of cane (Sugar)	Yes	Must have vocational training
Cutting of seed (Sugar)	Yes	Must have vocational training	
Use of de-leaving knife (Banana)	No	-	
Use of cacao knife (Cacao)	No	-	

Figure 11: Most Hazardous Work List- Agriculture Sector- Extracted from the National Child Labour Policy and Strategy 2022-2025

Migrants:

There is marginal participation of migrants in Belize's Northern Sugar industry. The 2010 Census highlighted that "in countries like Belize where border control poses a major challenge, it is extremely difficult to collect information on the number and characteristics of immigrants"¹². Therefore, the census data on the foreign-born population provides the closest approximation

¹² http://sib.org.bz/wp-content/uploads/2010_Census_Report.pdf date accessed: August 1, 2023



of the immigration situation, although irregular migrants may elude census capture¹³. While data on labour migration in Belize is hard to come by, consultations with the BSI/ASR and SIRDII have revealed that the cost of having legal labour migrants work in the industry is prohibitive. Therefore, in the past decade, the participation of migrants in the sugar industry in Northern Belize has been minimal. In the past, migrants were predominantly hired as cane cutters to perform laborious work that the local population did not want to undertake. The social inclusion challenges that come with labour migration for low paying jobs is therefore not considered a factor of consequence in the Northern sugar industry and ultimately for this project. According to the 2010 Census, the Corozal district continued to have the smallest proportion of migrants national (7.3%). The Orange Walk district had the second lowest migrant population at 10.8%. This provides support to the position that this productive sector in the north does not attract migrant labour. Notable in both districts, the proportion of migrant population fell by 0.65% in Corozal District and by 2.6% in Orange Walk District from the 2000 census.

¹³ *Ibid.*

Barriers and Opportunities

The insights mentioned in Section 4 provide a detailed description of the realities in Belize in terms of the gender inequalities and lack of gender mainstreaming at all levels. The insights also indicate that there are ongoing initiatives and programs to combat the gender inequality that exists. Therefore, it is critical to make a conscious effort to include Gender into the project's design to support these initiatives and drive towards an equal society.

The project will face many societal, economic, and political barriers when implementing gender equality in the project components. These barriers for gender equality are defined as:

1. Entrance to farming market

- o Access to land and collateral for finance requires a mindset shift that this project can help influence but does not have the programmatic capacity to change.

2. Social norms

- o Participation in farming activities – a simple solution is the attainment of a driver's license to provide equity of movement.
- o Cultural roles of women in the north – this has to shift, and Fairtrade and the sugar industry may need to expect more than what is currently being seen as empowerment through further enforcement of roles.
- o Job opportunities for women – the education system must respond to this and especially in the rural schools.
- o With more educated female youth in fields that can benefit the industry the opportunities for women involvement in non-traditional spaces can be harnessed.

3. Policy

- o A gender policy in place by the Government utilizing a cross-cutting approach can help bolster the shifts needed.
- o The Associations may also implement policies to ensure governance policies take gender equity under consideration.
- o They may also use the virtual space to ensure greater attendance at meetings and information sharing events by men, women, and youth.
- o Gender needs to form a key pillar of the sugar transformation needed to address the impact of climate change.

4. Cane farming is not seen as lucrative to the youth – Youths are focusing on education and other jobs, and there is the need to move to Mechanical Harvesting as Cane cutters are an ageing and dying group. Due to COVID-19, hiring immigrants has been near impossible to fill the gaps. It is however important to continue the dialogue with youth in the industry and to benefit from their formal

training to improve the functioning of the industry.

Despite efforts by aid agencies to reduce gender inequalities in the past three decades, gaps remain between legislation and implementation. The connection between gender and rural development strategies needs to be improved.

It is important to note that assistance to the sugar industry was available, via the Government of Belize (GOB) through the European Union's (EU's) funding of the Sugar Adaptation Strategy Project, which had four components:

1. Research and development,
2. Improving competitiveness through increase efficiency,
3. Road improvements, and
4. Irrigation and drainage

This funding was, in part, to provide financial support to the industry to assist in the sustainable transition away from Belize's Sugar Industry's preferential tariff quotas, which, to date, are now expired.

These additional financial constraints and government red tape (government interference) are significant constraints to the industry's growth, as is the poor standard of many feeder roads leading from main highways and roads to farmland. The first two associations listed, namely the Belize Sugar Cane Farmers Association (BSCFA) and the Progressive Sugar Cane Producers Association (PSCPA), are carried out using the Fairtrade Fund. However, their primary funding sources are commercial banks, credit unions, and the selling of sugar.

- o Lack of implementation of policies
- o Lack of seeing it as crosscutting

On the contrary, this is also a fantastic opportunity that must be embraced at this juncture as we work towards gender parity and the Sustainable Development goals in reducing poverty. These opportunities, based on the insights, are:

1. Women in leadership
 - o Mixed associations of women and men can provide an excellent opportunity for men to redefine their preconceptions of women, enabling them to see women as colleagues and bearers of knowledge while also strengthening cooperation and coordination between women and men. Hiring women at senior levels in the organization can add to the dynamic, especially since the women are more educated in most instances.
2. Gender in education
 - o Women are being exposed to new occupations through the education system to prepare them for meaningful employment opportunities. This is needs to be increased, predominantly in the project footprint are.
3. Policy and wholistic inclusivity
 - o Contribute to sector-wide gender policy change for equality and a helping to fight poverty in the region.



- o Ensure women are included in project activities and targets to ensure wholistic inclusivity, a gender-equal approach and equal benefit sharing. The inclusivity of women will unlock additional potential and additional growth opportunities in the project area.

Gender Inputs for successful Project Implementation

It has been shown that equality between men/boys and women/girls has long-term socio-economic and developmental consequences and is essential in the fight against poverty, economic growth, and sustainable development. Ensuring that gender equality issues are fully considered in development policymaking, planning, and programming decisions, both at the national and project level, must address the different ways in which political, economic, and social issues affect men and women and ensure that the needs of both are considered and addressed.

The actions suggested in the GAP have been designed and formulated to overcome the barriers mentioned in Section 5 and will aim to unlock the opportunities that exist both for women and for the project. Additionally, the actions have been formulated to consider the policy measure that has been identified to alleviate gender inequality. To address the barriers and seize opportunities, the GAP actions have to:

- Address gender and youth inequalities that emerge from the project/program.
- Ensure the differential needs of women and men are addressed.
- Ensure women and men have equal access to resources, services, and capacity development.
- Ensure equal participation of women and men in management arrangements and as beneficiaries, partners, and key stakeholders.
- Moreover, ensure women's equal participation in decision-making processes.

