Gender Assessment

FP101: Resilient Rural Belize (Be-Resilient)

Belize | IFAD | B.22/07

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Belize

Resilient Rural Belize (Be-Resilient)

Gender Assessment and Action Plan

GCF Additional Financing
Part I: Gender Analysis/Assessment:

Belize has a total population of 395,882 inhabitants according to the Labor Force Survey of April 2018. The rural population is slightly higher than the urban population (55% and 45% respectively) and equally slight is the difference between the percentage of men and women (56% and 54% respectively).

Belize has taken important steps in fulfilling its international commitments in favour of gender equality and equity and has renewed its Gender Policy in 2013. The government and civil society participation was part of this renewal, which generated a consensual document, with important modifications in relation to the previous one. Compliance with the Gender Policy requires efforts on the part of different sectors and governmental, non-governmental and civil society entities, which are still incipient. However, the progress made in central issues such as health and education are a sign that it is on the right track.

The Government of Belize, recognizing that rural women are the most affected by poverty and lack of access to services and resources for personal development and for their contribution to the development of their communities and territories, participates in the framework of the Agricultural Council Central American (Council of Ministers of Agriculture of the Central American Integration System Region and the Dominican Republic) in the development of an Agenda for the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women and has a focal point in the Ministry of Agriculture and in the Women and Family Support Department (Ministry of Human Development) to implement this agenda at the national level and give a better response to these women. Human, material and financial resources are currently insufficient and it will be necessary to strengthen the institutional ones in order to generate the expected results.

General information at National level

| Maternal mortality rate | Maternal mortality rate was 28 per 100,000 live births, estimated in 2015  
https://datos.bancomundial.org/indicador/SH.STA.MMRT_Consulted 12/20/2018 |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births) | The percentage of infant mortality per 1,000 live births is 13.4 for men and 11.0 for women. (2017)  
https://datos.bancomundial.org/indicador/SH.STA.MMRT_Consulted 12/20/2018 |
| Educational status of girls and boys | The status of formal school attendance shows that boys and girls between 2 and 16 years, segregated by age groups, show almost equal attendance levels and that the decrease in attendance in the group from 13 to 16 is a common phenomenon for men as women. |

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
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<tr>
<td>Age 2 - 4</td>
<td>33,1</td>
<td>32,6</td>
<td>33,6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Age 5 - 12</td>
<td>95,9</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>95,9</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Indicator</strong></td>
<td><strong>Value</strong></td>
<td><strong>Source</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Adult literacy rate (disaggregated by sex),</td>
<td>13 - 16 75.9 75.5 76.4</td>
<td>Source: The Statistical Institute of Belize. Belize Population and Housing Census. 2010 Country Report 2013</td>
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<td>Poverty rate</td>
<td>Poverty in Belize affects 40% of households and 41.3% of its inhabitants. 13% of non-poor households are in a vulnerable situation and 14% of the population is in that situation. The sex of the individual has little influence on poverty rates with men having slightly higher poverty rates (42% of men are poor compared to 40% of women).</td>
<td>Source: IFAD. 2009. Poverty Assessment Report</td>
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<td>Labour force participation rate (disaggregated by sex),</td>
<td>By April 2018, the participation of the population over 14 in the labor force is 65.5%. Disaggregated by sex, 78.3% of men and 52.9% of women are part of the labor force. Labor force, which gives a difference close to 25 percentage points in favor of men. However, these data do not take into account the contributions to domestic work and care that women perform.</td>
<td>Source: The Statistical Institute of Belize. Labour Force Survey Tables Abril 2018. <a href="http://sib.org.bz/statistics/labour-force/">http://sib.org.bz/statistics/labour-force/</a> consulted 07/01/2019</td>
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<td>Unemployment rate (disaggregated by sex),</td>
<td>By April 2018, female unemployment is 15% while male unemployment is 6%. In rural areas, female unemployment rises to 16%. While only 1.5% of the unemployed are male heads of household, 7.7% are women.</td>
<td>Source: The Statistical Institute of Belize. Labour Force Survey Tables Abril 2018. <a href="http://sib.org.bz/statistics/labour-force/">http://sib.org.bz/statistics/labour-force/</a> consulted 07/01/2019</td>
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<td>Political participation rate (disaggregated by sex),</td>
<td>Belize has one of the lowest percentages of women holding seats in parliament. In 2017, the share of seats in parliament held by women was 11.1%. The House of Representatives is made up of 32 members, of which 3 are occupied by women (9.38%), The Senate consists of 13 members and women occupy 2 seats (15.38%) (2018)</td>
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Data from 2012 show that women achieve higher levels of participation in political positions such as municipal councils, village councils and mayors. In total, women were 25.9% of councilors and 22.2% of seniors.


