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The engagement of men in Women's Economic Empowerment interventions

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ABBREVIATIONS

AfT	Aid for Trade
AGIL	Africa Gender Innovation Lab
GAD	Gender and Development
GALS	Gender Action Learning System
GBV	Gender Based Violence
PSD	Private Sector Development
RCT	Randomized Controlled Trial
RVO	The Netherlands Enterprise Agency
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UN	United Nations
VSL	Voluntary savings and loans
WB	World Bank
WE	Women Empowerment
WEE	Women's Economic Empowerment
WID	Women in Development
WTO	World Trade Organization

LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

List of Tables

Table 1	Operationalization of variables
Table 2	Information of participants

List of figures

Figure 1	Women's Economic Empowerment Framework
Figure 2	Conceptual Framework
Figure 3	Type of interventions for WEE
Figure 4	Benefits of including men in WEE interventions
Figure 5	Challenges for engaging men in WEE interventions
Figure 6	Guidelines for a better engagement of men in WEE interventions
Figure 7	Relevant topics for WEE
Figure 8	Comparison between challenges and guidelines
Figure 9	Main contributions of the engagement of men to WEE

ABSTRACT

In the context of PSD, gender-based constraints are assessed through different programs implemented by development organizations who aim to achieve WEE. Traditionally, these organizations tend to design interventions in which only women are part of the target group. Even when this seems to make sense, these interventions overlook the fact that paying attention to the context in which women live is essential for the effectiveness of the programs. Part of this context is men. Men who are unaware of the benefits of WEE, who do not take responsibility of the household tasks or who make business or household decisions individually do not enable women to put in practice the knowledge and tools gained during the WEE interventions. Not paying attention to the context also prevents development organizations from realizing that men also have a lot to gain from the fight against gender stereotypes and inequalities.

With the experience of the 16 development organizations that were interviewed, this thesis evaluates the role of men in WEE interventions, the benefits and challenges of their engagement and makes recommendations for a better way to approach and engage men in this type of interventions. These results provide development organizations with the elements to continue giving steps towards more comprehensive interventions in which not only the needs of women are targeted but also the concerns and frustrations of men are understood and assessed. The benefits of this approach are not only enjoyed by women but also by men, families, communities, and society at large.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	2
ABBREVIATIONS	3
LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES	4
List of Tables	4
List of figures.....	4
ABSTRACT.....	5
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	6
I. INTRODUCTION	8
II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND	10
II.1 Private Sector Development	10
II.2 Aid for Trade	12
II.3 Women’s Economic Empowerment	13
II.4 Women in Development and Gender and Development approaches	14
II.5 Men’s engagement	16
II.6 Conceptual Framework.....	19
III. RESEARCH DESIGN.....	20
III.1 Research aim and questions	20
III.2 Methodology.....	20
III.2.1 Research methods.....	20
III.2.2 Data collection	21
III.2.3 Operationalization of variables.....	21
III.3 Data analysis	23
III.4 Potential limitations and ethical considerations	23
IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION.....	24
IV.1 Key concepts	24
IV.1.1 Understanding of “gender intervention”	24
IV.1.2 Understanding of WEE	25
IV.1.3 Main interventions used for achieving WEE	26
IV.2 Benefits and challenges of including men in WEE interventions.....	28
IV.2.1 Benefits of engaging men in WEE interventions.....	28
IV.2.2 Challenges for engaging men in WEE interventions	35
IV.3 Guidelines for a better engagement of men in WEE interventions.....	42
IV.3.1 Relevant contextual information	43

IV.3.2	Role of men in the interventions	46
IV.3.3	Ways of approaching and engaging men.....	47
IV.3.4	Important topics for WEE.....	50
IV.3.5	Recommended approaches/dynamics	52
IV.4	Experience of development organizations with men engagement.....	55
V.	CONCLUSIONS	56
VI.	REFERENCES	60
	Appendix 1 – Information of participants.....	65
	Appendix 2 – Interview Guide.....	67
	Appendix 3 – Infographic: How to engage men in WEE interventions?.....	69

I. INTRODUCTION

For the past decades, PSD has been a key concept guiding the development agenda (Capacity4dev, n.d.; UNDP, n.d.). Many scholars affirm that it is the engine of growth (Black & O’Bright, 2016) and that it is essential for achieving poverty reduction (Schulpen & Gibbon, 2002). The emphasis on PSD is also present in the discourse of international organizations and development institutions like the United Nations (UN) and the World Bank (WB) (The World Bank, 2002; UNDP, n.d.) and it has been recognized by the European Commission as a key driver of economic growth, employment, and improvement of living conditions (European Commission, 2019b). Dutch development organizations follow the same trend. The Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO) and Dutch NGOs work in private sector development aiming to reduce poverty in developing countries (Schulpen & Gibbon, 2002).

The way in which these organizations work for PSD varies depending on the topic and region. The interventions that are most commonly mentioned in the literature are microfinance and credits (Black & O’Bright, 2016); integration into international trading systems (Higgins & Prowse, 2010), transferring knowledge on market requirements and skills (Humphrey & Navas-Alemán, 2010). Even when these interventions seem to be beneficial for achieving sustainable development, their negative aspects have been discussed by different authors. One important point is that PSD looks almost only to economic growth and not at the social context in which it is encouraged (Cagatay, 2001); and part of this context is gender. Gender differences in distribution of income; poor working conditions; access to assets (credit and land, for example), and complex power relations regarding resources limit the extent to which women can benefit from a more robust private sector and open international trade (Higgins & Prowse, 2010; Jones & Baker, 2008).

In order to tackle the above-mentioned barriers, effective policies and interventions are needed. In the context of PSD, several development organizations design and execute projects and interventions in developing countries, especially targeting only women, aiming to achieve economic empowerment and reduce the existent differences with their male counterparties. These interventions – the ones designed by development organizations for achieving WEE – are the type of PSD interventions analyzed in this research. WEE refers to the possibility of women to participate equally in the market; and to be able to control and make decisions regarding their income, resources, and assets at an individual, household and community level (UN Women, 2018). For this research, WEE is defined in a comprehensive way including the tools to act (in the market, like for example assets, skills, time, education) and the power to do it, which includes self-esteem, capabilities, and decision-making (Fair & Sustainable & AgriProFocus, 2017).

The problem with interventions that include only women as part of their target population is that they do not take into account that gender is a relational issue. Relations between men and women have been socially and historically constructed and their study is important in order to understand the existent hierarchy between both genders (Cornwall, 2000). Changing gender relations in order to make women have equal opportunities in the private sector implies changing both men and women, which is one of the reasons why the former group should also be engaged in gender interventions (Hearn, 2001). In fact, studies have shown that workshops aiming to generate empowerment and improve women’s self-esteem are not really effective when women do not have the support of their male partners in their private lives (Chant & Gutmann, 2002). WEE interventions in which men are not included can even reinforce the hostilities between men and women. It increases the possibilities of

men reacting in a defensive way towards the interventions, which negatively affects women (Chant & Gutmann, 2000).

Additionally, women-only Interventions do not take into account that men are gendered beings who also suffer from unequal gender relations (Flood, 2007; Wanner & Wadham, 2015). A masculine stereotype has been imposed on many men putting pressure on them about the finance of the household, the need to be “tough” and not as sensitive as women (Chattopadhyay, 2004; DAW UN, 2008). In that sense, the engagement of men in WEE interventions helps creating awareness of these stereotypes and reflecting about them, about gender inequality and also about how a change on the understanding of masculinity is also beneficial for men.

Despite the existence of the previously mentioned benefits, men’s engagement in WEE interventions it is not the trend followed by most development organizations when designing and implementing WEE interventions. It still seems to be an open debate whether it is more effective to include men in gender interventions which aim to create WEE and how to do it. The research that has been done is centered mostly in sexual health, household roles, fatherhood and violence (Chant & Gutmann, 2000; Wanner & Wadham, 2015). This thesis analyzes the interventions designed and executed by organizations working on PSD in order to learn from their experience of why (or why not) men should be included in PSD interventions that aim to achieve WEE and how they consider it is the best way to do it.

This research was done as part of an internship at the International Development Department of RVO. RVO is a Dutch governmental agency that operates as part of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy (RVO, n.d.-a). Their aim is to *“improve opportunities for entrepreneurs, strengthen their position and help them realise their international ambitions with funding, networking, know-how, and compliance with laws and regulation”* (RVO, n.d.-a). RVO works in PSD helping developing countries achieve sustainable economic growth, through different programs (RVO, n.d.-b). More information about their projects is available on the IATI website of RVO (<https://aiddata.rvo.nl/>). Gender mainstreaming is part of the agency’s activities. This makes them interested in gaining knowledge about different ways of improving the economic position of women in developing countries. The inclusion of men in PSD interventions and the way development organizations are working on it at the moment is of special interest for RVO since it is reputed to boost the effectiveness of these interventions.

In order to gain more knowledge on how development organizations approach the topic of men’s engagement, in-depth interviews were conducted in which representatives of these organizations shared their experience working in WEE and gender development in general. This research included not only NGOs as participants but also consultancies, foundations, companies, state agencies and independent consultants in order to approach the topic from different perspectives. In the same line, both Dutch and also international organizations were interviewed in order to have different experiences from the same topic and in that way enrich the data.

This thesis is divided into four sections. Section II presents the theoretical background, which contains the literature review of the main topics and discussions that are related to the engagement of men in WEE interventions. The research design is included in Section III, in which the methods for data collection and data analysis are explained in detail. The results of this research and the discussion are presented in Section IV. Finally, Section V contains the conclusions.

II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

This section contains the literature review of the relevant academic topics and current debates that are related to men's engagement in gender programs in the context of PSD interventions. These topics are PSD; Aid for Trade; Women's Economic Empowerment, Women in Development and Gender and Development; and, men's engagement.

II.1 Private Sector Development

Private sector is defined as the *“basic organizing principle for economic activity where private ownership is an important factor, where markets and competition drive production and where private initiative and risk-taking set activities in motion”* (Kragelund, 2004). The actors of the private sector are for-profit organizations as, for example, financial institutions, companies (multinationals, micro, small and medium-sized enterprises), co-operatives, entrepreneurships, among others (DAC, 2016).

In the late 1950s, the private sector started to be understood as an agent of economic growth and poverty reduction for developing countries (Kragelund, 2004). The realization of the private market as an engine of growth (Kragelund, 2004; UNDP, n.d.) led to the emergence of a general consensus between the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, western governments, and policy-makers, among others (Black & O'Bright, 2016). The four main points of that agreement were: (i) poverty reduction is the main objective of development; (ii) economic growth is central for achieving development; (iii) the private sector is the best tool to achieve economic growth; and, (iv) the role of the governments is to create appropriate conditions for the developing of the private sector and ensure that the growth contributes to poverty reduction (Schulpen & Gibbon, 2002).

For the past decades, the development of the private sector has been a key concept guiding the development agenda (Capacity4dev, n.d.; UNDP, n.d.). PSD refers to the interventions performed by development organizations, government, investors among others, that aim to “promote an environment conducive to the establishment and growth of the private sector in developing countries” (Di Bella, Grant, Kindornay, & Tissot, 2013).

The interventions for PSD can be performed at different levels. First, macro-level interventions are centered on creating an environment that allows the private sector to grow. They normally take the form of recommendations for the improvement of legal and economic frameworks (focused on property rights, market regulation) (Di Bella et al., 2013) or for example lobbying for better regulation for Small and Medium Enterprises (Helmsing & Knorrninga, 2007), among others. Second, meso-level interventions are those that focus on solving market failures in order to generate a competitive terrain for all actors (Di Bella et al., 2013); examples of this level of PSD interventions are the integration into international trading systems (Higgins & Prowse, 2010), transference of knowledge on market requirements and skills, helping small enterprises to gain market access and capacity building (Humphrey & Navas-Alemán, 2010). Third, micro-level interventions are focused on particular firms and people and aim to provide support services in order to ensure long-term growth (Di Bella et al., 2013). Examples of this level of interventions are microfinance and credits (Black & O'Bright, 2016) and also investments in health, education and vocational skills trainings (Di Bella et al., 2013).

PSD interventions are considered to be essential for poverty reduction (Schulpen & Gibbon, 2002) as they contribute with job and income creation; development of infrastructure; human capital and

workforce development; the transmission of scientific and technological knowledge; among others (Nelson, 2010; The World Bank, 2002). For this reason, the emphasis on PSD is present and becoming more important in the discourse of international organizations and development institutions. The UN and the WB recognize the importance of the private sector in achieving sustainable development, ending all forms of poverty and helping people to improve their quality of life (The World Bank, 2002; UNDP, n.d.). The approach can also be found on the European Commission's discourse, especially since 2011, in which PSD has been understood as a key driver of economic growth, employment, and improvement of living conditions (European Commission, 2019b).