To ensure this, the following policy priorities should be considered at all levels of project implementation:

POLICY PRIORITIES	✓ AREAS FOR SPECIAL ATTENTION
WEALTH AND EMPLOYMENT GENERATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Eliminating discrimination against female and male workers, including workers in the informal/agricultural sector ✓ Creating gender equity in labour force participation and employment ✓ Increasing women's access to land titles, credit, and business development ✓ Expanding social safety nets for vulnerable women, men and children ✓ Creating gender equity in child maintenance provisions ✓ Mainstreaming Gender into disaster management programmes ✓ Including youth for continuity of the industry
GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE, CRIME AND SOCIAL JUSTICE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Establishing family support systems that transform gender relations, expand and strengthen child protection programmes ✓ Creating psycho-social support mechanisms and resources for survivors of gender-based violence ✓ Building institutional capacity to address gender-based violence, crime, and social justice



POWER AND DECISION- MAKING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Training women on their rights and self-esteem ✓ Training them on understanding the sugar business ✓ Increasing women's representation in decision-making positions ✓ Build institutional capacity for gender mainstreaming in all relevant policies, strategies and plans of action. ✓ Implementing gender-responsive budgeting, access to the public sector and civil society organizations, emphasizing the Cane Farmers Associations. ✓ Showing girls in the education systems the value they can play in the industry. (Agronomy etc.)
----------------------------------	--

The four specific actions identified in the GAP are organised around the following four spheres of work:

1. Policy
2. Organizational
3. Constituency
4. Delivery

Specific actions are defined below based on these strategic spheres; they are explained further in annex 6. These actions should be incorporated into the project design to ensure that a gender-centric approach is taken in the project implementation and that the project helps address the existing inequalities.

1.3. Policy Actions

1. Make gender a strategic priority.

BSI/ASR needs to play its role in the education system, hiring practices, and daily operations to promote gender mainstreaming and gender equity. This must be prioritized in their procedures and brand and not only as an afterthought.

1.4. Organizational Actions

1. Provide adequate support to the Sugar Associations on gender issues.
2. Provide KPI's for the equitable distribution for integrating gender in the implementation of the project.

Mass education is required to dismantle the gender stereotypes that negatively affect Gender mainstreaming efforts. Since this is also a cultural reality, the education system must endeavour to educate boys and girls on their rights, roles and equity that needs to become a part of Belize's Sugar Cane Farming Industry and, ultimately, its education system.

Mindsets are shifting in the northern districts and especially the sugar cane industry due to Fairtrade. The project can capitalize on this by placing gender at the forefront of national initiatives, especially with regards to issues of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (SEAH) prohibitions which are necessary to ensure the project's gender and social safeguard response.

1.5. Constituency Actions

1. Build partnerships; ensure consistency beyond this project.
2. Benefit from lessons learned and good practices.

Ensure that this is not only a part of the project but becomes programmatic by including the Ministry of Women and Indigenous Affairs to gain traction in achieving SDG's and incorporated them into a national strategy.

1.6. Delivery Actions

1. Ensure full participation of both women and men in the project implementation.
2. Consider the different needs of women and men in designing and undertaking actions to deliver the project components.

Ensuring that the project is explained to women and men and that the terms of its implementation be made transparent to the public.

A gender-sensitive outreach and capacity building plan to ensure that women, youth, and other sub-groups are engaged and have equitable access to the resources and opportunities attributed to this project are critical. This can only be ascertained inbuilt into the parameters of this project with the specific actions that will be measured by key performance indicators, which are built into the log frame of the M&E framework focussing on **ACCESS/INCLUSION EDUCATION/INFORMATION SHARING and GOOD GOVERNANCE.**



Gender Action Plan

Table 1: Gender Action Plan

Activities	Indicators and Targets	Timeline	Responsibilities	Costs
Impact Statement: Increased resilience of vulnerable farmers, including female and young farmers, to the impacts of Climate Change in the sugar cane industry in Northern Belize.				
Outcome Statement: Female and male farmers in Northern Belize have enhanced personal and institutional capacity to utilize climate smart sugar care farming techniques, inputs, and practices.				
Output 1: Female farmers and young farmers benefit from improved crop diversity and farming practices				
Activity 1.1.1 Ensure participation of women in Seed cane variety working group	- % Of female participants on Working group (20%)	Year 2	PMU, BSI, SIRD I	Reflected as part of project budget.
Activity 1.1.2 Ensure representation of female and young farmers in seed varieties training programme.	- % Of farmers female farmers trained on new varieties (35%) : - % Of young farmers trained on (10%)	Year 3	PMU, BSI, SIRD I	\$ 145 000,00 (reflected as part of project budget)
Activity 1.2.2 Include young people in seed cane nursery management and for new nursery training of seed cane nursery collaborators	% youth included in seed cane nursey management programme (20%)	Year 3	PMU, SIRD I	No Additional Costs envisioned. Cost included in training line.



Activity 1.3.2 Identify and train suitable male and female contractors on business practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - # Of local entrepreneurs trained on business practices (200): - % Female contractors trained on business practices (35%) 	Year 3	PMU	\$ 63 500,00 (Cost included in training line).
Activity 1.3.4 Train female farmers on Climate Smart Agriculture for replanting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - % Of female contractors trained on CSA practices (35%) 	Year 3	PMU	\$ 63 500,00 (Cost included in training line).
Activity 1.3.5 Ensure that selection of farms Replanting of fields include vulnerable farmers, including females and youth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - % Of acres of land replanted to climate adapted technology owned by female farmers (20%) 	Year 5	PMU, Farmer Associations	Cost subsumed in project activity.
Output 2: Vulnerable farmers including, women and youth, with increased capacity that allows them to use sustainable water and land management techniques.				
Activity 2.1.1 Develop criteria for irrigation and drainage to identify most vulnerable farmers and/or farms where conditions make implementation viable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Criteria to include provision for youth and gender participation established (Yes/No) - % of female farmers who benefit from construction of draining and irrigation infrastructure (35%) 	Year 1 Year 3	PMU	
Activity 2.2.3 Ensure participation of registered women and youth in Water management and irrigation scheduling training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ratio of female to male registered farmers trained in moisture management techniques (1:3) 	Year 3	PMU, SIRDI	\$ 33 000,00 (Cost subsumed in project budget).
Activity 2.4.1: Identify and give support to female owned farmlands under pest management programme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - % Of land supported with pest management that are female owned (35%) 	Year 3	PMU, SIRDI,	
Output 3: Gender Responsive stakeholder consultations and awareness programmes instituted to ensure transformation of the Sugar Cane Industry in Northern Belize.				