Were are the women. A Study of Women, Politics, Parliaments and Equality in the CARICOM Countries.

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<th>Life expectancy (disaggregated by sex)</th>
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<td>In 2016, life expectancy for women is higher than men in approximately five and a half years. While women are expected to live 73.4 years, men barely reach 67.74 years.</td>
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Country of intervention

What is the legal status of women in the country of intervention?

The government of Belize is a signatory to all the main international conventions setting out rights for women. Entre ellos, the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) passed in 1979; this is the first international instrument that is not neutral in terms of gender, and promotes the creation of affirmative action measures to increase participation opportunities for women in all sectors. Mainly art. 14 refers to rural women.

At the national level, the legislation enshrines a series of principles and guarantees for all inhabitants. However, there are criticisms from groups of feminists and intellectuals that the national constitution is conservative and invisible to women.

Belize has a Gender Policy from 2013, which updates the previous Policy (designed in 2002 by the National Commission for Women, and approved by legislative bodies) and emphasizes the diversity of the Belizean population and the need for coordination and harmonization of strategies with other stakeholders, especially government institutions and civil society organizations.


What are commonly held beliefs, perceptions, and stereotypes related to gender

Traditional gender roles are maintained in Belize. Women continue to be responsible for domestic tasks and care. The stereotyped assignment of these roles assumes that their abilities lie in the performance of those tasks, limiting their opportunities to the private sphere of the family, affecting their participation in economic activities. Men, on the other hand, are assigned the tasks of economic character in the public sphere.
Despite advances in this area and evidence of women's work at the community level and in productive activities, these roles are reproduced in the family, school and other mechanisms that maintain these cultural patterns, mainly in rural areas.

What is the division of labour among women and men?

From the analysis of the activities carried out by men and women during the 24 hours a day, the imbalance in the allocation of domestic and care activities was evidenced, which are carried out in their totality by the women who dedicate an average of 8 hours to the day to its execution, while the men do not dedicate time to them (there was only one case of a man who invests 1 hour a day in going to pick up his children to school). This imbalance mainly affects the hours of rest (about 6 hours for men and 4 hours for women) and the participation of women in productive activities (10 hours for men and 7 hours for women). On average, both sleep the same amount of hours (7 hours).

Source: Consultations conducted in 2 workshops in the project area (January 10 and 14, 2019)

What is the participation between women and men in the formal/informal economy?

5 out of 10 women and 8 out of 10 men of working age are integrated into the workforce in Belize. The majority of both are services and sales workers (19% males and 34% females) or they work in elementary occupations (23% males and 17% females) *. The informal economy is also important in the country and it is women more than men who seek opportunities to generate income in this sector, although the amounts are low, the risks are high and the legal and social protection is very weak.


Project footprint area

What is the situation of women and men?

In the rural areas of Belize, families live mainly from agriculture and the provision of services, especially related to tourism. Most families involve more than one of their members in the activities of production and income generation. In the case of agricultural or other activities that take place close to the home, women are actively involved although they are usually unpaid family workers or simply are not recognized in their work, are not paid and are not considered part of the labor force.