In the Netherlands, both governmental and non-governmental entities are also engaged in PSD as a way to reduce poverty in developing countries (Schulpen & Gibbon, 2002). On behalf of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, RVO designs programs focused on innovative investment projects, transfer of technology, knowledge, and skills, as a way of supporting sustainable economic growth (RVO, n.d.-b). Dutch NGOs also follow this trend: an empirical study of their operations over the last 35 years, showed that their approach has changed from a supply-side focus (provision of only goods and tools for increasing income and employment) (OECD, 2007) to an enterprise development focus (Helmsing & Knorringa, 2007), in which the transference of only resources is accompanied by trainings and skills transference in order to enable a long-lasting and sustainable change in the private sector of the developing countries that they are assisting.

The study of gender relations is essential in the context of PSD interventions because the position of women regarding the distribution of income and access to assets may limit their opportunities in the private sector in both wage employment and entrepreneurial activity (Cagatay, 2001; Higgins & Prowse, 2010). For example, in the context of Sub-Saharan Africa, evidence shows that due to differential access to important resources for employment as time, skills and capital it is more complicated for women than for men to obtain a wage job (Chakravarty, Das, & Vaillant, 2017). This is why 74% of women are self-employed or family workers. Self-employment is considered to be a vulnerable way of employment because of the informality in which these occupations tend to operate (Chakravarty et al., 2017).

On the other hand, a synthesis study elaborated by the Africa Gender Innovation Lab (AGIL) demonstrates that women entrepreneurs also face different challenges such as less access to education, capital, networks, and information; less time to dedicate to paid work because of the allocation of their time to household activities and childcare (Campos & Gassier, 2017). These differences in access to education, networks, time, etc., create an uneven playing field which results in differences in business practices; different levels of sophistication of the entrepreneurship, sector segregation (women tend to be concentrated in less profitable sectors such as beauty salons due to, for example, lack of skills or knowledge for working in a more profitable sector as mechanics). These constraints have as a consequence that female-owned enterprises tend to underperform – in terms of profit and growth – the ones owned by their male counterparties (Campos & Gassier, 2017).

Interventions that aim to foster the private sector in developing countries need to take these constraints into account in order to have a positive impact on both women and men, without widening the gender gap.

II.2 Aid for Trade

The evidence indicates that the openness and liberalization of the market are key for achieving growth and therefore development (OECD & WTO, 2009). In fact, most of the developing countries that have shown a fast poverty reduction have also had as a strategy a global market expansion and a sustained high economic growth (OECD & WTO, 2009). This indicates the relevance of economic growth and market openness for development. This initiative is considered as essential for achieving the SDGs, specifically SDG 8, which aims to achieve sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for everyone (UN, n.d.).

The idea of AfT was developed after the realization that the mere existence of access to trade does not really help poorer countries, who have to deal with the adjustment costs and barriers that liberalization of trade and globalization imply (WTO, n.d.). Normally, in developing countries there is lack of the necessary infrastructure for exporting like ports, roads or even electricity; and of technologies and knowledge that allow companies to benefit from a more open trade (Stiglitz & Charlton, 2006). In that sense, the central objective of AfT is to assist developing countries in the assessment of barriers to trade (Calì & te Velde, 2011; Stiglitz & Charlton, 2006) and build capacity in terms of policies, institutions, and infrastructure (OECD/WTO, 2008) so they can benefit from increasing global exchanges.

The importance of AfT for development has also been recognized by the European Commission and the World Trade Organization (WTO) and they both adopt it as a strategy for helping developing countries to face internal constraints and be opened to the benefits of trade (European Commission, 2019a; WTO, n.d.). The interventions that are designed as part of AfT strategies are coordination for identification of externalities; developing technology; skills formation; credits schemes; access to finance; development of infrastructure; among others (Calì & te Velde, 2011). So far, around 300 billion dollars have been destined by donor governments to 146 developing countries, in the context of AfT. The sectors with more attention are transportation and storage, energy generation and supply, agriculture and banking and financial services (OECD/WTO, 2017).

When analyzing if AfT has positive impacts on development, it is important to reflect on if both women and men benefit equally (Higgins & Prowse, 2010). As it was described for PSD, women face some constraints when entering the labor or entrepreneurial market that prevent them from enjoying all the benefits of trade openness and exportation (Jones & Baker, 2008). A research conducted in Tanzania, Mozambique, and Jamaica showed that women were in a less advantaged position in terms of access to resources than men due to poor infrastructure; restricted access to land and credit; labor discrimination; and, complex and unfavorable power relations over the resources. The researchers concluded that because of those reasons, they could not benefit from the interventions, leading to a broader gap between male and female farmers (Fontana, 2009).

In addition, the increase of international trade tends to be more beneficial for medium and large producers, which is not the case of most women farmers in Sub-Saharan Africa who tend to be small scale farmers because of lack of access to credit, technology, and other important tools that allow companies to grow in the market and benefit from PSD interventions or programs (Cagatay, 2001). A research conducted in Latin America shows the same trend. Unpaid work in that region has been traditionally assigned to women, who spend much more time than men executing household tasks and childcare activities. Additionally, Latin American women are still lagging behind in terms of equal access to land titles and credits (Jones & Baker, 2008). In this scenario, trade liberalization may

generate more employment among women but it tends to be in the service sector where less qualified workers are needed (Jones & Baker, 2008).

These circumstances should be taken into account when designing and executing PSD and AfT interventions in order to ensure that the benefits can be enjoyed by both men and women in the same way. A relevant topic connected to this one is Women's Economic Empowerment and the way this can be achieved through the mentioned interventions, which is described in the following section.

II.3 Women's Economic Empowerment (WEE)

According to literature, the term "empowerment" has been defined in different ways, depending on the context and the topic under study (Calvès, 2010; Malhotra, Schuler, & Boender, 2002; World Bank, 2016). Most authors define it as a process (Kabeer, 1999; Miles, 2016; World Bank, n.d., 2016), the process *"of enhancing the capacity of individuals or groups to make choices and to transform those choices into desired actions and outcomes"* (World Bank, 2016). According to this definition, "empowerment" implies change: the change from a status in which the individual or groups of individuals did not have the possibility to decide to one in which they have it (Kabeer, 2005).

In the case of Women Empowerment, it has been defined as *"the process through which women gain the capacity for exercising strategic forms of agency in relation to their own lives and in relation to larger structures of constraint that position them as subordinated to men"* (Miles, 2016). The definition of this concept has not found a consensus in the literature, but most scholars define Women Empowerment around two key elements: resources and agency (Malhotra et al., 2002). WEE has been defined in the same way. It has been stated that the sole participation of women in economic activities does not imply that they are empowered (Rijke, 2017). This is why in the literature and in the discourse of most development organizations, WEE it is also based on the existence of both resources and agency (Golla, Malhotra, Nanda, & Mehra, 2011; UN Women, 2018).

In the context of WEE, resources are understood as enabling factors or pre-conditions for empowerment (Kabeer, 1999; Malhotra et al., 2002). This element includes material (conventional economic sense) and also human and social resources that are necessary for having the ability to decide (Kabeer, 1999). Examples of resources are education, employment (Malhotra et al., 2002) literacy, skills, (Aslop, Bertelsen, & Holland, 2007), land equipment, among others (Rijke, 2017). Agency, on the other hand, is referred as the *"ability to define one's goals and act upon them"* (Kabeer, 1999) or the possibility to *"formulate strategic choices, control resources and decisions"* (Malhotra et al., 2002). Examples of agency are decision-making in their personal lives and also in a community level (Slegh, Barker, Kimonyo, Ndolimana, & Bannerman, 2013); bargaining, and negotiation in and outside the household, deception, and manipulation, subversion and resistance, reflection and analysis, among others (Kabeer, 1999).

This comprehensive definition of WEE is the one adopted in this research and it is reflected in the following framework developed by Fair & Sustainable and Agriprofocus (2017):

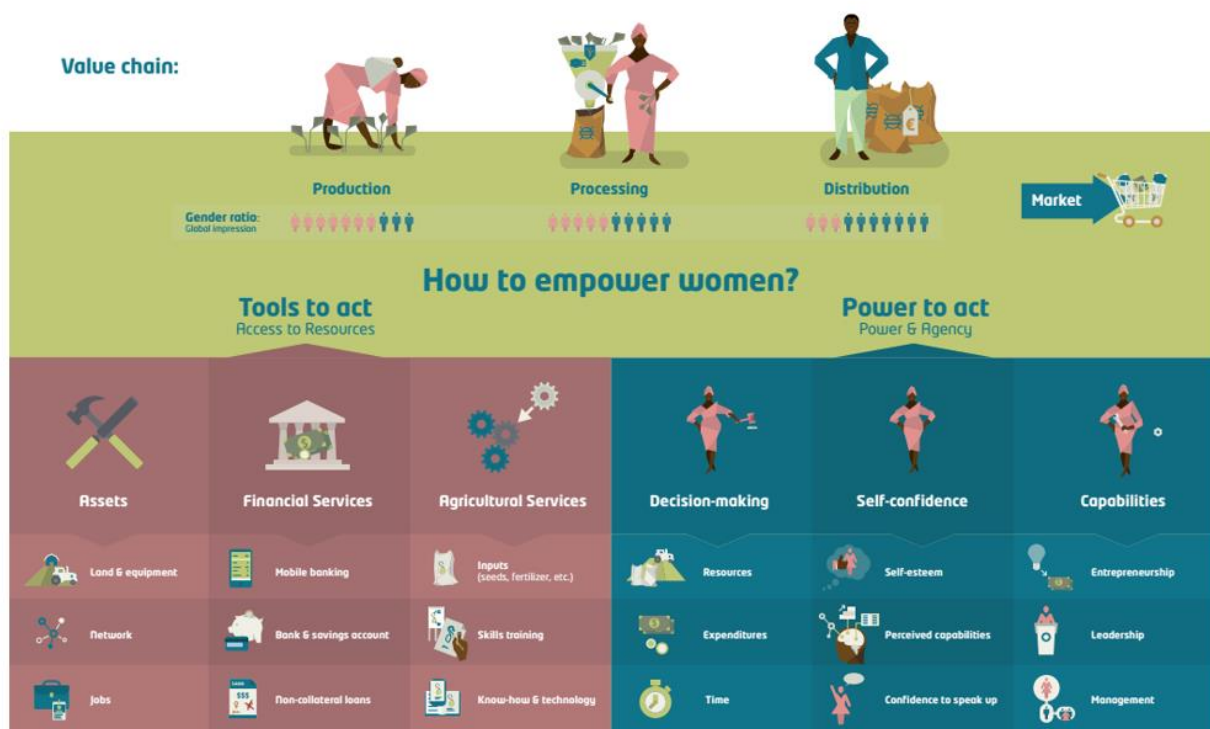


Figure 1: Women's Economic Empowerment Framework. Elaborated by Fair&Sustainable and AgriProFocus

As it was mentioned in the previous paragraphs, this framework contains a broad definition of WEE that includes the previously mentioned general elements of empowerment: resources and agency (Markel, 2014). The relevance of this framework for this research is also given by the fact that it is used by RVO and some other organizations (like AgriProFocus and Fair&Sustainable) which were interviewed for this research for including gender in their private sector development interventions. Using the same framework and definition of WEE makes it easier to integrate the results of this research (the engagement of men in WEE interventions) in ongoing and future projects that are based in the understanding of WEE as a conjunction of tools and power.

Even when some change has been achieved, the programs and interventions designed by development organizations are not yet proven to be fully effective to overcome the constraints faced by women in the labor market (ActionAid Kenya et al., 2018). An open discussion on how to improve the outcomes of the mentioned interventions is the inclusion of men as part of the target population of these interventions (White, 2000). As it is elaborated on section IV of this thesis, their engagement contributes mostly for achieving the second element of WEE: power to act.

The next section contains the description of a theoretical change in the main concepts that define the gender agenda of development organizations.

II.4 Women in Development (WID) and Gender and Development (GAD) approaches

The way in which gender inequality has been approached in the interventions designed and executed by development organizations has been re-evaluated over time by development organizations and scholars (Brown, 2007). Relevant for this research is the change from Women in Development (WID) to Gender and Development (GAD), which is explained in the following paragraphs.

The concept of WID started in the 1970s (Chant & Gutmann, 2000) after Ester Boserup's publication of *Women's Role in Economic Development*. She was the first to point out the sexual division of labor in African agrarian economies and how modernization had different effects on men and women, being less favorable for the latest group (Rathgeber, 1990). This is explained by the fact that in agricultural settings, for example, new technologies were presented to men and not to women, making it less likely for female farmers to improve their production (Boserup, 1970). The same trend was observed in industrialized economies, in which women were allocated to the lowest-paying positions due to their lower levels of education (Rathgeber, 1990).