<p>Activity 3.2.1 Develop a wholistic training strategy and training material to build climate resilience. This training strategy should set realistic gender goals and cater to training attendance availability of men and women.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Existence of wholistic gender responsive training strategy (Yes/No) - Women farmers consulted in the development of the training strategy (Yes/No) - Care provisions for farmers with dependents included in training strategy (Yes/No) 	Year 1	PMU	\$5,000
<p>3.2.2 Develop a communication strategy that is gender responsive and clearly include female farmers as a stakeholder group with unique communication approaches.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Existence of wholistic gender responsive communication strategy (Yes/No) 	Year 1	PMU	\$5,000
<p>Activity 3.1.1 Ensure transformational forum to sensitize farmers on transformation strategy implements gender responsive strategies to capture inputs from female and young farmers and industry workers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Existence of documented plans to ensure views of female and youth farmers are captured in form (Yes/No) - %Of Women farmers Consulted (70%) 	Year 1	PMU	Subsumed under forum facilitation costs
<p>3.1.2 Ensure Climate Resilient Transformation Strategy reflects gender and social inclusion approaches as part of strategic actions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Existence of gender approaches in Climate Adaptation Resilient Transformation Strategy (Yes/No) 	Year 1	PMU	Subsumed under strategy development cost
<p>Activity 3.4.1 Develop farming models through industry knowledge sharing in consultation with women and young farmers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gender roles and responsibilities considered within farming models (Yes/No) - %Of female farmers consulted in development of farming models who are women (70%) 	Year 1	PMU	Subsumed under farming models cost



	- % Of farmers Consulted in Development of farming models who are youths (15%)			
Activity 3.1.3 Ensure proportional representation of female farmers in training on climate smart agriculture techniques.	- % Of Farmers trained in climate smart agriculture techniques are female (35%)¹⁴			
Activity 3.4.1.1 Develop gender inclusive farmer economic and social vulnerability criteria by ensuring consultation with women and youth.	- Economic and Social Vulnerability Criteria includes Females and youth for benefit distribution (Yes/No) . - % of Women farmers consulted in development of vulnerability criteria (50%)	Year 1	PMU	\$80,000.00
Activity 3.4.1.2 Ensure that all project stakeholders are trained and socialized on vulnerability criteria; including on gender equality.	- % of farmers socialized on economic and social vulnerability criteria including gender equality (80%)	Year 1	PMU CCCCC	Cost subsumed in 3.4.1.1
Output 4: Gender responsive project management and governance environment instituted.				
4.1.1 Table annually, a discussion on the Progress of GAP Implementation as an agenda item of the PSC.	- # Of discussion on Gender report held at Project PSC (4)	Years 1-5	PMU CCCCC	No Standalone cost identified (Staff time)
4.1.2 Provide Gender Mainstreaming Training, including sensitization of GAP and ESIA to Steering Committee. This training will also focus on SEAH/SGBV risks, reporting and management.	% Of PSC members trained (100%) # Of Gender mainstreaming and sensitization trainings held for the PSC (2)	Year 1 Year 3	PMU CCCCC	\$5,000.00

¹⁴ Training target may be refined based on development of training strategy.



4.1.3 Ensure mandatory participation of Project Staff in Gender Mainstreaming Training to be organized by the CCCCC.	-# of internal trainings on gender undertaken by project staff (2) -# of external courses on Gender undertaken by Project Staff (2)	Year 1 Year 3	CCCCC	\$4,000.00 (Venue and meals) \$4000 (Gender courses)
4.1.4 Ensure that a representative is identified to provide advisory gender services to PSC in coordination with the Project Manager.	- Presence of Gender advice to the PSC (Yes/No)	Years 1-5	CCCCC PMU	No Standalone cost identified (Staff time)
4.1.5 Develop and update periodically list of all female farmers and their contacts for one of one communication of project opportunities.	- List of female farmers developed in first year of project implementation (Yes/No) - List of female farmers updated in years 2,3,4,5 of project implementation (Yes/No)	Year 1 Years 2-5	PMU	No Standalone cost identified (Staff time)
4.1.6 Hire a Gender and Social Officer who will work with the PMU and be responsible for implementation of Gender actions in collaboration with CCCCC Gender and Stakeholder Specialist. This Gender and Social Officer will be responsible for developing and maintaining a strong relationship with female farmers and ensure that project communication reaches female farmers.	- Gender and Social Officer recruited as part of PMU	Year 1	PMU CCCCC	\$174,000.00 (\$3000/month*58 months)
4.1.7 Refine the Project Level GRM already developed as part of the Stakeholder Analysis to include reporting on SEAH and SGBV complaints,	- SEAH and SGBV reporting channels clearly identified in Project GRM (Yes/No)	Year 1	CCCCC PMU	No Standalone cost identified (Staff time)
4.1.8 Ensure that the Project Level GRM inclusive of SEAH and SGBV reporting mechanisms is publicized and shared with project counterparts, including all female farmers identified.	- Project GRM publicized with farmers and stakeholders (Yes/No) -% of female farmers socialized on GRM (80%)	Year 1	CCCCC PMU	No standalone cost identified (Operational costs)



<p>4.1.9 Ensure contractors, and project staff interacting with community signs Code of Conduct to be developed under this project.</p>	<p>Existence of COC that prohibits SEAH/SGBV (Yes/No)</p> <p>% Of Staff, consultants working in communities who have signed COC (100%)</p>	<p>Throughout the life cycle of the project</p>	<p>PMU CCCCC</p>	<p>No Standalone cost identified (Staff time)</p>
---	--	---	----------------------	---

Conclusion

The strategies adopted for rural and agricultural development in Belize have favoured mainly the urban sector. The neglect of smallholder farmers has been reflected in discriminatory policies, inadequate market information, and other relevant institutional arrangements, making it difficult to compete against the large farmers. Rural women are the worst affected by these unfair institutional, economic, and politico-cultural arrangements. Women farmers are invisible and not fully supported in their competing roles and are therefore not at the centre of policy interventions. This project must explicitly capture the importance of Gender and agriculture to affect the continuance of a transformation plan started with Fairtrade.