While men are more linked to the activities of commercial production, women make a significant contribution to the food security of families and participate in the links of agricultural value chains related to the availability of raw materials (such as nurseries) and value aggregation (such as packaging and transformation).

Domestic tasks and care are performed by women and are not remunerated or socially recognized as a contribution to the family or national economy.

The sex of the individual has little influence on poverty rates with men having slightly higher poverty rates (42% of men are poor compared to 40% of women). However, the hardships caused by poverty are no equal on men and women; due to the responsibilities assigned by society to women, they will often experience the sharp end
of having to deal with the lack of adequate funds to maintain their household, particularly where they have no independent source of income (CPA, 2009).

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?

There are differences. The effects of tropical storms, hurricanes and other events such as droughts and floods are devastating for women, more so than for men. Due to women’s role within the family, particularly as caregivers, women assume much of the stress caused by these phenomena and suffers the effects of the lack of necessary resources for her attention.

The group most vulnerable to climate are women in conditions of poverty such as those who live in the project area, who are the most prone to suffer malnutrition due to the tendency to prioritize men for food consumption in the face of shortages. Chauvinist attitudes are also common, limiting the participation of women in decision-making about the handling of emergencies and the distribution of resources, including financial and material resources to reactivate agricultural and other activities, related to the generation of income.

Women have a different capacity to adapt than men, as a result of their roles in the family and the community. This capacity must be increased through access to decision-making and the necessary resources to face the emergencies caused by climate change and extreme climatic events, in its different manifestations.

Are there existing gender inequalities that may be exacerbated by climate change impacts in the proposed project/program footprint area?

The impacts of climate change could exacerbate gender inequalities in different ways, including:
- there may be an increase in women’s time dedicated to family care activities, given the limitations on access to resources and necessary services for their attention, among which the availability of food stands out,
- the economic losses produced by disasters can put at risk the availability of productive assets and household, making it more difficult for women to maintain or replace them due to their limitations of access to financing,
- if assistance to address the imbalances caused by climate change is limited and there is little participation of women in decision-making about its distribution, the likelihood of this resulting greater access by men to the detriment of women is quite high.

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?

Some of the inequalities that manifest themselves in the project area are:

Income inequality. Women receive less income for their work than men, even among those in the informal sector, placing them in a more vulnerable position due to their inability to acquire or restore their assets to adapt to climate change.

Inequality in access to goods and services. The supply of goods and services provided by institutions usually has a gender bias, relegating women’s access to the background after men. The limitations on access to land,
technology, technical assistance and other services limit their ability to adapt to climate change.

Inequality of access to information. Women are less exposed than men to the media that disseminate climate information or information about resources and services available to cope with the effects of climate-induced disasters. The availability of smartphones by the majority is an option to get information to women.

Inequality in capacity building opportunities. Although the formal education of women is slightly higher than that of men, their possibilities of receiving non-formal training on issues related to climate change is lower due to their low participation in existing organizations, mainly in productive ones in rural areas. and ignorance of their role in facing emergencies in the family and the community.

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<tr>
<th>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?</th>
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<td>Mechanisms will be established for women to participate in all the activities proposed by the project in an average of 40% of the total beneficiaries. Because women are currently underrepresented in small-farmer economic and productive organizations, they will act on the modification of traditional patterns of role assignment for men and women, so that they have more time to achieve the expected participation. The project will provide training in gender equality at all levels, provide resources for affirmative actions that help address existing barriers in organizations and communities that will benefit from the project, monitor their active participation in each of the project activities and build roads to facilitate the mobility of products and people.</td>
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<th>What resources (economic, financial, physical, natural, other assets) do women and men have access to? Who manages or controls access to these resources?</th>
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<td>According to the results of the consultations held during the formulation of the project, women, like men, consider that both have access to resources or assets of the home, resources for production and natural resources. However, although most women also consider that the control of these resources is in the hands of both, some believe that men have exclusive control over natural resources and in the case of men, although most believe that women in terms of shared control of resources, some consider that they have control over all resources. It emphasizes that neither men nor women assign control of resources in a unique way to women, as happens in the case of men.</td>
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Source: Consultations conducted in 2 workshops in the project area (January 10 and 14, 2019)