The term WID was used by the Women's Committee of the Washington DC chapter of the Society for International Development (Tinker, 1990) and further discussed at the World Conference of the International Women's Year and the UN Decade for Women. WID soon started to gain international importance and raised awareness of the need to improve the education, employment opportunities and political participation of women (Razavi & Miller, 1995).

At that time, it was identified that development agencies and NGOs were focused only in women's roles as mothers and wives and the policies and programs were concentrated in social welfare concerns as nutritional education and home economics. For WID theorists, no longer should women be considered as passive objects of welfare policies and programs, they should be considered as active contributors of economic development (Tinker, 1990), arguing that the origins of women's subordination were linked to their exclusion from the market (Razavi & Miller, 1995). In that regard, for this approach, the integration of women on productive labor became the main objective (Razavi & Miller, 1995).

WID has been criticized mainly in two aspects that are relevant for this research. First, it has a limited scope. Its main goal is to include women in economic development but without challenging or paying attention to the other roles that women would continue playing due to their relationship with men (reproductive and community responsibilities) (Brown, 2007; Chant & Gutmann, 2000; Goebel & Epprecht, 2006). Second, WID has been also criticized by defining "development" only as economic development and assuming that this Western understanding of development is shared and suitable for every developing country (Brown, 2007).

The GAD approach was developed in the late 1980s as a response to WID and the critiques mentioned above (Cornwall, 2000). The main difference is that it moves from analyzing only women to analyzing gender and gender relations (Brown, 2007; Dover, 2014; Wanner & Wadham, 2015). In that sense, *"it aims to explore the social, economic, political and cultural forces that determine how men and women participate, benefit and control project resources and activities"* (Brown, 2007). The GAD approach understands that gender is a socially and historically constructed term that needs to be analyzed in that way in order to understand the existent hierarchy between both genders (Cornwall, 2000; Rathgeber, 1990). Its focus is on women's roles in society and also the interaction of these roles with the ones of men (Brown, 2007).

This approach acknowledges that there are different factors that may shape people's lives, such as social, economic, cultural, legal and political aspects (Chant, 2000). In that sense, it states that when working on women's empowerment, power should be built in order to learn from their viewpoints when designing and executing interventions and policies (Brown, 2007). For this perspective, interventions should not only give women the tools to increase their income and participate in economic activities but also that they should be empowered in order to challenge and change current

gender roles that are not favorable for them (Brown, 2007). This change relates to the definition of WEE used in this research. The change from WID to GAD points out the relevance of looking at the power to act (second element of WEE) and not only at the importance of giving resources to women in order to fully achieve WEE.

The main criticism to GAD is that its practical application is far behind its principles because it recognizes the importance of treating gender as a relational issue, but development organizations continue to design and mainly women-only interventions (Brown, 2007; Chant, 2000; Wanner & Wadham, 2015). The literature explains this by pointing out that GAD's goals are much more challenging than the ones of WID since it aims to change social structures and institutions, which is complicated to achieve (Rathgeber, 1990). For example, the traditional belief systems that are created by religion or social norms suggest that men should work outside the house as the breadwinner and women are in charge of providing care and running the household (Promundo, 2018). These roles are usually understood as naturally and biologically established (Wanner & Wadham, 2015), which makes it more complicated to achieve a change in the current structures and role distribution of tasks.

The approach development organizations have regarding gender issues has an influence in the type of interventions they design and can have an impact on, for example, their willingness to include men in gender interventions and the way it is done. The debate on this specific topic – men's engagement – is explained in the following section.

II.5 Men's engagement

Related to the discussion presented in the previous section is the importance of looking and analyzing the multiplicity of factors that shape women's empowerment. One factor that has high relevance for this research is the relationship between men and women (Brown, 2007; Dover, 2014). There is an increasing interest in working with men and boys for achieving gender equality and WEE (Dover, 2014; Wanner & Wadham, 2015). In fact, in 1995 in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the UN (1995) encouraged men to participate in gender equality and pointed out the relevance of men and women working together in order to successfully achieve the same goal.

Besides what has been said in the literature and what is present in the discourse of the development organizations, there is little evidence that men's engagement in gender interventions is happening in a significant proportion (Wanner & Wadham, 2015). According to literature, the main reasons why the inclusion of men in gender these interventions are not yet popular within development organizations are the following. First, there is the fear of women of losing the small terrain that has been gained. This means that there is the idea that the inclusion of men would have as a consequence to miss the focus that now is placed on women (White, 2000). Second, other scholars point out that development organizations already work with a limited budget for gender interventions and including men would imply the division of the resources between both groups, reducing, even more, the budget that could be dedicated to women-only interventions (Chant & Gutmann, 2002).

Third, there is a risk of men taking over the projects without any improvement in terms of equality (Chant & Gutmann, 2002). It is considered that in most of the cases men are in a more favorable position (better educated, access to financial tools, access to assets, etc.) and therefore they are able to take more advantage of the intervention, leaving women in a worse place than if the interventions would have been designed including only female participants.

Besides these concerns, a larger sector of the literature agrees in the benefits of including men in the fight for gender equality. The main reasons given are the following. First, what needs to be changed are the relationships between men and women and focusing only on women has failed to do so because they concentrate only on one side of the relation (Chant & Gutmann, 2002; Hearn, 2001; Wanner & Wadham, 2015). Second, a common consequence of interventions that encourage WEE is that female participants end-up with a workload that is not able to take on (Chant & Gutmann, 2002). Women are mostly taking care of their household and children and the development of business activities or employment is added to that without the division of tasks with their partners (Chant & Gutmann, 2000; Slegel et al., 2013).

Wanner (2015) points out that situations like the ones described in the previous paragraphs continue happening because of the lack of analysis of the context in which the interventions are executed. The author suggests that, for example, microcredits interventions are a good tool for achieving WEE. However, the possibility of women to take advantage of the interventions depends also on their position in the household, the division of the household tasks and childcare (because of time reasons) and other factors that depend on their relation with their male partners (Promundo & CARE International in Rwanda, 2012; Wanner & Wadham, 2015).

The third and last reason why literature considers that men should be included in WEE interventions is that their exclusion can worsen the hostilities between men and women. Studies have shown that men tend to feel threatened and take over women's projects; control their income and increase their authority at the household (Chant & Gutmann, 2002). This jeopardizes the success of gender interventions and may have negative effects on women (Wanner & Wadham, 2015).

All these benefits have been demonstrated in a pilot study called Journeys of Transformation conducted by Promundo and CARE International in Rwanda in which the organizations provided Voluntary Savings and Loans (VSL) to women with access to financial tools and services needed to improve their enterprises (Promundo & CARE International in Rwanda, 2012; Slegel et al., 2013). The pilot study was conducted with an experimental and a comparison group. In both groups, women received financial assistance but only in the experimental one, the husbands of the women involved were invited to participate in 16 weeks of group education activities (Promundo & CARE International in Rwanda, 2012).

The trainings were a combination of business knowledge, managerial skills, different roles of the couple in a family business and other relevant technical knowledge. Additionally, the program included topics as reproductive health and sexuality, alcohol consumption and gender-based violence. The composition of the group participating in the different sessions varied depending on the topic: some of the discussions were conducted with women and men together and others only with men. This separate space for men enabled the discussion and gave them the opportunity to share their opinions and visions on the different topics in a more open way than if their partners would have been present (Promundo & CARE International in Rwanda, 2012).

The pilot study showed positive results for the experimental group. The intervention improved the general economic situation of the families participating in the study and the results are higher in the case of the experimental group. Regarding partner relations and family dynamics, only the experimental group showed positive changes like more engaged men in household tasks and child care, less conflicts within the couple, a more positive perception among men regarding the participation of their wives in the labor market and family economy (Promundo & CARE International

in Rwanda, 2012; Slegel et al., 2013). This example shows that including men in gender interventions may have a positive impact since it helps to raise awareness about the importance of WEE for both men and women and to achieve the second element of WEE by improving the position of women in the decision-making of the household.

The reasons mentioned above look at the inclusion of men as a way to improve women's situation and make women's interventions more effective. A different and complementary approach for the engagement of men is that it should be based on the fact that men are also gendered beings who participate in gender relations (Flood, 2007) and also suffer from unequal power structures that are based in dominant ideas about masculinity (Wanner & Wadham, 2015). These stereotypes create the pressure of men of being responsible for the income of the household (men as breadwinners) and of being "tough" and less sensitive than women (Chattopadhyay, 2004). Different studies have demonstrated that this pressure tends to lead to more violent and risky behaviors, not responsible health care and suppression of experiencing the complete range of human emotions (Chattopadhyay, 2004; DAW UN, 2008; Wanner & Wadham, 2015).

Taking this into account, a different approach to men's engagement in gender interventions is to do it under the understanding that men can also benefit from it. In this way, awareness is created about how positive is also for men to have healthier and equal gender relations (Flood, 2007; Wanner & Wadham, 2015). It is important to mention that for this sector of the literature, the needs, concerns, and frustration of men should also be assessed in gender interventions in order to make them part of the change, and not just as mere instruments for the benefit of women.

In that sense, some scholars argue that a prerequisite for successfully including men in WEE interventions is to re-shape the current predominant understanding of "masculinity" (Wanner & Wadham, 2015) because the way in which it is interpreted now limits their participation (Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, 2005). "Masculinity" is a socially constructed expectation (Morrell, 1998; White, 2000) of men's behavior in a given society that shapes men's position in gender relations (Connell, 2005). Different scholars explain that it is wrong to understand that there is only one way of defining "masculinity".

On the contrary, it has different ways of manifesting and it changes over time and depends on different factors like, for example, race and sexual orientation (Morrell, 1998). The dominant form of masculinity in society, which is also relevant for this research is the one called "hegemonic masculinity" (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; Donaldson, 1993; Morrell, 1998). Hegemony is related to power and involves creating the idea that some stereotypes or social relations are natural, ordinary or normal (Donaldson, 1993). In general terms, men's expected behavior – their "natural" way of being – is related to courage, certain forms of aggression, autonomy, mastery, adventure, technological skills, and toughness in mind and body (Donaldson, 1993). Their role is conceived normally as the provider or the breadwinner of the household (Barker et al., 2011; Chant, 2000; White, 2000).

These concepts and stereotypes are relevant for this research since they influence the way men interact with their partners, families, and children on different activities (World Health Organization, 2007) and normally make them distant to activities as childcare or household tasks, which are behaviors more related to a traditional conception of femininity and the role of women (Chant & Gutmann, 2000).

The theoretical background contained in this chapter was used to frame the research and therefore provided the concepts that were necessary for the elaboration of the methods that were applied in order to obtain the data. The following section contains a graphic description of the conceptual framework of this thesis.

II.6 Conceptual Framework

Figure 2 below contains the graphical representation of this research’s conceptual framework.

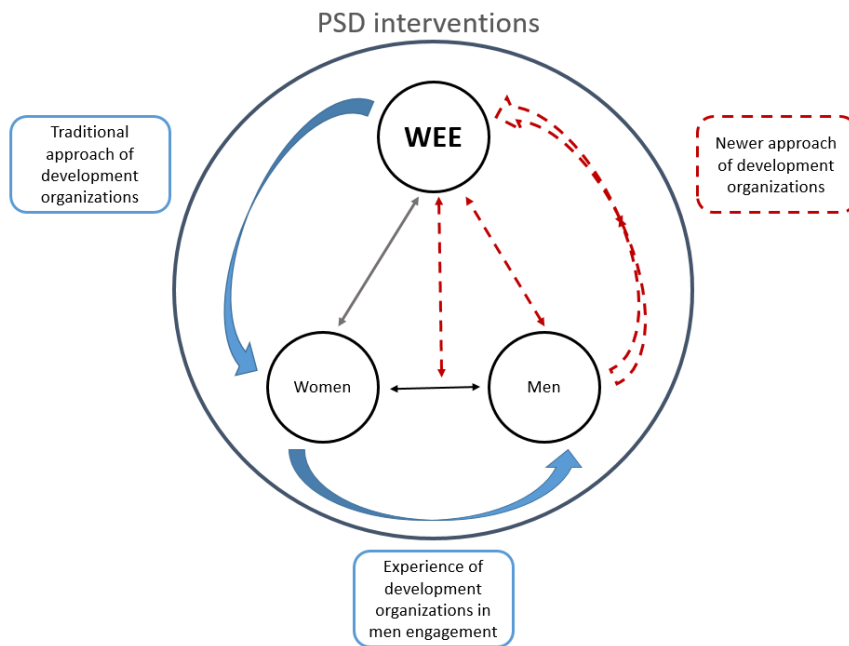


Figure 2: Conceptual Framework

In the context of PSD, WEE interventions aim to provide women with the tools and the power required to engage in the labor market (as entrepreneurs or wage employees). Traditionally, development organizations are focused on women as part of their target population in order to achieve WEE. A more modern approach is the one that proposes that men should also be engaged in WEE interventions, in order to achieve better results. This research analyzes the experience of different development organizations engaging men in order to determine the benefits and challenge and the best way to work with men in the fight for gender justice.