The Government of Belize's budgetary commitment to the agricultural and rural sectors is being focussed upon and must continue on this trajectory. Most interventions in these sectors tend to target agricultural value chains where men have a competitive advantage. As a result, women farmers and their specific agricultural needs are inevitably side-lined, leading to a vicious circle of persistent gender inequalities – even though women play significant roles in agricultural activities. This area must be given keen attention.

The current development policy framework for Belize is such that women's potential is underutilized. Their role in policy formulation remains ambiguous at best, with a significant gap in their access to agricultural resources and rewards. If not consciously addressed, the persistent gender inequalities in Belize's agricultural and rural sectors of Belize will make the SDGs an impossible task. This is because women's improved capabilities and welfare are strongly linked to prospects for poverty reduction, including lower rates of infant mortality and child malnutrition. Sustainable development cannot occur under gender inequality. Promoting gender equality in agriculture will, in the long-term, help to address the gender-specific constraints that reduce women's productivity and limit their contribution to agricultural production, economic growth, and the wellbeing of their families. It will also reduce hunger and extreme poverty. When and if women farmers have equal access to agricultural resources and rewards, they will be better able to participate and contribute to agricultural and rural development. Closing the gender gap in agriculture would put more resources in the hands of women, and strengthen their voice within the household, thereby improving the food security, nutrition, education, and health of children (FAO, 2011).

Women's low status in Belize's Sugar Industry, especially its rural areas, coupled with gender stereotypes and a poor perception of gender inequalities, persist in Belize's Sugar Industry. This is primarily due to practices that see men identified as 'heads of households and women as 'contributing family workers,' reinforcing women and men's uneven and hierarchical status in rural areas. Thus, women have limited access to power, decision-making, resources, and fulfilment of their rights. They may also suffer from diminished self-esteem and confidence, which are critical personal assets that can discourage or encourage them to act.

It is essential to state that even though gender inequality continues to persist in Belize's agricultural and rural sectors, successive governments have undertaken and continue to pursue various initiatives to support women farmers. Attempts have been made through legal instruments, policies, and interventions to integrate gender issues into land tenure reforms. This is a critical issue since land, in turn, frames access to other essential agricultural inputs and natural resources for sustainable livelihoods. However, the enduring problem is that most agricultural policies are initiated to make it difficult to measure any gender impacts.



In conclusion, the Government of Belize, and its development partners, both public and private, are the major actors in addressing gender barriers in the agricultural and rural sectors. Thus, any practical recommendations will have to bear in mind the different motivations of each actor. However, there needs to be widespread acceptance starting with the education and development of our girls and young boys from the toddler stage. Of the significance of integrating Gender into the development process, the question remains whether actors are only gender-sensitive or whether they genuinely mainstream Gender in their development planning and implementation processes. Being aware of gender issues does not necessarily imply taking serious account of gender issues in planning and implementation. This project cannot create the paradigm shift needed for gender equity in such a short period.

However, this project can educate, inform, and prepare women, men, and youth toward a mindset shift as our country strives to meet the Sustainable development goals. The simple assignment of inclusion via vulnerability assessment and identification in this project, empowerment with Drivers Education training, Technological exposure and mass attendance via virtual meetings and information sessions, and entrepreneurship support will significantly impact the desired destination.

This project, through its GAP, activity indicators and targets, will ensure that it remains aware of gender issues and promotes and implements good gender equality practices through **ACCESS/INCLUSION, EDUCATION/INFORMATION SHARING, and GOOD GOVERNANCE as in the proposed GAP.**

Annex 1: Key Gender Questions

Key gender questions for the Initial Social Assessment (ISA)

1. Who are the target beneficiaries?
2. Disaggregate the beneficiaries according to Gender.
3. Talk to women as well as men.
4. Are women visible in the sector?
5. Determine the gender division of labour in general.
6. Are women's needs in the sector the same as those of men's?
7. Identify, if possible, the main sources of income for women and men.
8. How might the project affect women? Is the project likely to have the same positive and negative effects on women and men?
9. Can a gender-inclusive design be drawn up for the project, and could it effectively and equitably target women?
10. Identify, if possible, legal, cultural, or religious constraints on women's potential participation in the project.
11. Does the executing/implementing agency have the capacity to deliver benefits to or involve women?



Annex 2: Questionnaire

INTERVIEW

-Questionnaire for Women Farmers in the Orange Walk and Corozal Districts-

Name:	Association:
Age:	Location:
Years as cane farmer:	Phone #:

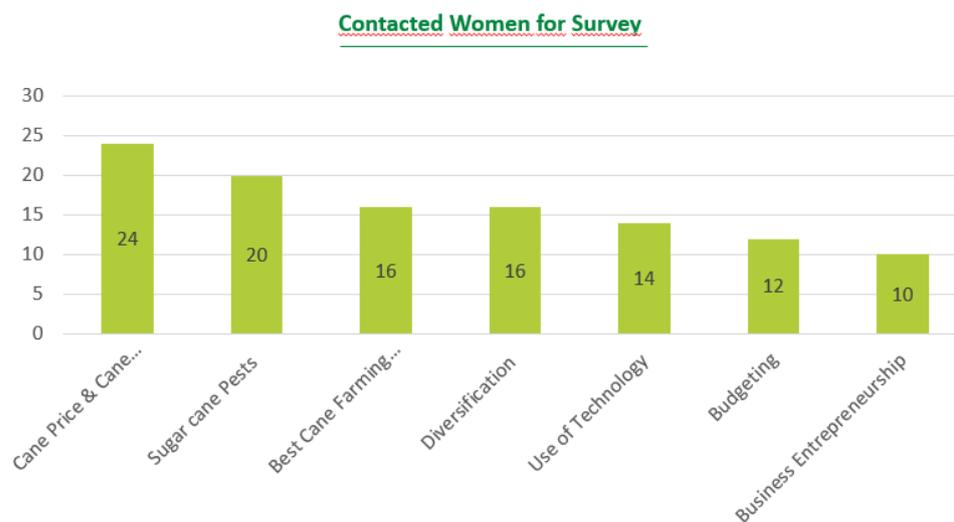
1	Function of the interviewee in the cane farm?	<input type="checkbox"/> Owner <input type="checkbox"/> Owner's Wife
2	Do you have any background knowledge of the sugar cane industry of Northern Belize?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
3	Do you know that BSI facilitates information to the farmer associations, and you can access this information?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
4	Do you know that there is plenty of information that can be of your interest, and you can access it and even get help in understanding them?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
5	Do you know there is a Commercial Agreement between your association and BSI?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
6	How do you get information on your cane payments?	
7	How do you get information on the Cane Price?	
8	Would you like to get information on the Cane Price?	
9	Name two things stated in the Cane Price document.	
10	Who manages the cane field finances?	<input type="checkbox"/> Husband <input type="checkbox"/> Self <input type="checkbox"/> Family member <input type="checkbox"/> Other
11	In which ways do you think BSI can help more cane farmers related to education around the sugar industry?	
12	Is there any topic your husband usually talks about related to cane fields/sugar, which you do not understand and would like help in understanding?	
13	Would you consider becoming a Leader in the association?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
14	If you answered Yes to the above – What kind of leader would you like to be? If NO , why not?	
15	Do you currently own a smartphone?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
16	How familiar are you with phone apps like WhatsApp, Instagram,	<input type="checkbox"/> Very Familiar