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<th>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?</th>
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<tr>
<td>Access to information on productive aspects and climate change is limited for both men and women, but mainly for women. In response to this limitation, the project will develop a climate information system and will support the improvement of market information technologies to make this information available to the rural communities that need it most. Small-farmers will be direct beneficiaries including men and women alike. Information and dissemination about events and activities of the project will be disseminated through means that guarantee the participation of men and women in the expected proportions.</td>
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<th>Do women have equal access to education, technical knowledge, and/or skill upgradation?</th>
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93% of women and 91% of men aged 15-24 living in Belize are literate. Women and men have equal access to formal education at all levels and before age 16 have equal percentages of attendance at formal education in different age groups. Women of working age have higher educational levels than men: they are less among the people with only the primary level (46% vs 40%) and they are the majority with the secondary level or more (44% vs 39%).

According to information from the LFS of April 2018, 32545 people from rural areas mentioned having received some type of training for work and of them 31% were women while in the urban area they are 40%. In the case of women, 61% received training related to Clerical / Service / Sales workers (25% of the men) while 53% of the men were trained in Skilled Agric / Craft / Plant & Machinery (and only the 18% of women). This information allows us to reflect on the lack of training for the work received by women in the topics of greatest interest to the project and justifies the efforts to bring the services related to agricultural value chains and climate change closer to women as well as to women. men gives rural families small-farmers.


Will services and technologies provided by the project/program be available and accessible to both women and men?

The Project will create mechanisms to guarantee the participation of women and men in the defined percentages. It will invest in technical assistance and training for better performance of both in prioritized value chains and markets, including the use of technologies that promote resilience and adaptation to climate change. They will have access to climate information systems and markets and prices of agricultural products. For their participation in POs, they will also have access to capacity building for organizational strengthening.

To what extent do women and men from vulnerable communities participate in decision – making processes? What type of decisions are made by women? What are the constrains (social, cultural, economic, political) that restrict women’s active participation in household and community level decision – making processes?

Women are responsible for decision-making at home. Within their communities, where possible, they occupy decision-making positions in organizations related to health, school and others related to their traditional domestic and care role. Their participation is limited in the decisions on political, productive and financial aspects that are considered of the scope of action of men

Are there any opportunities to promote the leadership of women in local governance/political systems and formal/informal institutions? If not, what are some of the constrains that hinder women from assuming leadership roles?

According to the available information, women have greater opportunities to occupy leadership positions in local politics than at the national level. Additionally, the 2011 Agricultural Census reveals that 30% of farmers are females who are in charge of taking decisions in all activities in their farms and more than 25% of women work in irrigation and water management.

In spite of the above, women in rural areas have little participation in producer organizations and their participation in value chains and adaptation to climate change has not been made visible, so their opportunities
for leadership are diminished. The project proposes to increase the participation of women in OPs and their presence in leadership positions that can then be scaled up to institutional and political levels, as has been the experience in other countries with projects executed by IFAD. It will also provide more information about the participation of women in value chains and climate change, to identify niches of opportunity for their participation in decision-making in those fields.

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 respective needs and priorities? If so, how?

Once informed about the objectives of the consultations and provided the central information of the project, the participants analyzed their needs and priorities. For this, they focused on the activities they carry out in the agricultural value chains in which they participate. The priority needs common to men and women are: irrigation systems, road access to farm, cover structures, seeds to plant, chemicals and tools. The men also prioritized processing for vegetables, machinery and equipment and women, supplies for canning, small machineries, cold storage and nurseries.