III. RESEARCH DESIGN

This section contains a description of the research design, which includes the research aim, research questions and the methodology that has been used in order to answer the questions. Additionally, it contains an explanation of the way in which the data was collected and analyzed and a reflection regarding the possible limitations and ethical considerations of the research.

III.1 Research aim and questions

The aim of this research is to contribute to the way in which development organizations working in PSD design and execute their interventions regarding the engagement of men in order to better achieve WEE. In that regard, the research question that is answered is the following:

What do development organizations consider as the contribution of men's engagement in PSD interventions for achieving WEE?

Sub-question 1:

What is the experience of development organizations on men's engagement in PSD interventions for achieving WEE?

Sub-Sub question 1:

What do development organizations consider as the benefits and challenges of men's engagement in PSD interventions for achieving WEE?

Sub-question 2:

How do development organizations consider that men could be further included in PSD interventions for achieving WEE?

III.2 Methodology

III.2.1 Research methods

For this research, qualitative methods were used. These methods are recommended when the researcher is interested in understanding the perception or reasons for the behavior of the interviewees. It is adequate for answering questions that describe processes (Hennink, Hutter, & Bailey, 2011) and therefore to learn from the experiences of people working in gender development organizations about how interventions could be improved with the engagement of men.

The specific method that was used to obtain the mentioned information is in-depth interviews with professionals working in development organizations with experience in gender, whose details are contained in Appendix 1. Due to its flexibility, the possibility to get in-depth information (Bryman, 2016) and learn from the personal experiences of the interviewees (Hennink et al., 2011) this is the suitable research tool to be applied on this research. The way in which the interviews were conducted and the information that was obtained through them is described in the following section III.2.2.

III.2.2 Data collection

Before conducting the interviews, a literature review was performed in order to define the relevant concepts and discussions for this research. This literature review is contained in section II. Additionally, part of the data collection implied to study the website of the organizations that participated in the study in order to get familiarized with their aims, projects, areas of expertise and be able to conduct the interviews with background information.

The interviews were conducted in the Netherlands during the months of April and May 2019. In total, 16 interviews were conducted: 10 of them were with members of Dutch development organizations and the other 6 with members of international development organizations, as it is further detailed in Appendix 1. The respondents were initially selected by RVO based on their expertise and knowledge working in WEE and/or engagement of men in gender interventions. The snowballing sampling technique was used during the first interviews in which the participants recommended other experts to whom it would be important to talk to.

An interview guide was elaborated and adapted to the different interviews according to the participant's field of expertise. The basic form of the interview guide is contained in Appendix 2. The questions covered topics like their experience in gender and WEE; their way of designing interventions or advising clients (in the case of consultants); their experience in the engagement of men in WEE interventions; the benefits and negative effects of their inclusion, among others. During the interviews, the participants were asked to give examples and previous experiences in order to back-up the information they were providing.

Depending on the location of the experts and their availability, some interviews were conducted face-to-face (6) and some via Skype or phone call (10). At the beginning of each interview, the participants were asked for their permission to use their names and their organizations' names on the report. They were also asked for their permission to record the interview. Only one participant preferred to keep its personal and organizational details confidential. This organization is named as "confidential" in the following sections and Appendix 1. The rest of the participants gave their consents to use their personal names and the details of the organizations they were part of. This is why in the following sections, the reference to the interviewees is made by their personal name. The indication of the organizations they represent for the purpose of this research is included in the first time they are mentioned in the thesis and further elaborated in Appendix 1.

III.2.3 Operationalization of variables

The following Table 1 contains a brief definition of the main concepts of this research (based on what has been stated in Section II – Relevant Theoretical Background) and the methods that were used during the data collection phase in order to obtain the data related to each variable.

VARIABLES	KEY CONCEPTS	QUESTIONS / APPROACH USED DURING DATA COLLECTION
DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION	NGOs, foundations, consultancy companies, who work in projects in the Global South and whose projects have a focus on reducing gender inequalities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Literature review/organizations' website review. - Interviews (elaborate on the work the organization does in the gender field; type of interventions the organization works on; contribution to WEE).
PSD	Development programs focused on developing the private sector in developing countries as a strategy to reduce poverty by creating employment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Literature review/organizations' website review.
GENDER INTERVENTION	Programs or projects that address the different constraints typically women face. In this case, interventions for WEE.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Literature review/organizations' website review. - Interviews (understanding of gender intervention in terms of the target group; target group of organizations' interventions).
WEE	The conjunction of tools to act (access to resources) and power to act (decision-making, self-confidence, etc.) in women.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Literature review. - WEE Framework designed by AgriproFocus and Fair&Sustainable. - Interviews (understanding of WEE; type of interventions for achieving WEE; the role of men in WEE interventions).
MEN'S ENGAGEMENT	Engagement of men in WEE interventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Literature review/organizations' website review. - Interviews (role of men in WEE interventions; benefits and challenges of including men in WEE interventions; suggestions for improving the current practice of engaging men; reactions of both men and women on the field when men are included in WEE interventions; suggestions on how to better include men in WEE interventions).
EXPERIENCE	Knowledge of the development organizations gained by practice and previous or current projects in WEE related topics and men's engagement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organizations' website review. - Interviews (elaborate on the work the organization does in the gender field; examples of interventions in which men were included; description of reactions of men and women when men are included).

Table 1: operationalization of variables

III.3 Data analysis

The conducted interviews were transcribed and later codified using the software NVivo. The coding list was previously developed based on the literature review and further complemented with the new information obtained during the fieldwork. An Excel table was created sorting the information by two different types of development organizations: (i) development organizations in general; (ii) development organizations who work in the engagement of men. This distinction was made in order to determine if there was a different trend in the answers depending on the type of expertise of the respondents.

This way of sorting the information allowed to have an organized database with code, participant, and quote, which was useful in the process of writing the thesis. The analysis of the data was done following the research questions and linking them to the key concepts of the research and the literature used for developing the conceptual framework. The graphical representation of the analysis was done using the software EdrawMax.

III.4 Potential limitations

The main limitation of this research is that it was conducted from the Netherlands and aims to learn from the experience that development organizations have on the topic. Further research would be needed in order to have the insights and opinions of women and men that are part of the target populations in order to understand how they experience the engagement of men in gender development interventions and how they would proceed to do it to guarantee its success. Additionally, the results may not represent the situation in every developed country because of the big relevance gender mainstreaming has, particularly, in the Dutch Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation agenda. The last limitation is that RVO served as an entry point for most of the interviewees, which had an impact on the organizations that were selected as participants of this research. Additionally, some of the interviewees have ongoing projects or have worked with RVO in the past which could have an impact on their answers to the questions during the interviews.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section contains the findings of this research and the reflection about them. It contextualizes the results by first elaborating on the key concepts for this thesis. This is followed by the answer to the different research questions proposed in section III.1.

IV.1 Key concepts

This section discusses some of the key concepts of this research like “gender intervention”, “WEE” and the type of interventions that are most commonly used for achieving WEE.

IV.1.1 Understanding of “gender intervention”

Even when there is the general understanding that gender is a relational concept and that it is not automatically linked with women-only interventions, in practice development organizations tend to identify gender with women. The work is still in a phase in which not too much attention is paid to power relations and the context surrounding women, but more in women’s position in the labor market (in wage jobs or entrepreneurial activity), as it is elaborated in the following paragraphs.

Section II.4 describes the theoretical swift from WID and GAD. This implies an understanding of gender as a relational concept which includes men and women. This change was supposed to bring more attention to the relevance of men in gender mainstreaming. According to literature, the attention to the relations between men and women was not really translated into practice because development organizations continued being focused on female-only interventions (Brown, 2007; Chant, 2000; Wanner & Wadham, 2015).

This was confirmed by the findings of this research. Even when the large majority of the experts was aware that a gender intervention should have as an aim to achieve gender equality regardless of the target population they work with, they admitted that in practice gender still means women. Els Rijke, independent consultant, was clear about it:

Most of the organizations, especially the ones that are a bit new to gender, when they talk about gender they think about women. So when they talk about gender interventions, they think about interventions focusing on women. The fact is that most of the organizations don’t even look to what is happening around these women, the power relations that there are. So there are a lot of projects that they might call gender interventions that are focusing on women. That is quite common. (Personal communication, April 11, 2019)

This shows that the majority of the interventions have women as a focus and pay little attention to power relations and to the context in which these women live. Part of this context, that is relevant for this research, is men and the way in which they interact with women. Even when the role of men is starting to be noticed in some interventions, “[a] lot of gender programs or programs that have gender mainstreaming, the focus is very much on the empowerment of women and girls but there was little attention for the role of boys and men within the context (...)” (R. van Zorge, Rutgers, personal communication, April 12, 2019). The change from WID to GAD “(...) was only a change of words. It didn’t become Gender and Development. It remained Women and Development but with a different name.” (J. Reynders, independent consultant, April 4, 2019).

According to literature, this has happened due to the fact that development organizations fear that by broadening their target population and including men in the fight for gender justice women can be overpowered or displaced by men (Chant & Gutmann, 2002; White, 2000). This information is contradicted by the findings of the fieldwork from where it can be concluded that the main challenges that development organizations have to overcome are related to the ways in which they operate and the systems and tools they use for measuring their outcomes. (See also section IV.2.2).

IV.1.2 Understanding of WEE

Another important concept that frames this research is WEE. This thesis understands that WEE is defined by the conjunction of two important elements: (i) tools to act; and, (ii) power to act. The way in which an organization understands this concept may have an influence on the interventions that are designed or the topics they are focused on. In general terms, the findings of the fieldwork are also aligned with this definition. Some differences were found in the emphasis on one of the elements of WEE and it depended on the approach of the development organization. Organizations with more business-oriented models tend to be more emphatic about the material element (tools to act) than the personal one (power or agency). This information is elaborated and analyzed in the following paragraphs.

The results are mixed regarding the understanding of WEE. The findings can be divided into two groups. The first one defines the concept aligned to the definition used in this research. A very clear definition was given by Machteld Ooijens, from Partnering for Social Impact, who said that *“WEE it is definitely not only about access to resources but also like having agency and power to make your own decisions in all the issues related to your personal life. I think these two elements are key for WEE”*. (Personal communication, May 10, 2019).

The second group defines WEE with more business or market-oriented view and it is centered in the role and position of women in the market. For example, the fact that women should be able to have a job or to have successful businesses. It is important to mention that most of the interviewees that had this more market-related answer were asked about the relevance of power and agency in WEE and they agreed that they were also relevant concepts for understanding that women are economically empowered.

In conclusion, the general understanding is that a woman cannot be considered empowered if she does not have power or agency to make decisions about their private and professional life. These results indicate that there seems to be a gap between the understanding of what WEE entails and the way in which it aims to be achieved by the interventions that are most commonly designed for that. Most of the interventions that are designed for achieving WEE assess only the first element of WEE (tools to act) by the provision of financial or business related support. The second element, the power to act, implies that women should be able to decide how is their income going to be used or being part of the decision-making at the household level.

As it is elaborated in section IV.2.1, an improved position of women in decision-making is complicated to achieve without the engagement of men in WEE interventions and a change in traditional gender norms and roles. The achievement of the second element of WEE is still not fully taken into practice by development organizations, as it is elaborated in the next section IV.1.3 in which the main interventions used for achieving WEE are elaborated.

IV.1.3 Main interventions used for achieving WEE

The range of interventions that are designed and executed for WEE is large and varies depending on the organizations in charge and their approach to it. A relevant finding was that the context in which women live, like the power dynamics in the household, for example, are essential for WEE and where the engagement of men is necessary. Not addressing this sphere may limit the impact of the interventions. Despite of the benefits that looking at the context in which women live, the interventions and the household and community level do not seem to be popular among development organizations. The most commonly used intervention for achieving WEE are the ones related to finance or business oriented. The following Figure 3 shows what are the most commonly used:



Figure 3: type of interventions for WEE. Own elaboration

The most frequently mentioned category of interventions for achieving WEE in the context of PSD is the one related to access to finance or market. Part of this group are, for example, conditional cash transferences to keep girls in school; access to finance or investments for women; promotion of women in managerial positions; more accessible agriculture, among others. As it was mentioned in the previous section, these interventions tend to be focused only on addressing the first element of WEE, leaving the second one normally unattended.