	Facebook, Email, Zoom, Microsoft Teams?	<input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat Familiar <input type="checkbox"/> Not familiar
17	Which Pest affects sugar cane?	
18	Which area would you like to learn more about? (a) Use of Technology (b) Business Entrepreneurship (c) Budgeting (d) Best Cane Farming Management Practices (e) Diversification (f) Cane Price & Cane Commercial Agreement (g) Sugar cane Pests	(a) (b) (c) (d) (e) (f) (g)

Questionnaire Results – Areas women farmers wanted capacity building support

83% of the participants expressed their interest in learning and understanding more about Cane Price & Commercial Agreement with the associations and BSI



Overview

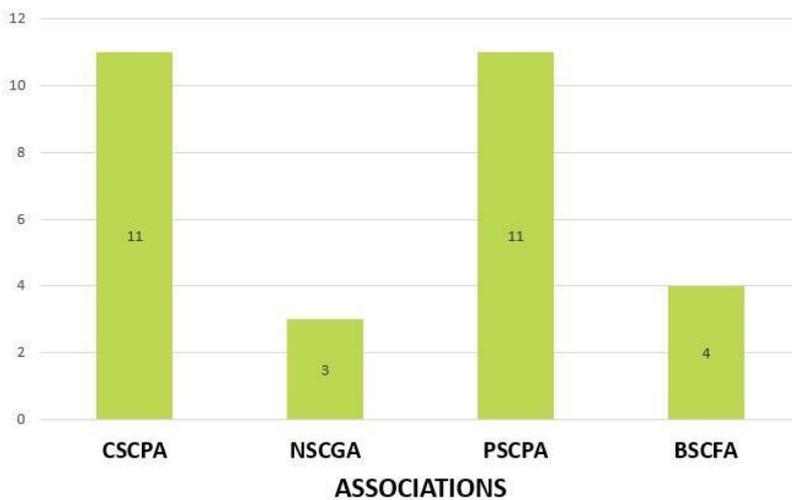
- 6/29 Women surveyed said that they have considered becoming leaders in the association.
- 24 Women manage their cane field finances.
- 20/29 Women have not seen the Cane Price Document.
- Some of the Women would like to receive the cane price information directly through text message. Some mention it would be nice to put it on social media Facebook, since it is accessible.
- 8/29 Women don't know there is a Commercial Agreement between associations and BSI. Those who know, only know there is one, however they do not understand it.
- More than 22 of the Women have been over 10 years in the industry.



Questionnaire

A total of 29 women participated in answering the questionnaire. Participation comes from the 4 different associations: PSCPA, CSCPA, NSCGA & BSCFA.

Contacted Women for Survey

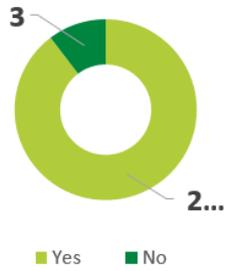


Women Conducting Survey

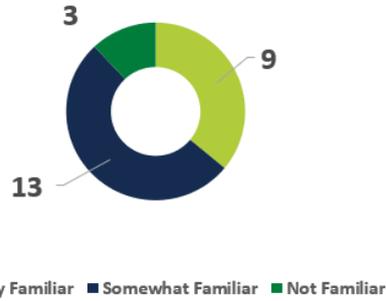
Women Farmers and Technology

Almost all women are already using some sort of technology

Women using technology



Women who are familiar with technology



Annex 3: Focus Group Session Attendees

Focus Group session attendees and sign-in sheets



Nombre	Branch	Telefono	Email	Firma
1. Fedelia Marveller ✓		6662009		a Fideira Navro
2 Irene Jimenez ✓		627 9244	Guinea G.	Irene Jimenez
3 Francisca Jimenez ✓		629-6522	Guinea G. <u>canimiri627@gmail.com</u>	Francisca Jimenez
4 Rosalia Quetzal ✓		662-5385	Guinea Grass	Rosalia Quetzal
5 Nicolasa Uli ✓		6506756	Progresive	Nicolasa Uli.
6 Nahsali Melara		605 9340	nahsali.melara@gmail.com	
7 Atovana Moverser		627-6184	q/s San Lázaro	Moverser <u>atovana@gmail.com</u>
8 Francisca Mendez		620 3767	San Pablo camera francisca	<u>francisca@gmail.com</u>
9 Marciana Cowo ✓		015-5002	Guinea Grass	Marciana
10 Lydia Pech ✓		660 9432	Guinea Grass	

March 12th, 2021

NAME	BRANCH	PHONE #	EMAIL	SIGNATURE
Benita Coyok	O/W	6105070		Benita Coyok
Mayra la Coyok	O/W	634-7266	mcoyo10@gmail.com	Mayra
S. Hernandez	O/W	622-1003	susicholze@yahoo.com	Susana Hernandez

NAME	BRANCH	PHONE #	EMAIL	SIGNATURE
Adelaide Chu		620-3423		A.C.
Mariely Palomo		623-7536		Mariely
Daisy N. Che		628-9138	daisy.che01@gmail.com	Daisy
Berta R. Cob	P.S.C.PA	600-4548	bertacoba@gmail.com bertacoba@yahoo.com	Berta
Erika Sosa	CSCPA	627-8014	cscpa.czl@hotmail.com	Erika
Noelle Chan	CSCPA	650 7238	noelle.chan28@gmail.com	Noelle
Fortunata Chuo		6658521		Fortunata
Emmela Camata		6280167		Emmela
Maité Camara		604-5886	maitecam14@gmail.com	Maité
Julissa Castañeda	CSCPA	6045384	25JulissaCastañeda27@gmail.com	Julissa
Addy Camara	CSCPA	649616	addy.camara13@gmail.com	Addy
Carla Bacab	C.S.C.P.H	630-7819		Carla
Erli Chan	N.S.C.G.A	613-1003	erli.chan@yahoo.com	Erli
Paswala Chan		621-545	paswala.chan06@gmail.com	Paswala