The project’s strategy is based on the confluence of the building resilience to climate change, extreme climatic events and the agricultural value chain approach, which allow integrating the needs and priorities expressed by the people during the consultation. The project will make available to the producer organizations resources of the Matching Grant Fund (MGF) for the financing of initiatives framed in value chains prioritized from the link of raw material to the market and will have technical assistance and training for their development considering climate change. Additionally, this fund will allow investing in affirmative actions that favor the participation of women in the initiatives that are financed.

Source: Consultations conducted in 2 workshops in the project area (January 10 and 14, 2019)

Have the needs of specific (and vulnerable) sub-groups been taken into account by the project/program (e.g. children, girls, women and men with disabilities, the elderly, widows)?

The project especially takes into account women and young people, integrating them as direct beneficiaries of the project by 40% and 20% respectively. Other subgroups are not differentiated as direct beneficiaries of the project, although because they are part of the families served directly and indirectly, they will benefit from the implementation of the project.

Has the project/program recognized the distinct vulnerabilities of women and men and developed specific response strategies for each target group?

The Programme recognizes the importance of addressing the gender restrictions and inequalities that mainly affect women and adopts measures so that producer organizations not only increase the participation of women but also identify participatively the restrictions that affect their participation and act to eliminate them.

Are the specific knowledge and skills of women and men, especially from vulnerable groups, being utilised to contribute to project/program outcomes and solutions?

The meeting of knowledge and specific skills of men and women, with the expertise, technological innovations and financing provided by the project will make it possible to achieve the expected results and impacts on the families and communities of the selected area. The different characteristics, forms of participation and
experiences in the production and adaptation to climate change of men and women, will be used to their own benefit by providing opportunities for economic empowerment and increasing their resilience to adverse climate events.

**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?**

The project considers training in gender equality as the best resource to modify the sociocultural aspects that act in the stereotyped assignment of roles and values for men and women. This training will be carried out to all the groups directly linked to the implementation of the project, namely PMU, MED and MOA, consultants, field technical teams, and project participants. This training, as far as project implementers are concerned, should provide practical tools for its action with a focus on gender equality, according to specific responsibilities. The effects of this training will be monitored constantly in order to reinforce when necessary.

Additionally, the project contemplates the allocation of economic resources for the development of practical actions that favor the participation of women in the project and can be actively integrated into the different activities.

Another important action is the assignment of women’s participation goals that mean an increase in relation to the situation existing at the beginning of the project, seeking greater equality between men and women.

**Strategy for Gender Equality and Social Inclusion**

This assessment including the focus groups developed, as well as the preliminary study presented in appendix 2 particularly sections A and C, in relation to gender and the situation of women and youth served as the basis for the formulation of the project strategy gender equality and social inclusion.

Following IFADs participatory approach and operational model, the project will use three instruments throughout project implementation to gather the additional information to feed development of gender sensitive IPPs: rolling baseline studies at project beginning, the Climate Vulnerability Assessment and the Value Chains Analysis and Market Assessment. These will in turn be utilized to shape project specific action plans under strict guidelines to be included in the Programme Implementation Manual.

In the case of baseline studies, the indicators generated will be gender sensitive and differentiated by age groups between young people and adults. (PIM, 4.7). In addition, through the studies included in component 1 (Appendix 4, 1.1.), specific information on climate vulnerability and value chains will be obtained. Specifically, The Climate Vulnerability Assessment, as part of its bottom-up approach, will provide information on the vulnerability and adaptive capacity of different social groups, including groups of women and youth, providing specific information for each of the 5 priority areas. The Climate Vulnerability Assessment will translate these findings into gender-sensitive guidelines to prioritize management strategies for climate change adaptation. Value Chains Analysis and Market Assessment will provide particular attention will be given to analysing the role of women and youth. The methodology should specifically consult, and identify opportunities for both women and men. This information will be used to improve efficiencies in the production, processing and marketing of the products and promote youth and women’s participation in all stages of the value chain through the implementation of the business plans.
Complementing the Development of Infrastructure Production Plans (IPP), built for each area based on the Climate Vulnerability Assessment and the Value Chains Analysis and Market Assessments, an analysis and consolidation of the information collected on gender and social inclusion will be carried out. Thereby supporting definition of opportunity niches for increased and strengthened participation of women and young people in climate resilient actions and value chains. The elaboration of Plans of Action on Gender and social inclusion in each area, based on the information obtained from the studies mentioned above, during the first year of implementation of the programme, will serve to achieve greater specificity and concreteness in the proposals of the Strategy.