One of the interventions or strategies that is also part of this group and that is aligned with the work of RVO is the promotion of gender as a business case for companies. This idea was mentioned as a way to engage companies in the fight for WEE. From this approach, besides the social and ethical reasons why companies should be aware of gender unbalances and constraints when hiring or selecting suppliers, some organizations aim to prove them that there are actually business arguments for doing so. Angelica Senders, from Fair&Sustainable, explained this strategy and its benefits during an interview:

When we talk about gender from the perspective of development organizations, we tend to emphasize the social reasons to do so, the social objective, like gender justice. But of course, for companies, that is not what makes them move. For companies, you need

business arguments. And of course, companies also like to do good, that's not a problem, but their first reasons to do something will be if this brings them benefits, profits. And recently, together with AgriProFocus, we described six cases where companies invested in gender-sensitive company model, company business strategy and it gave them benefits and it was also beneficial for women. (Personal communication, April 2, 2019).

Some of the benefits that companies obtain, by also considering women as potential employees, were shared by Lotte-Marie Brouwer, from BopInc: *"we show them from research, from experience that it will actually help you to earn more profit because if you have more women you understand a new customer segment better, you have more diversity, you have more change that actually employees will stick and increase the employee loyalty and all these things. There is a lot of research on that."* (Personal communication, April 23, 2019). WEE brings companies economic benefits and development organizations can help this group of stakeholders to realize it (M. Ooijens, personal communication, May 10, 2019). This approach differs from the more traditional strategies or interventions for achieving WEE have proven to be effective so far and has already been used by some organizations working in gender equality.

Other important groups of interventions that are relevant for this research are the ones working at the community and household level. These interventions take into account the context in which women live and relate to the second element of WEE (power to act), which makes it more likely to achieve it. Regarding the interventions at the community level, the following examples were mentioned: awareness creation programs about women's rights; awareness creation programs of the problematic understanding of masculinity; the use of role models to inspire other women and men, among others.

Regarding the interventions at the household level, examples are programs that aimed to engage men in care work and household tasks; to address social norms and values at the household level; development of household plans and budgets between the spouses, among others. Participatory methods were mentioned as an important tool for the implementation of these interventions, which means that the existent problems and solutions to them are identified by the participants of the interventions through different group or couple dynamics.

According to Thies Reemer, from Oxfam, these methodologies work better because *"(...) top-down it is always imposing something it is like it was perceived (...) it needs to come from their reality, it needs to be grounded in what they do."* (Personal communication, April 24, 2019). An example of a participatory methodology that relates to WEE is the one described by Wessel van den Berg, from Sonke Gender Justice:

One exercise is recording the 24 hour day and it basically breaks down what a typical day in the life of a man in that community looks like and what a typical day in the life of a woman in that community looks like. Hour by hour. That is a very useful exercise to talk about how men and women spend their time. (Personal communication, May 10, 2019)

Reflecting about the way in which men and women use their time tends to make men realize that women spend many hours doing household tasks and encourage them to also be involved and take part of that responsibility (R. Pierotti, AGIL, personal communication, May 6, 2019). Other examples in the same line are the ones listed by Angelica Senders: *"(...) assisting families to develop household plans together (men and women together), to develop a vision of what do we want to achieve in 5*

years, who is going to contribute in what way, how are we going to use our money for investments, how are we going to use the money we earn, this kind of things.” (Personal communication, April 2, 2019).

These examples show that for achieving both elements of WEE it is not enough to improve the position of women in the labor force without looking at the division of the household tasks and their power in the decision making. When men start taking responsibility over the household tasks and women start having more participation in the decision-making of the household, the power dynamics become more balanced. Women have more time to dedicate to productive activities and a say in the way in which their earnings (or the household budget) will be spent.

IV.2 Benefits and challenges of including men in WEE interventions

This section elaborates on the benefits and challenges of engaging men in WEE interventions, which answers the sub-sub research question 1: *What are the benefits and challenges of men-engagement in PSD interventions for achieving WEE?*

IV.2.1 Benefits of engaging men in WEE interventions

The main benefits of engaging men in WEE are presented in the following Figure 4:

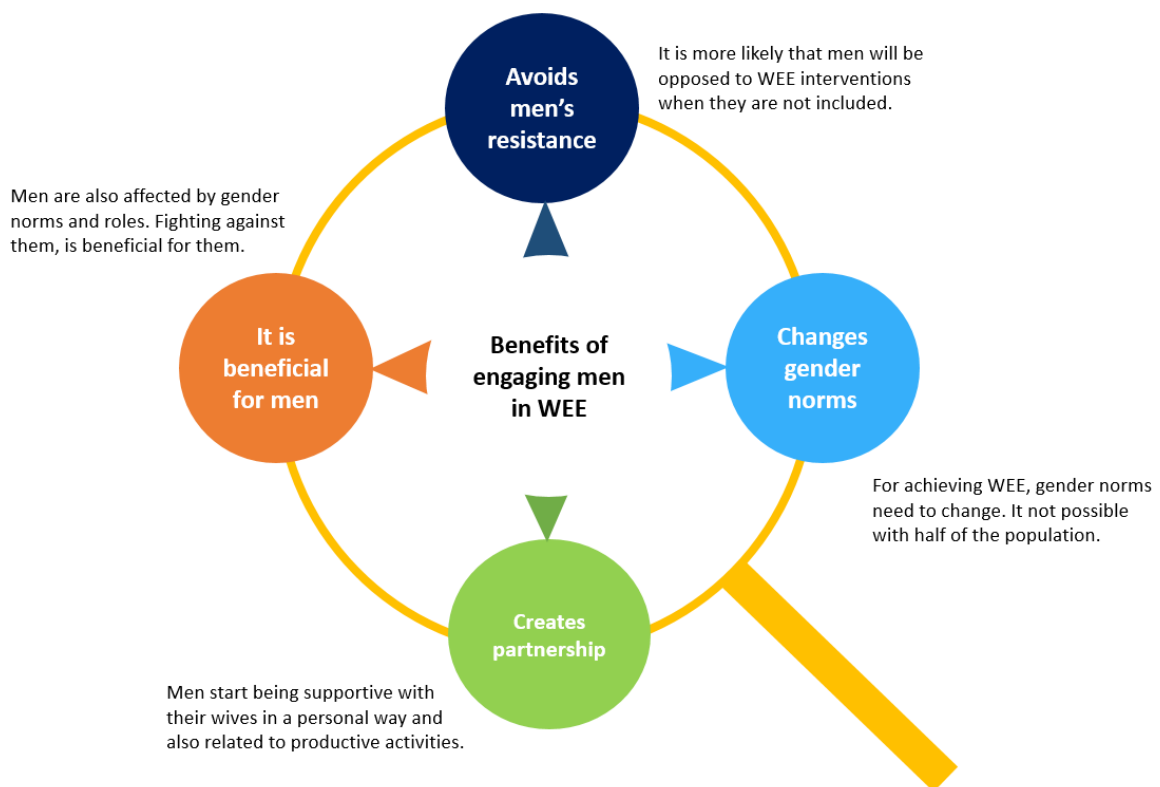


Figure 4: benefits of engaging men in WEE interventions. Own elaboration

These results are important since they add on the ones identified in the literature and highlight the relevance of understanding how men are also harmed by gender norms and how can they benefit from WEE interventions at different levels (personal, household and community level) as a way to

really assess the root cause of the problem and not just its symptoms. The following paragraphs elaborate on the four mentioned benefits.

(i) Avoids men's resistance

The first benefit is that the engagement of men in WEE interventions avoids their resistance or opposition to the intervention that aims to be implemented. This benefit has also been identified in the literature, in which it is explained that the exclusion of men might even jeopardize the success of the interventions (Wanner & Wadham, 2015). It was confirmed during the fieldwork that when men are excluded, they tend to act as barriers for women and their programs. This situation was clearly explained by Aapta Garg, from Promundo:

It also happens a lot that the programs that are focused on women's economic empowerment are really only focused on women but if we realize as well that men (fathers or brothers or uncles and even community leaders) can act as barriers if they feel like there is a harm to them or if they don't understand...so, not including them can actually limit the impact that the program can actually have. (Personal communication, May 10, 2019).

Lotte-Marie Brouwer reflected on this topic and mentioned that,

I'm slowly thinking more and more in our own interventions how could we include them more? could we include them as part of our trainings or invite them? Make them feel part of it, make them feel proud of their wives or daughters because without men it is not going to work. (Personal communication, April 23, 2019).

According to what has been mentioned, the inclusion of men reduces the possibility of resistance against the interventions and gives more space to development organizations to work with women and have positive and more effective outcomes. This benefit is closely related to the reduction of the risk of GBV, which was pointed out as another benefit of engaging men in WEE interventions. The reasoning, in this case, is similar: there is a risk that when GBV is present in the context of the intervention and men are not included, the violence against their wives may increase. Raynold Brandes, from SNV, explained his experience on this topic with a clear example:

I used to work in a gender-based violence prevention program in Bangkok that was Asia-Pacific wide on engaging men and boys. If you don't engage men and boys in women's empowerment, they don't know what is happening and often to maintain the power in the household they would increase violence. So if you don't [engage men] you actually have a likelihood of increasing violence in the home. That is what I learned from a regional program that I managed in Asia-Pacific in prevention of gender-based violence by working with men and boys. And that you can apply actually anywhere. (Personal communication, May 2, 2019).

The same experience was shared by other experts who mentioned that GBV may increase when women become main income earners in the household (Confidential, personal communication, April 4, 2019) or start being more resistant and having their own power (W. van den Berg, personal communication, May 5, 2019). A possible explanation of why this occurs is that men tend to adhere to the norm that they are the breadwinners and women take care of the household. A sudden change

in these embedded gender norms can have as a consequence that men feel attacked or overpowered by women and react with violence to maintain their power (R. van Zorge, personal communication, April 12, 2019).

(ii) Engaging men helps changing gender norms

As it was mentioned in the previous section, WEE interventions have an effect on existing gender norms and relations. It pushes for a change in the way the market is structured and the traditional roles that men and women have had on it and on private spheres. Engaging men in WEE interventions gives development organizations the possibility to go further and to tackle the root of the problem (patriarchy, traditional gender norms, gender roles, toxic masculinity, etc.). This results in better outcomes and more effective interventions and goes in the direction of achieving the two elements of WEE (tools to act and power to act). In that sense, Jens van Tricht, from Emancipator, explained that:

I mean I do favor women's empowerment and at the same time there is a critique worldwide of fixing women in order to fix the system, but of course, if the system is wrong then you should fix the system and not only leave it all to women that are already suffering from injustice. Men create the injustice or these wide communal systems or corporates or institutions so it is really problematic if we only intervene to empower women and leave the rest of the structure like that. (Personal communication, April 30, 2019).

Trying to empower women without engaging men would probably not help to dismantle the gender norms and roles that are currently in place because that cannot be achieved by working only with half of the population (R. van Zorge, personal communication, April 12, 2019). This situation was exemplified by Sandra Bruinse, ex Plan International and Jan Reynders:

On the other hand, what we asked when we were there...these women, these characters that you saw, they developed themselves so quickly and so easily and in such a good way that this could also be a threat for possible husbands because they developed in a better way. So those were also side-effects that were not so positive. Of course, it is good for the women because they developed, but for the men of the same generation, it could be a threat. So that is also something that you have to...look upon the fathers, make sure that they are part of the group that you are working with but also the same generation that you also work together with them and make sure that she doesn't become out of place because of her sudden development. (S. Bruinse, personal communication, April 16, 2019).

But actually there was one more issue that I had: the country director of UNFPA wanted me to design a project exclusively for boys and I said: "no way". If it is exclusively for boys in secondary schools, then the girls will feel very awkward in dealing with these soft boys, so to speak...you know I'm using that term "soft boys" ... who show a different identity. Because they are used to the golden chain boys and even their parents, their future possible in-laws, they would not like these kind, caring boys because they are not used to it. So I had to work with the boys, with the girls. (J. Reynders, personal communication, April 4, 2019).

These examples illustrate that interventions which may have an influence on existing gender norms and roles work better when the “affected” stakeholders are involved. This is the case of WEE interventions. They break the understanding that men are the only breadwinners of the household and give more power to women than what people are used to. When these interventions engage men the possibility of changing the roles increases and with that, the effectiveness of the programs. It seems, from what has been explained by the interviewed experts, that WEE interventions that do not engage men tend to be only superficial solutions or quick fixes for a very complex problem and not really address the second element of WEE: power and agency. They additionally miss the possibility to benefit men by helping to release the pressure they tend to feel based on the previously mentioned gender stereotypes.

(iii) Creating partnership between spouses

Another important benefit of engaging men in WEE interventions that was mentioned during the fieldwork is that it creates partnership between men and women, concretely between spouses. Krizia Nardini, member of MenEngage, gave a comprehensive description of the collaboration that can be encouraged by the engagement of men in WEE interventions:

They gain collaborative partners in a social sense. So partners in a private sphere and also in a social sphere. They gain collaboration from men in society so probably what they learn they could take more into practice. They get more responsible partners, more responsible fathers, better caretakers in the domestic sphere so then the division of labor can be easier. They gain support basically for what they do, they gain understanding, they gain a context to put into practice what the program wants. (Personal communication, May 9, 2019).