Annex 4: Interviews Held

- BSI/ASR – Suzette Tillett, Olivia Avilez and Susan Castillo
- Development Finance Corporation – Natalie Goff, Asad Magana
- Belize Bank – Loans Officer
- La Inmaculada Credit Union – Loan Officer
- Farmers – Male and Female as well as children in and out of the industry
- Cane Farmer Associations - mixed membership inclusive of Chairmen
- SIRD
- Escuela Mexico Secundaria – Board Member
- Corozal Community College – Teacher
- Northern Districts - Citizenry

Annex 5: Assessment Tool

CONSENT STATEMENT:

Hello. My name is _____. We are conducting a survey for the sugar industry to assess sugar cane production viability as well as assess the role of Gender in the sugar industry in Belize. The results of these interviews will be used to guide the development of a strategic plan for the agricultural sector of the sugar industry in Belize.

Your participation is voluntary. You may choose not to answer any questions, and you can stop the interview at any time. All of your responses will be kept strictly confidential. Would you like to ask me anything else about the survey?

- (a) Respondent **agrees** to interview
- (b) Respondent **does not agree** to interview

Identification Panel		
Zone: (Choose one only) (a) CZL 1 (b) CZL 2 (c) CZL 3 (d) OW 1 (e) OW 2 (f) OW 3	Group: (Choose one only) (a) Caledonia (b) Libertad (c) San Joaquin (d) Corozal (e) Patchakan (f) Xaibe (g) Louisville (h) San Victor (i) San Narcisso (j) San Roman (k) Douglas (l) San Jose (m) Orange Walk (n) Progreso (o) San Estevan (p) Guinea Grass (q) San Lazaro (r) Yo Creek	Quadrant No: (Choose one only) (a) Less than 75 tons (b) 75 to 300 tons (c) 301 to 1000 tons (d) More than 1000 tons
Name of Farmer (If given): Number of years in cane sugar farming: Place of Residence:	Association (Choose one only) (a) BSCFA CZL (b) BSCFA OW (c) PSCPA (d) CSCPA	

Main occupation: Other occupation:	Gender: (Choose one only) (a) Male (b) Female (c) Non-binary (d) Other	Age: _____ years (Give exact figure)
---------------------------------------	---	--

Questions:

1. Who is the head of your household? **(CHECK ONE ONLY)**
 - a. A Female (wife)
 - b. A male (husband)
 - c. Both female and male?
 - d. Binary
 - e. Other

2. Who within the household is involved in your sugar cane business? **(CHECK AS MANY AS APPLY)**
 - a. Husban
 - d b. ___Wife
 - c. Son(s)
 - d. Daughter(s)
 - e. Other: _____

3. When it comes to the business, who would be the designated farm manager within the household (i.e., who is primarily responsible for decision-making pertaining to field activities and farm planning? **(CHECK AS MANY AS APPLY)**
 - a. Husban
 - d b. ___Wife
 - c. Son(s)
 - d. Daughter(s)
 - e. Other: _____

4. Who within the household would be the designated *fund manager* (i.e., who is the person primarily responsible for managing income, expenditure, book-keeping, etc.?) **(CHECK AS MANY AS APPLY)**
 - a. Husban
 - d b. ___Wife
 - c. Son(s)
 - d. Daughter(s)
 - e. Other: _____

5. When it comes to the business, who would get involved in managing any farm labour within the household? (Whether that's managing family members or paid workers?) **(CHECK AS MANY AS APPLY)**
 - a. Husban
 - d b. ___Wife
 - c. Son(s)
 - d. Daughter(s)
 - e. Other: _____

6. Who within the business makes decisions about things like adopting new technologies, new

business or farming approaches, new varieties, etc.? **(CHECK AS MANY AS APPLY)**

a. Husband

- b. Wife
- c. _____ Son(s)
)
- d. Daughter(s)
- e. Other: _____

7. When you take out loans/credit for your farm, whose name is the credit in? **(CHECK AS MANY AS APPLY)**

- a. Husban
- b. _____ Wife
- c. Son(s)
- d. Daughter(s)
- e. Other: _____

8. Who manages money in relation to the repayment of loans/credit? **(CHECK AS MANY AS APPLY)**

- a. Husban
- b. _____ Wife
- c. Son(s)
- d. Daughter(s)
- e. Other: _____

9. Who within the household engages directly with Farmer Associations, such as attending meetings and engaging with Farmer Association representatives? **(CHECK AS MANY AS APPLY)**

- a. Husban
- b. _____ Wife
- c. Son(s)
- d. Daughter(s)
- e. Other: _____

10. Who within the household engages with key industry representative, such as harvesting group leaders, BSI or SIRDI representatives, etc.? **(CHECK AS MANY AS APPLY)**

- a. Husban
- b. _____ Wife
- c. Son(s)
- d. Daughter(s)
- e. Other: _____

11. Overall, how much knowledge do you feel you have of the things which impact your business in relation to other people in your household? **(CHECK ONE ONLY)**

- a. Equa
- b. _____ More
- c. Less

12. Overall, how much decision-making power do you feel you have of the things which impact your business in relation to other people in your household? **(CHECK ONE ONLY)**

a. Equal

- b. More
- c. Less

13. Do you share the income from your sugar business equally in your household?

- a. Yes
- b. No

14. Do you have any other roles you play in the "sugar value chain" other than farming?

- a. Harvesting
- b. _____Transportatio
- c. Milling
- d. Shipping
- e. _____Marketin
- f. Other: _____

15. Why do you think the roles in the cane business are divided this way?

- a. It is based on the skills, resources, or knowledge each member of the household has.
- b. It is cultural.
- c. It has historically been done this way.
- d. Other: _____

16. Do you feel you are equally prepared with the same skills, knowledge, and resources to run a successful sugar cane farm, compared to men in your household or as other male sugar farmers, you know?

- a. Yes
- b. No

17. Are there barriers you can think of which might affect the skills, knowledge, and resources that a woman sugar cane farmer might have in relation to men? If so, what are they?

18. Do you feel that other stakeholders within the industry – such as BSI, farmers association, SIRD representative, or members of your harvesting group- engage with you in the same way they engage with men and other genders?