The Strategy of Social Inclusion and Gender is based on the mainstreaming of both concepts throughout most of the activities, in order to guarantee the increase in the participation of women and young people, the strengthening of their capacities in different fields and their access to all the benefits offered by the program. Some specific activities are carried out as affirmative measures and have a differentiated budget.

- In addition to the above, component 1 includes Producers Organizations Strengthened (Subcomponent 1.2) that includes training. For this, Organizational Development Plans will be developed. They will take into account gender differences, as well as the specific needs of women and young people. This program includes among its themes: gender equality and social inclusion, which will be given to all beneficiaries. It also contemplates the realization of Equality-Gender learning route for beneficiaries and a "pilot" Program that includes the preparation of young men and women (50% women) from the communities to be managers of the Local Organizations.

- As part of Subcomponent 1.3: Climate Resilient production and marketing, organizations will design value chain Business Plans (BPs). One of the principles that will guide the development of BP will be: Social Inclusion and Gender: The organization must show the expected number of women and youth partners, (close to 40% women and 20% youth). Based on a participatory analysis, each organization will define the measures to be taken to encourage the participation of women and youth and make affirmative action be necessary. These actions are part of the PB of the organization.

- For the selection and financing of productive initiatives through the Matching Grant Fund though (MGF), measures are included such as:
  
  - The Calls for proposals for the Matching Grants Fund, will explicitly mention the Program’s target group and specifically invite young people and female farmers to participate.
  
  - Promote the participation of women and young people and their level of participation in the organization will receive different scores. If they meet the percentages of 40% and 20% or more, they will receive the highest score.
  
  - One cross cutting sub-category of the MGF investment will be affirmative action in favor of women and youth or other at need groups. For example, domestic load relief, and other specialized courses. Regulations to be specified in PIM.

- Regarding Technical Assistance, they will guarantee equal participation of women in the same proportion as that of their involvement in POs for Climate Resilient production planning and marketing. The MoA Climate staff and extension agents (PMU) will receive training in gender equality concepts and practical tips as to how to ensure equal male and female participation in extension, training, farmer to farmer training, and technical assistance.
• While women are less involved in marketing, the Program marketing support will take into consideration that between 14-18% of marketing of grains, permanent crops, and vegetables are carried out by women, and they must be part of the participants in training, fairs, buyer / seller encounters.

• Backyard gardens for Increased resilience and food-security, contemplate a greater participation of women and will be promoted to approximately 60%.

• Component 2 Climate Resilient Rural Infrastructure and Assets (CRRIA) (Sub-component 2.2) considers that the participation of women should be promoted during the creation and strengthening of The water users’ groups (WUGs). The program will facilitate the participation of women as members and as leaders involved in decision making in organizations on water use.

• Research and Development is considered part of the Cross Cutting Activities. In these studies, special attention will be given to providing technological options adapted to the needs of women and young people, according to their participation in value chains and backyard gardens. It will also take advantage of the study of productive conversion possibilities of cane producers in the district of Corozal, to identify opportunities for women and young people to be integrated into value chains with alternative basic products. This action will reinforce the inclusion and gradual incorporation of Corozal District communities that meet the criteria established by the Program.

• Project will finance capacity building for GoB staff through its participation in a learning route to look at aspects related to climate resiliency, rural organization strengthening, and gender equality and social inclusion.