An important point that is raised in the quote above is that the partnership that can be achieved in two different spheres: (i) related to women’s businesses or productive activities; and, (ii) in the private sphere (household related tasks and caregiving). Regarding the first one, engaging men in WEE interventions makes them more aware of the benefits of it and more supportive with their wives so they can put in practice what they have learned in the interventions (K. Nardini, personal communication, May 9, 2019).

On the other hand, when men start giving value to women’s work, they also start collaborating with specific tasks of women’s businesses. For example, Lotte-Marie Brouwer mentioned that:

(...) what they did is that they actually started involving the husbands, the brother or whatever to help them; I don’t know with the motorcycle, or whatever...to help them push these products to other areas and stuff. That really helped. That pushed sales and all of the sudden, they were working together in their business models, so it was really good. (Personal communication, April 23, 2019).

According to what was mentioned in this interview, sometimes men have access to some resources (like the motorcycle in this case) and in some situations, their collaboration in the women’s business may be helpful for achieving a better performance. It is important to mention that this benefit refers to the case in which men and women work as a team, but does not imply that interventions aim to involve men in women’s businesses as a way of men controlling or taking over women’s enterprises.

Regarding the second sphere (the personal one) is related to increased participation of women in household dynamics and decision-making. The concrete examples that were found during the fieldwork were joint development of the household budget between the spouses; joint decision-making; increase and improve communication between men and women; and men's participation in childbearing and household tasks, which gives women more time for developing productive activities.

Related to the last point, Rachel Pierotti, shared an experience in the engagement of men in household tasks and how that can help to achieve WEE:

We have another one in Ghana that is for women entrepreneurs and one of the things that we are testing is included men in the trainings with their wives to encourage them to recognize the value of investing in women's business. Whether that means taking some of the housework of her so she can spend more time in her business or letting her reinvest the income of her business or whatever. (...) So, a lot of our work is acknowledging those intra-household inequalities and trying to figure out how to address those. (Personal communication, May 6, 2019).

This example highlights the relevance of involving men in household tasks as a way of giving women more time for developing productive activities, which helps to achieve the aims of the WEE interventions. This is also related to findings from the literature review: when women are engaged in this type of interventions they normally perform both productive and reproductive activities, which increases their already large workload if men do not assume any household responsibilities (Chant & Gutmann, 2000; Sleghe et al., 2013; K.Nardini, personal communication, May 9, 2019). Engaging men in WEE interventions helps releasing this workload and having a more equitable division of household tasks.

The involvement of men in household tasks should not only be seen as a strategy for giving women more time for developing productive activities. It also benefits men in a personal way that tends to be overlooked by most development organizations. It gives them the possibility to explore caring activities and situations and to develop better personal relations with their partners and children. (See also section IV.2.1 (iv)).

As it is explained by Raynold Brandes, the partnership between men and women does not only improves the economic position of women and increases their participation in the household decision-making but also improves the relationship between the couple:

Because that is normally what is lacking: communication. Through the household dialogue we make them talk, plan their budgets, plan what activities, what the woman is going to do with her farm, so it is much more than just interaction between spouses, which just improves significantly the atmosphere in the home. (Personal communication, May 2, 2019).

This point is of high relevance for development organizations because it is not yet the common practice to work at the household level when implementing WEE interventions. The focus of the interventions tends to be on the economic side forgetting that quality of life and well-being is not only achieved through economic means but by covering also psychological needs. The examples and experiences mentioned above show that engaging men in WEE interventions has the potential to create partnerships between couples and therefore improve the relationship's dynamics and

household atmosphere. This type of interventions goes beyond the economic aspect of development and moves to a more holistic approach to quality of life and human needs, which assess one of the critiques to WID (its economic understanding of development) (see also section II.4).

(iv) It is beneficial for men

So far, the mentioned benefits are more focused mainly on women and their needs. For all of them, the engagement of men is beneficial because it results in better positioning of women in the labor market and the household. The following paragraphs describe a different and very important approach that highlights the need of paying attention to the way in which men can also benefit from their inclusion in the fight for gender justice.

Current gender norms and stereotypes also harm men. They tend to feel high levels of pressure on being the breadwinners of the household and from the “straitjackets” that they are expected to fit in (J. Reynders, personal communication, April 4, 2019). This finding is consistent to what has been highlighted by a sector of the literature which recognizes that men are also gendered beings who participate in gender relations and suffer from unequal power structures (Flood, 2007; Wanner & Wadham, 2015). It has also been mentioned that the pressure that men feel to fit in the stereotypes that are imposed by society can lead to more violent and risky behavior and not responsible health care (Chattopadhyay, 2004; DAW UN, 2008; Wanner & Wadham, 2015).

This was also pointed out during the fieldwork by Ruth van Zorge:

Gender roles and norms are hard roles for women and girls but also for boys and men. There is a lot of research on that as well that you see that because of well-being, because of globalization or unemployment, which basically results in the fact that a lot of men and boys are not able to fulfill their tasks as breadwinner, which it is still, of course, the norm everywhere, even in our culture. Which leads to depression, frustration, often it can also lead to risky behavior of men and boys and violence within the groups of boys and men, women or within their families. (Personal communication, April 12, 2019).

Working in WEE and changing the gender norms and roles without taking men’s position into account may worsen the situation for them. From this perspective, engaging men in WEE interventions is not only beneficial because it gives women a better positioning and more collaborative partners, but also because it tackles the root of the problem. It shows men that gender roles and stereotypes are also negative for them and that their lives could be better without these norms:

That means that men have to find ways to understand that their lives should become happier and richer. Not only by protecting the women, women’s rights, but actually by changing himself. Which means that men are not only used in an instrumental way for the sake of women, it is for everyone’s sake (...) Gender justice is better for everyone not just for women and whenever I see promotion of wanting to engage men for women’s rights because it is good for women...that is not enough, sorry, it is not enough. (J. Reynders, personal communication, April 4, 2019).

During the interview with Jan Reynders, he emphasized the mistake that some development organizations make of engaging men in gender interventions only for the sake of women (personal communication, April 4, 2019). He explained that “when you do it temporarily and you bring men on

board for the sake of women, you will find some men noble enough to give in; but we are not changing the men's mind". (Personal communication, April 4, 2019). A real change implies also looking at men's needs and frustrations; giving them the space to express their concerns and viewpoints; it implies working also with their vulnerabilities and challenging the gender roles they adhere to in order to achieve a long term and sustainable change:

What we do is that we work with a methodology where it is more than just targeting men in one way. Our programs actively have participants critically reflect on them, in the ways in which they subscribe to gender norms, how they communities or the ways in which they have been socialized has an impact in the way in which they understand gender and gender norms. Then we challenge those ideas in order to achieve long term and sustainable impact on changing gender norms. (A. Garg, personal communication, May 10, 2019)

In this way, men understand that from the change of traditional gender norms and roles they gain *"better quality of life, better relationships, feeling good with themselves, better relationships with their children, with their partner, more confidence in what they do, less pressure to perform according to the standards of masculinity"* (K. Nardini, personal communication, May 9, 2019). The inclusion of men in WEE interventions has a positive impact for women and for men but also for the household and the community.

Jan Reynders shared an experience of an intervention in which men were asked about parenting and caregiving. He mentioned how a boy from the group explained that he enjoyed caregiving and parenting and performing those tasks had a very positive impact on him:

So actually he [referring to the boy of the example] was giving the example of how it can be changed. So he was challenging himself, he was not doing it for the sake of the woman only, he was doing it for him. He actually realized in the process that he was becoming a better man. Because he was becoming a caring man. And he was learning things that he would not have learned by just being in a job and coming at home at eight at night and then giving the money to the wife for looking after the kids, which is the traditional very common situation. (Personal communication, April 4, 2019).

This example highlights the fact that including men in WEE interventions have the potential of benefiting men not only with more income coming from the productive work of their wives but also in a much more important sphere: the personal one. Care work and parenting help men to perform different roles and develop new feelings and sensations. It is, in sum better for them, for their families, for their wives and for society at large (J. van Tricht, personal communication, April 30, 2019).

This approach of men's engagement can be considered as one of the main findings of this research since it proposes the most complete and effective way of looking at it in the context of WEE interventions. Despite how beneficial it seems to be, the engagement of men in WEE interventions is not yet a trend in the work of development organizations. The next section elaborates on the challenges that the experts have found when trying to engage men in WEE interventions.

IV.2.2 Challenges for engaging men in WEE interventions

Two groups of challenges have been identified: (i) challenges at the organization level; and, (ii) challenges at the field level, as it is shown in the following Figure 5:

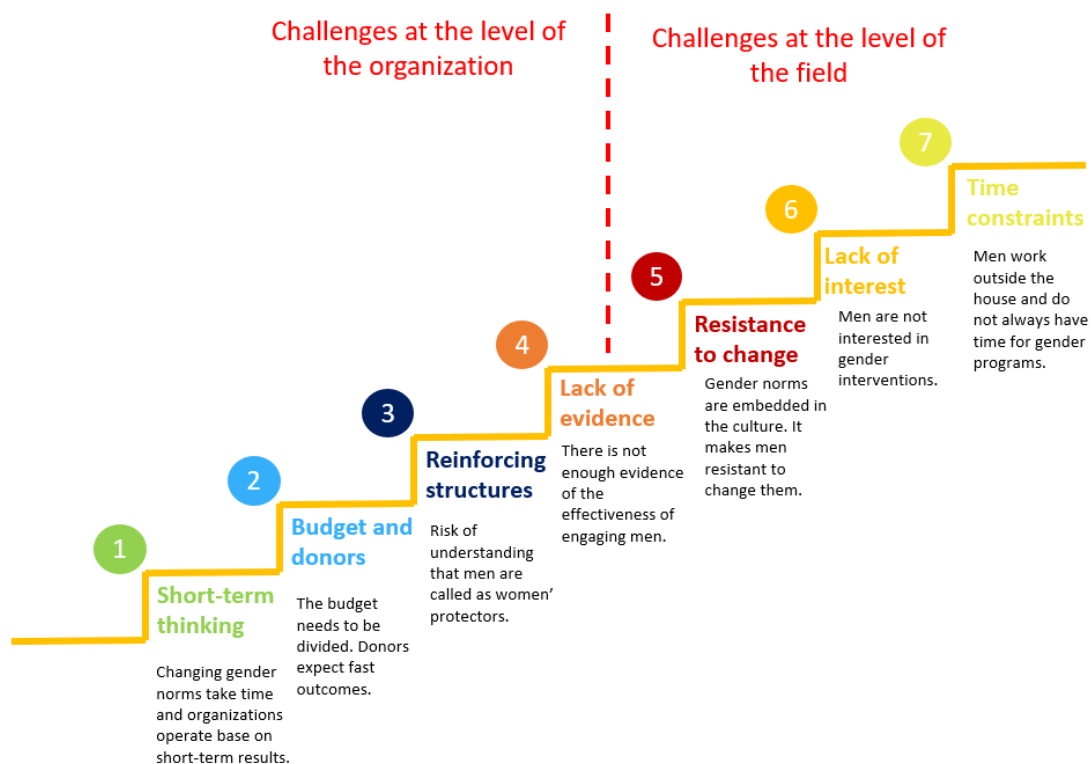


Figure 5: challenges for engaging men in WEE interventions. Own elaboration

IV.2.2.1 Challenges at the level of the organization

The challenges at the organization level are the ones that are related only to the way in which the development organizations work and operate and the decisions they make, without taking into account the men which try to be involved in the interventions. The main challenges that were identified during the fieldwork were: (i) short-term thinking; (ii) budget and donors; (iii) reinforcement of power structures; and, (iv) lack of evidence.

These findings add to the challenges mentioned in the literature. As it is elaborated on section II.5 the literature is more focused on the problems that can be found at the level of the field: resistance of men, men taking over women's projects, etc. The findings of this research add a relevant component to the analysis and it is that the way in which development organizations operate (the distribution of their budget, the attention to immediate outcomes, etc.) can also act as a limitation for the engagement of men in WEE interventions. The relevance of pointing out these obstacles for engaging men in WEE interventions is that it can open a space for organizations and donors to critically reflect upon their work and how to start tackling more root causes than symptoms of gender inequality.

(i) Short-term thinking

One of the main challenges that development organizations face for including men in WEE interventions is that the projects and the way they structure their work is based on short-term thinking. Interventions tend to be designed to show fast results. When assessing deep, structural problems like gender norms and roles, the short term does not work. A long term process is needed in order to ensure that the people are undergoing a sustainable change of mindset. Jan Reynders, illustrated this point clearly:

I don't believe in short-term effects and that's where I think the problem comes. Most of the work that we are talking about here – changing mindsets, changing norms and values – takes 15 to 20 years. I mean, the trip I just did, in every of the four countries, we had the final conclusion: is it possible to do this project in five years? and the answer was: no way. (Personal communication, April 4, 2019).