- a. Yes
- b. No

19. Are there barriers you can think of which might affect the kind of networks, contacts, and business relationships that a woman sugar cane farmer might have in relation to men? If so, what are they?

20. Do you feel women have equal opportunities compared to men to benefit from participation in additional parts of the sugar value chain- such as management/ownership in harvesting/hauling operations or paid work in BSI?

- a. Yes
- s b. No
- c. Not sure

21. If you answered NO in 20, what barriers do you think to keep things from being equal?

22. Do you feel women have equal opportunities to get into leadership positions within your farmer's association?

- a. Yes
- s b. No

23. If you answered NO, what barriers do you believe to keep things from being equal?

24. Overall, what challenges do you think women face in the sugar industry, which might be different from the challenges men face?

25. Overall, are there any changes you would like to see to the industry, whether at BSI, in your harvesting group, or your farmer association, which you feel would impact women's experience in the sugar industry?

THIS IS THE END OF THIS QUESTIONNAIRE. THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION.



Annex 6: Report on the Youth Perspective in the Sugar Industry

Background: The Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre (CCCCC), with support from the Green Climate Fund (GCF) is currently in the process of preparing the “Building the Adaptive Capacity of Sugarcane Farmers in Northern Belize (BaC-SuF)” Project. The project is a joint public- private sector initiative that aims to strengthen the adaptive capacity of sugarcane producers, so they are better equipped to respond to the challenges of a changing climate. This includes improving farmers’ access to climate resilient crop varieties, promoting wise-use practices and the integrated management of land and water resources, improve farmer understanding of climate risk, threats and response options and improved access to financing.

Purpose: The aim of the focus group session with youth in or affiliated with the Belize Sugar Industry is to garner their insights as to the future of the industry and their role in its continued success. Findings of the discussion will be incorporated into the Final Gender Analysis Report to inform the Gender Action Plan for the project.

Female Youth Perspective on the Sugar Industry

Location/Venue: Corozal District, Sugar Industry Research and Development Institute, (SIRDI)

Date: Thursday, October 28, 2021

Profile of Stakeholders Present: There were a total five (6) participants. Three (3) representing Progressive Sugar Cane Farmers Association and two (2) representing Belize Sugar Cane Farmers Association and one (1) representing Corozal Sugar Cane Farmers Association. The Northern Cane Farmers Association was unrepresented in this session. The participants were expected to be between 16 years to 25 years in age. Their educational attainment varied from completing some high school or currently enrolled in high school; attending Junior College; and completing a first degree. Their involvement in the industry included being children/grandchildren of cane farmers to owners of quotas. Two participants claimed that they are highly involved and assist in their family business. In both cases, the use of their formal education has strengthened the operation of the family business.

Summary of Key Findings:

1. **There is a gender segmentation of work in the sugar cane industry. Men work in the fields and take the sugar related decisions, women are financial managers, caregivers.** Consistent with the contextual findings within the larger society and with women who are more advanced in age, the participants were in general agreement that there is segmentation of job duties within the industry. Largely men undertake the more strenuous physical work while women are involved in the domestic and care work, as well as management of financial resources.
2. **Fathers discourage their daughters from joining the industry. Not because of misogyny, but because they do not want their daughters to participate in laborious work linked to degenerative illnesses and an industry with diminishing profitability.** Participants largely
3. acknowledged that while the industry can be seen as a place of enabling machismo, at their own individual level, the discouragement from participating in the industry is largely due to their parents wanting a 'better' life for them. The manual labour associated with the industry coupled with the diminishing financial gains is seen as a disincentive and parents would encourage their children to take up more stable, formal employment consistent with their higher levels of education.
4. **The Sugar business is predominantly thought of in terms of physical work in the fields.** The Business management side of the industry does not come to the fore. Participants spoke of the industry as primarily agricultural work. Therefore, when asked of women's participation in the industry, the default response would validate the assumption of a male dominated industry. However, when the sugar business as a whole is unpacked, it reveals differentiated roles for males and females. Important to note, however is that the face of the industry is male dominated because of men's physical presence in the field and male dominance in association leadership.
5. **Machismo prevails since men are seen to have ultimate decision-making authority in their households and within association's leadership.** The findings in 3 above, underscores the prevailing machismo associated with the industry. The industry operates within a larger socio-cultural space of male dominance in decision making. While it is recognized that women attend association meetings and may even meet in groups to discuss certain positions prior to association meeting, largely men's voices are more prevalent at meetings. This is coupled with the predominant masculinization of leadership among all the northern sugar industry's associations.
6. **Education and participating in the Sugar industry are seen as dichotomous by many, however, the young women who formed a part of the discussions agree that it adds value to become educated in various fields.** For many cane farmers and their families, the aspiration is to be educated and have the youth find alternate career paths. Of the participants in the focus group, 100% agreed that this was the wider sentiment within the industry, however only 33% also held this belief. Participants were largely of the view that educated youth can transform the industry and add value to their family

businesses by contributing their scientific and business management formal training. Participants demonstrated how being trained chemists and natural resource managers have added value to the work of their immediate family businesses.

7. **The legacy of the sugar business would preferably be passed on to male heirs. However, this is not across the board as there are women in the industry who have received quotas from their parents or relatives who have passed on.** The concept of male legacy is not across the board within the industry. While some families prioritize passing quotas on to their sons, this is not the case for others. Some families hold on the status quo more firmly than others. Others seek to empower their children regardless of sex. This empowerment includes providing formal education for their children, and informal training within the industry. Passing on quotas in this regard would be done based on children's expressed interest in continuing in the industry and not entirely on the basis of sex.
8. **Although women own quotas, they do not own the land. The land either belongs to their fathers or husbands.** The possession of quota is differentiated from the possession of land. Women's ownership of quotas does not translate to ownership of land.
9. **Families make decisions to have alternative livelihoods as a safeguard for income.** Often women hold jobs outside of the industry, while their husbands or partners are solely employed in the family business. This trend is expected to continue to be the mode of family income protection as more women are educated at higher levels than men within northern Belize and Belize as a whole. Participants highlighted that a second income outside of the industry, often in formal employment, has proven to be useful in meeting loan repayments in periods of reduced production or in periods where families are impacted by climatic events.