This was confirmed in an interview with Machteld Ooijens, who mentioned that:

There are no quick fixes, no short term solutions. And it is also interesting in discussions about gender also if you look at NGOs also they have projects per three years and then the results need to be there...impossible, of course. Everyone knows and still the whole system is like that, based on short term outcomes even when we are talking about the impact of a three-year intervention...it is not possible. Everyone knows it I think, but we still do. (Personal communication, May 10, 2019).

The issue that was raised is of high importance. The system works now trying to find quick fixes for very complex issues (J. van Tricht, personal communication, April 30, 2019). This type of change needs time also because people need to have space for reflecting on the different topics that are discussed in their programs (A. Garg, personal communication, May 10, 2019). Also, because this type of interventions needs follow-ups with the same people, with the same community in order to ensure a long-term and sustainable change (J. Reynders, personal communication, April 4, 2019).

Two or three-year interventions can achieve more job positions for women or more women with technical knowledge of how to run a business but in two or three years the root causes of gender inequality would not be assessed. Gender norms and stereotypes would not change and patriarchy would not be dismantled. *Gender Justice can never be done through a quick fix. There is no way. And I think that if we don't realize that we are just fooling ourselves, we are fooling the subsidy givers, we are fooling politicians (...).* (J. Reynders, personal communication, April 4, 2019).

Quick fixes do not work because they assess symptoms but not the root causes of inequality. As it was mentioned, literature tends to focus in the complications with men in the field but overlooks something more important than that and it is the way in which development organizations operate and the outcomes they pay attention to. It seems from this that it is easier and faster to focus for example, in a number of women trained, a number of new women working, etc., but changing social norms and roles does not show fast results and probably not yet in a quantifiable way, which discourages development organizations and donors to work on that.

This relates to findings of the literature review in which it was stated that the change from WID to GAD was never taken to practice due to the high complexity that it means to pretend to assess or

change gender norms and roles. Most development organizations, who work in a short-term basis, prefer to implement interventions that seem to be closer to a vision to WID, a vision of gender that has been, at least theoretically, replaced by GAD.

A potential strategy for dealing with this challenge was found during the fieldwork. Jan Reynders, independent consultant, explained the way in which he managed to extend a four-year intervention for three extra periods:

So, what did we do at the end in that project in Bangladesh? We said ok, we will design the project in such a way that we negotiated with the embassy that it would have to be three times four years. Because they can only decide for four years, but they can have a moral commitment for 12. And the person at the embassy actually agreed. She said that as a moral commitment yes, but I cannot put it on paper. And I said: "yes, but it means that we don't need to be successful in the first four years. We can have small steps; we have to show the direction. And if the direction after these four years is showing the right direction, then you can move on". (Personal communication, April 4, 2019).

This is an example of a creative way of giving the interventions the time they need for achieving a deep and sustainable change. The important point of this strategy is that it does not tie the development organization with the need of presenting end results after a short period but showing the path that the intervention is following and steps given in the right direction. As in this case, development organizations need to find different ways to overcome this challenge and align their processes with the needs of the contexts and problems in which they are working.

(ii) Budget and donors

The budget of development organizations, as a challenge, is related to the one mentioned above (short-term thinking). In fact, according to some of the experts, the budget and the donors from which this budget is obtained may be one of the reasons why development organizations operate in a short-term basis, as it is explained in the following paragraphs.

This challenge has two interrelated ways of looking at it. The first one is consistent to what has been found in literature: some donors or development organizations are resistant to investing budget in engaging men because they feel that the budget they have for women's programs is already limited (Chant & Gutmann, 2002). Regarding this issue, Jan Reynders explained that:

I understand that you want to make sure that whatever money that you have, you don't take it away from women's rights issues, but if you want to promote gender justice then half-half, or at least look at where the need is highest. And you have to work on the mindset of boys because they are brought up in a very traditional way (...). (Personal communication, April 4, 2019).

According to him, older generations are more likely to have this type of mentality and would prefer to invest just in women's projects rather than include also men on them. However, as it has been explained in the previous sections of this thesis, addressing only half of the population does not necessarily lead to a real change in gender norms and roles because those are held on by men and women. He affirmed that younger generations of people working in development organizations tend

to be more aware that to make a difference, the budget should be invested also in gender justice (J. Reynders, personal communication, April 4, 2019).

The second way to look at this challenge complements the findings on literature and it is related to the donors that provide development organizations with their budget. According to some of the experts, development organizations are sometimes tied by the type of projects and results that the donor institutions decide to fund. Regarding this topic, Lotte-Marie Brouwer explained that when working in donor projects

Often there is this checklist that you have to go through, through the project. I understand that donors have to have some kind of tool to hold to but it is not always the reality. So, if as an organization you have limited budget to train x amount of women and it is like “number of women trained”, are you going to use your budget to also train men? I don’t know. (Personal communication, April 23, 2019).

Addressing men and working on gender norms and stereotypes takes longer periods and, according to some of the interviewed experts, this may not fit with the donors’ plans or tools since they tend to have more short-term thinking. The problem with this vision is that the root of the problem continues without being looked at and only symptoms of inequality are addressed (Thies Reemer, personal communication, April 24, 2019).

Creating awareness of the importance of men’s engagement in WEE and giving more space for discussing it are practices that could help to overcome the mentioned challenges related to the budget of development organizations. Promoting gender as a business case and involving companies and the stakeholders with which the donors work are also strategies that help to raise the topic and encouraging its inclusion in the different interventions (M. Ooijens, personal communication, May 10, 2019). Later on, indicators for men’s engagement could be developed in order to make it easier for development organizations to report to the donors the results of their interventions regarding this topic (L. Brouwer, personal communication, April 23, 2019).

(iii) Reinforcement of power structures

Another important challenge faced by development organizations is that interventions that aim to change gender stereotypes and work with men, should be very careful to not reinforce existing power structures. This was explained by Jens van Tricht, in the following way:

I mean, it is clear for most of us that men are also victims of the gender structures and patriarchy and at the same time if we focus solely or predominantly on the needs of men we lose sight on what they do to women. So, then you see projects empowering men within patriarchy and not dismantling patriarchy. (Personal communication, April 30, 2019).

Patriarchy and power relations are key elements that need to be identified before implementing WEE interventions and engaging men. This is important in order to determine the approach that will be used, the information that will be provided and the way in which it is going to be done. Regarding this topic, Ruth van Zorge gave the following example:

I can put an example of a program in Pakistan, where we were working on a gender-based violence program. The people within the community, the men, were very accommodated towards our program because we were engaging men and boys in a positive way. But at the same time within that community the boys and men were already the ones of course who decide what was happening and actually they just took over that role and were becoming too focal and very happy to do something for violence prevention but from their role as the guardian, like the ones who need to protect the women. So, instead of transforming the gender norm towards equality it was like “oh, this is a great program because as men we are now seen or regarded as the protector of women”. So this is of course not what you want. So this is the real challenge and you have to be very careful with that. (Personal communication, April 12, 2019).

This example shows that there are important but subtle reactions or assumptions (in this case from the men of the community) that need to be taken into account when working with men for gender equality. Not realizing this may have as a consequence the reinforcement of the power structures that want to be dismantled. This mistake seems to be more common than expected and it is also present in important campaigns for the engagement of men in the fight for gender justice:

[HeforShe] to me is the most patronizing approach. So, here it comes the man, on the white horse, the woman has no agency, he has to come on his support to help her become bigger. (...) I would say it is a cheap male-heroism. I’m going to protect these women. That’s why this for me is not pro-feminist. (J. Reynders, personal communication, April 4, 2019).

As can be appreciated from the examples above, this is a very important challenge that development organizations need to be aware of and take into account when engaging men in WEE interventions. Section IV elaborates on different recommendations given by the interviewed experts in order to assess this challenge.

(iv) Lack of evidence

The last challenge at the level of the organizations is that there is still a lack of evidence on the effectiveness of the engagement of men in gender interventions (including WEE interventions). This challenge is consistent to the findings in the literature: most of the research and focus of the role of men in gender interventions are related to sexual health, fatherhood, and GBV (Chant & Gutmann, 2000). Rachel Pierotti mentioned that the application of programs like GALS (which address gender-related issues with both women and men) seem to be going in the right direction but that the evidence is still limited (Personal communication, May 6, 2019).

Ruth van Zorge confirmed this concern and elaborates on why the lack of evidence can be a challenge for development organizations regarding the engagement of men:

since it is a new approach, the evidence of the effectiveness of the approach is also new and as I said this Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT) is wonderful if you are able to show that and demonstrate that but that RCT came out at the end of 2017 or even at the beginning of 2018. Before, a lot of the information is really anecdotal or really qualitative. I’m an anthropologist so I really believe in the qualitative studies the insights and actually, all the qualitative studies show similar results than the RCT. However, specifically donor

(...) as long as you don't have that, it is really difficult to get funds and do this kind of programs. (Personal communication, April 12, 2019).

As it is mentioned by the referenced expert, the lack of evidence in this field is a challenge not only because it makes more complicated to learn from the experience of previous organizations who have successfully engaged men in WEE interventions but also because it is an obstacle for obtaining funds. This seems to indicate that more research is needed or results shown about this topic in order to increase its application and, therefore, the attention of the donors.

IV.2.2.2 Challenges at the field level

This section elaborates on the challenges that were identified by the experts in relation to the men and women that are participants in their projects or that form part of the community in which the project is being implemented. The most important ones identified on this research are (i) resistance to change; (ii) lack of interest/understanding; and, (iii) time constraints, which are elaborated on the following paragraphs.

In general, in this case, the results also add to the information that was provided by the literature. As it was elaborated on section II.5 the concerns most commonly listed in literature were related to women losing space or men taking over WEE interventions (Chant & Gutmann, 2002; White, 2000). These challenges are also part of the findings during the fieldwork but the main findings were related to men's perception of these interventions and the existence of different internal or contextual limitations to engage in them and change gender norms and roles.

(i) Resistance to change

The first reason why men are resistant to change is because of the existence of embedded gender stereotypes and roles that determine what society expects from men's and women's behavior in a certain context (K. Nardini, personal communication, May 9, 2019). Raynold Brandes explained that:

So then you still see in countries or provinces that are culturally a bit more strict, that they try to maintain these cultural practices by saying "this is women's role; this is men's role". We try to break the cycle by showing that men and women can in principle do anything but then of course the whole discussion about "but it has always been like this and etc.". That is always something to overcome. (Personal communication, May 2, 2019).

The given example illustrates that working in changing gender stereotypes it is not an easy task because they are embedded in people's mindset and are part of their culture. This makes it complicated to start working with a group of men that may be then ridiculed by their peers and *"feel that society and the neighbors and everybody is judging. Then [they] feel like "I don't know if I would do that"* (L. Brouwer, personal communication, April 23, 2019). This relates to the second reason why the experts considered that men are resistance to change: their surroundings.

Often, when men are engaged in WEE interventions and changing their behavior (helping in the household, taking care of the children, etc.) they feel that they may lose power within the community (R. Brandes, personal communication, May 2, 2019) or get ridiculed by their peers (J. Reynders, personal communication, April 4, 2019). Related to this topic, Jan Reynders shared an experience of an intervention in which gender roles were aimed to be changed and described the reflections of a

man who was taking care of the household tasks and children because his wife was too young and didn't know how to do it:

I actually liked it. But I was ridiculed by my friends because they said that it was wrong. My parents also told me that it was wrong that I was not supposed to do that. I said that I should because I was the father of the child and if she cannot cook then I have to do it. And now we do it together. Now after this group I feel that what I was doing was actually normal, but we didn't call it normal. (Personal communication, April 4, 2019).

This example illustrates how important it is to reduce peer pressure when working in gender stereotypes. Thies Reemer explained that organizations need to work on creating groups and support for these men:

But, if there is no critical mass, if there is no support, then these guys they start bringing water and they find themselves surrounded by women and men are laughing at them and of course they withdraw. So you need a sort of support groups, people supporting each other to be different than the norm and then they really don't care because they know that they are doing better. And then they don't care at people laughing at them. (Personal communication, April 24, 2019).

The engaging on men in WEE interventions that aim to change gender roles should take into account that often men need a support group to feel comfortable to make a behavioral change. This is related to what has been mentioned in the previous sections of this thesis: it is important that development organizations take into account the context in which the interventions are implemented and understand the power dynamics, the roles and number of people needed in order to make a sustainable change among men and women in the community.