Male Youth Perspective on the Sugar Industry

Location/Venue: Corozal District, Sugar Industry Research and Development Institute, (SIRDI)

Date: Friday, October 29, 2021

Profile of Stakeholders Present: There were a total five (5) participants. Three (3) representing Progressive Sugar Cane Farmers Association and two (2) representing Northern Sugar Cane Growers' Association. Belize Sugar Cane Farmers Association and Corozal Sugar Cane Farmers Association were unrepresented in the focus group. Although they did not share their specific age, the participants were expected to be between 16 years to 25 years in age. Their educational

attainment varied from completing some high school or currently enrolled in high school; attending Junior College; and completing a first degree. Their involvement in the industry ranges from being a paid field worker with no familial ownership; to children and grandchildren of farmers; all of whom claim to have participated at some point in time or in some capacity (paid or unpaid) in the family business. Two participants claimed that they are highly involved and assist their father with the business; although none are as yet considered ‘farmers’, that is, they own quotas.

Summary of Key Findings:

- The participants indicated that the family member/s with the overall responsibility for running the sugar business tend to be predominantly male, eg. grandfathers, fathers and uncles. However, there are exceptions as one participant indicated; it is his grandmother takes on this responsibility. Although she shares responsibility with her sons who attend to the fields and attend Association meetings on her behalf; within the family she is recognized as the final decision-maker and in charge of all financial matters. One participant also indicated that his mother is a cane farmer (own quotas) as well.
- Generally, it would suggest that for the most part, farmers/owners do not operate unilaterally but as true family businesses with each member of the family including women, taking on different responsibilities and even incorporated in decision-making. The level of involvement in decision-making and financial matters of wives of cane farmers seem to vary across families with some very involved and some not as much. Children seem to be introduced to certain aspects of the business from an early age regardless of gender eg. girls and boys are taken to the fields.
-
- Ownership succession may be dependent on the individual families but culturally matriarchs are known to be well respected and would inherit if their husband passes. She may determine her level of involvement in the industry or relegate responsibility to one or more of her children. Traditionally, there seems to be a preference for males to inherit although these young males indicated that they have no expectation to inherit over their female siblings (where they have female siblings) but rather believe the decision would be made based on who exhibit more interest in the business. Their perception is that male children/siblings are more interested than female siblings but this may be bias to only the field work aspect.
- Their concept of the ‘sugar business’ was expressed primarily as the field work aspect, preparing the fields, planting, harvesting and delivering to the factory. As such when asked about female participation in the industry; the immediate response was little to none or that women did not have much interest in those type of work because of it being manually intensive, difficult and even dangerous. However, respondents were quick to recognize that women do have supporting roles such as providing food, doing laundry as well as some financial and administrative duties. This perhaps points to the need for some sensitization as to the entire gamut of what constitute the industry – the entire value chain so that there is a greater understanding of the importance of the

roles beyond that of the field work. As well perhaps an economic value attached to the unpaid support that women provide would allow for greater recognition of the contribution they make to ensure the business is successful.

- Governance of the industry at the level of the cane farmers associations seem to be principally male-dominated to the extent where even women who are heavily involved in their family businesses as owners do not readily participate at this level. The participants seem not to object to this practice and views it as a norm. For example, in the case of the grandmother the young man expressed that it is for her 'protection' and 'health'. There is some indication that this cultural norm may be changing (a woman was recently elected to the executive of the BSCFA) however, not a very fast pace. These young men seem to subscribe to the status quo as it relates to this issue and perhaps some focus on this generation in terms of the importance of gender equality and inclusion would benefit in the long run.
- Lastly, within this small group of young males, divergent views were uncovered as to the opportunities that exist within the industry for them including the potential for education to support or reinforce those opportunities. Those males who are children of farmer-owners whose families provide the financial and other resources to pursue higher education, seem to choose education fields in science and technology that provides knowledge that can directly impact the business. They seem to expect to eventually become owners themselves and/or work in some aspect of the business in the factories, associations or SIRD. They seem to understand the importance of science and technology to spur innovation and profitability, thus ensuring the long-term sustainability and resilience of the industry for their generation and beyond. The other view seems to be more traditional, where working in the industry is seen as an alternative to education. That is, if young males do not want to continue their education; working in the sugar industry becomes the back-up plan. If they are the children of farmers, they begin helping and learning the industry through practical experience. If they are not the children

of farmer-owners, the view was expressed that there seems to be very little opportunity for upward mobility within the industry, with the expectation to remain field workers in longevity and no expectation to eventually be owners themselves. The extent to which these divergent views prevail among the wider male youth population is unknown; but it does point to a need to perhaps target educational opportunities to young males who work in the industry because they feel such opportunities were not afforded to them due to poverty or other factors. Such educational opportunities may broaden how they see themselves contributing to the industry and options for upward mobility and economic prospects.



Annex 7: Youth Focus Group Guide

Welcome

Introduction of Moderator and participant.

We are here to discuss youth participation in the sugar industry in northern Belize.

The results will be used for finalization of a gender assessment that will accompany the Belize northern Sugar Cane Farmers Project. The Project intends to provide farmers in sugar industry with useful support to help combat the impacts of climate change. For example, we are hoping to be able to improve water management on farms both in terms for drainage for when there is excessive rainfall and in terms of irrigation to combat the effects of drought.

You were selected because you are a daughter/son of a sugarcane farmer.

Guidelines

- There are no right or wrong answers, only differing points of view Keep in mind that we're just as interested in negative comments as positive comments, and at times the negative comments are the most helpful. You've probably noticed the microphone.
- We're tape recording the session because we don't want to miss any of your comments. People often say very helpful things in these discussions, and we can't write fast enough to get them all down.
- please allow one person to speak at a time.
- We will be on a first name basis today, and we won't use any names in our reports. You may be assured of complete confidentiality.
- We ask that your turn off your phones. If you cannot and if you must respond to a call, please do so as quietly as possible and rejoin us as quickly as you can.

My role as moderator will be to guide the discussion but we also encourage you to talk to each other.

We intend to keep this discussion to one hour.

Can we start by you introducing yourself?

Questions:

1. How much do you know about how the sugar industry? Tell me more about it.
2. In your, household who manages the sugar business. (Who manages money... if there are loans, who applies... who attends Association Meetings)? (Do you consider the business a family business?) (Are you currently included?)
3. Are there specific roles for women and men in the sugar industry? Why is this the case?
4. Of you siblings, who would most likely inherit the sugar business? Are they interested? Why? Why not?
5. Do you think that as a woman/ man you would be provided with part of the business as an inheritance?
6. What's your opinion on the future of the Sugar Industry?
7. Is there a future in the industry for you? (Would your education help or hinder your future in the industry?)