(ii) Lack of interest or understanding

Related to the previous challenge, some experts mentioned that generally, men are not interested in gender interventions because they have the perception that gender means women and that gender interventions are not for them (E. Rijke, personal communication, April 11, 2019). This point was also shared and elaborated by Ruth van Zorge, who stated that

(...) you often see in the community sessions that it is quite difficult to keep the men and boys interested, I mean, talking about gender, talking about gender roles, etcetera, etcetera. If you don't do that without another entry point, men would lose interest. (Personal communication, April 12, 2019).

From the experiences shared it is possible to conclude that engaging men in WEE interventions it is complicated not only because of all the challenges mentioned above but also because they do not seem to have interest on what is being discussed in these interventions. A relevant finding regarding this point is that the way in which the interventions are presented and framed is key for gaining men's attention and interest. This point was explained by Aapta Garg in the following way:

Often men don't really understand why the program is needed, how is this supposed to support them? If you present the program as this is a program for gender equality that is not going to interest many men to enter the program or willingly enter into one of these

programs. So one way is to frame it as that you are helping families (...). (Personal communication, May 10, 2019).

As it was explained in section IV.2.1 (iv), WEE interventions also have the potential to be beneficial for men in different ways. In order to engage men in the programs, they should be communicated about the benefits that this type of programs bring for their wives, children, community and for themselves. This point is also related with the fact that men should be approached and framed in a positive way and not reinforcing the idea that they are the problem because this would only create a bigger distance and rejection to WEE interventions.

Regarding this point, it is important to reflect on the reasons why men think gender interventions are a women's issue and they have nothing or too little to do there. One point mentioned by Jens van Tricht is that men do not really see themselves as gender beings and as part of the gender norms and roles (Personal communication, April 30, 2019). Besides that, as it was mentioned in section IV.1.1, in practice, gender interventions are normally focused on women. This association that comes from development organizations may also have had an influence in the way men perceive these programs (and gender at large): as a women's issue that is unrelated to them.

(iii) Time constraints

According to the findings of this research, men tend to work outside the house and do not have much time for participating in interventions for long periods. *"The norm is that men are unfamiliar with participating in programs like this it is also other practical where men are also more likely to be employed than women. Working hours are also something that makes it tricky."* (W. van den Berg, personal communication, May 10, 2019).

As it is also explained by Aapta Garg, there is another element that adds to the one mentioned and makes the engagement of men even more complicated in that regard: men tend to have an hourly income and participating in WEE interventions may imply losing valuable income:

Another component that can be kind of a challenge is that this kind of programs diverts from their availability for participating in paid labor. You have to find ways to please men for participating in the program. If you want to incentivize or inspire men participate in a program, whereas they lose valuable income by their participation, that can be a challenge for men to be willing to participate. (Personal communication, May 10, 2019).

As it can be concluded from the shared experiences, it is a lot to ask from a family to involve them all in WEE interventions because of all the time and income that it implies (L. Brouwer, personal communication, April 23, 2019). A potential solution for this is to implement the interventions during weekends or weeknights, which is the time in which they are normally available (A. Garg, personal communication, May 10, 2019) or even in their workplace (W. van den Berg, personal communication, May 10, 2019). (See also section IV.3.3 (iii)).

IV.3 Guidelines for a better engagement of men in WEE interventions

This section elaborates on different ways and topics that are recommended to take into account for better engaging men in WEE interventions. This answers the sub-sub question 2: *How do development organizations consider that men could be further included in PSD interventions for achieving WEE?*

The aim of this section is to develop guidelines that development organizations can apply when trying to engage men in WEE interventions. These guidelines are constructed based on the information and shared experience of the organizations who were interviewed during the fieldwork. The results presented in this section are divided into the following topics: relevant contextual information; the role of men; ways of approaching and engaging men; important topics for WEE; and, recommended approaches/dynamics.

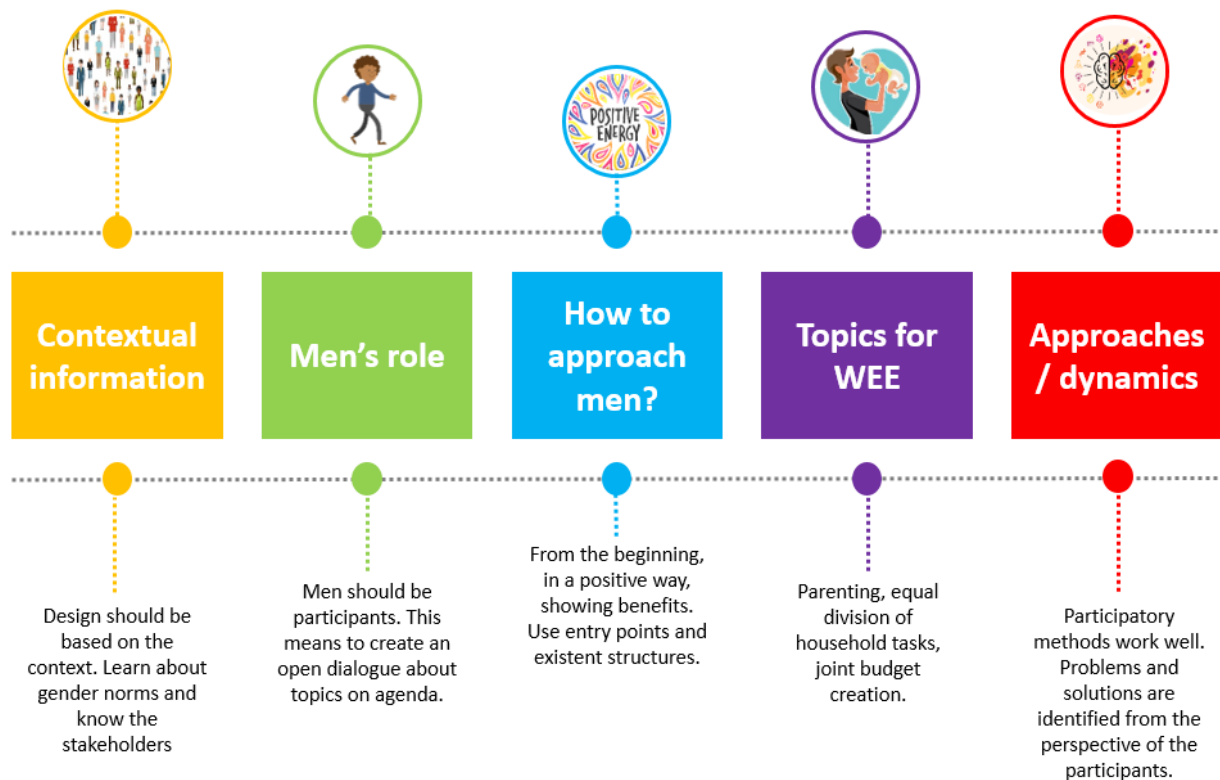


Figure 6: guidelines for a better engagement of men in WEE interventions. Own elaboration.

Before elaborating on the results, it is important to mention that the recommendations contained in this section cannot be considered as a blueprint applicable to every intervention in every context. As it is elaborated in section IV.3.1 it is important that development organizations design the interventions based on the particular situation of every community where it aims to be implemented.

IV.3.1 Relevant contextual information

Every context has different gender roles and power dynamics, stakeholders, authorities, institutions. Getting to know them is relevant in order to design and implement a WEE intervention that suits the context and avoids risks like reinforcing power structures or increasing GBV. Regarding this, Krizia Nardini explained that:

It [the intervention] has to be coherent with the contextual culture and the need of the place. So, it cannot go beyond that. This is why I cannot give you a concrete formula like "this is how you can involve men for sure" because depends on the place. You need to have people that are trained in order to detect this kind of needs and differences and then to have programs that can work in the place. (Personal communication, May 9, 2019).

Aapta Garg explained what are the specific elements that she considers important to identify before designing an intervention:

Often when you work with men on gender equality, you need to start where they are. You usually have to do a process of previous research in which you meet with local stakeholders, men, partners, women to understand what are the norms that exist within the community, what are the challenges and barriers to achieve gender equality and also what are the opportunities to address these challenges and barriers. Using that information, you can start with the framing, with the messaging of the program itself. (Personal communication, May 10, 2019).

As it can be identified from the previous quotes, there are different elements that are important to take into account and research when designing and implementing a WEE intervention. Some of the elements mentioned below are: existing norms in the community; stakeholders; local partners; challenges and barriers for achieving gender equality. These elements are elaborated in the following paragraphs.

(i) Gender norms and stereotypes in the community

As it was mentioned in the previous paragraphs, every context has probably a different way of understanding gender norms and roles, different power dynamics and therefore a different approach and response towards a WEE intervention. In that sense, a large number of the interviewees agreed in the fact that previous research is needed before even deciding what are the potential contributions of a development organization in a certain context (K. Nardini, personal communication, May 9, 2019; Confidential, personal communication, April 15, 2019). Regarding this point, Machteld Ooijens explained that:

I think that in general, it is not that different from all the other projects, except from the very first stage, doing a very deep gender analysis. So, start by doing a very good gender analysis, which again it does not mean focusing only on what the women are doing but in which you really take into account men, women, relationships, their power relationships, the way they participate in society, all this kind of things (...). Within that, the role of men obviously is a very important one and in that, the role of different stakeholders is a very important one and I think once you have this information you can decide: "ok, what should my strategy look like?" (Personal communication, May 10, 2019).

As it was pointed out by the mentioned expert, understanding the way in which men and women relate in the particular context of the intervention is important in order to determine the way in which the program should be designed and the benefits that it can bring to the community. When focusing on the engagement of men, it is really important to also pay attention to the expectations that society has on them. An intervention which aims, for example, to involve more men in household tasks may be breaking societal expectations over men as a breadwinner and unrelated to care work. This conflict between existing stereotypes and the aims of the interventions may have an impact on men's disposition or resistance to change (R. van Zorge, personal communication, April 12, 2019).

Not only power structures based on gender are important but also other cultural or social characteristics that shape the dynamics of the community where the intervention aims to be applied. These are, for example, race, socio-economic sectors, religion, etc. These elements may also have an

influence in the power structure of the community, the way in which people relate, which may have an impact on the intervention that aims to be implemented.

In sum, it is important to research and understand the way in which people relate and the power dynamics existing in the community in order to ensure that the intervention fits the context and that will have valuable outcomes.

(ii) Know the stakeholders

Linked to the importance of getting to know the gender roles and power dynamics of the context in which the intervention aims to be engaged, it is relevant to have a clear understanding of the main stakeholders and their influence in the community and engage them from the start. Examples of the stakeholders that are important to look at can be company managers, community leaders, tribe leaders, etc. (S. Bruinse, personal communication, April 16, 2019). This experience was shared by Aapta Garg, who mentioned that in their programs they always try to include the community and the institutions because community and social norms can have an impact on the changes that want to be obtained (personal communication, May 10, 2019).

Another reason why it is important to get to know the main stakeholders was pointed out by Machteld Ooijens, who mentioned that:

The only thing you should do is to start doing a gender analysis locally and also define your own capacities as an implementing organization being an enterprise, a NGO or whatever; see what is feasible and if you don't have the capacities yourself, then you look for Promundo or whatever entity that has the expertise. Because I would really like to emphasize that not all the organizations have the capacity and the expertise to do all of this by its own. So, go for a multi-stakeholder approach, try to see who is good and at what and try to use the expertise together. (Personal communication, May 10, 2019).

This emphasizes the fact that development organizations should also determine their own capabilities and possibilities. Part of understanding the context and deciding the design of the intervention is to determine which topics are part of the development organization's expertise and with which ones they need the support of other organizations or institutions.

Linked to this idea, it can be recommendable in some cases to partner up with a local organization with a better understanding of the context and a stronger link to the people. *They are usually the ones who direct the implementation of these programs, communicate with local partners. So, finding a local partner who is able to do this work, it is very important (...)*" (A. Garg, personal communication, May 10, 2019). This is also recommendable when there is a language barrier between the development organization and the community in which the intervention aims to be implemented (K. Nardini, personal communication, May 9, 2019).

Finally, knowing the main stakeholders of the area helps development organization to identify the ones who are potential key partners for the WEE that aims to be implemented. Examples of these stakeholders are local authorities; companies (which is related to gender as a business case); teachers and parents; religious leaders; opinion leaders and role models.

A very interesting finding of this research was that a stakeholder that can have a large impact are religious leaders. Ruth van Zorge explained that Rutgers works very often with these leaders because they share objectives and values with the organization and tend to have a huge influence in the community:

We work a lot with religious leaders actually, so that is also a very valid entry point because that is also something that has been very much accepted and appreciated within a lot of communities (...) it doesn't matter that much if they are from an Islamic background or Christian, or Catholic or Pentecost because a lot of the objectives that, for example, our programs have and the ones that religious communities have are almost the same. There are a lot of shared values about love, about prosperity, health. Religious leaders would also say of course that they don't want violence within the family. (Personal communication, April 12, 2019)

A different experience of working with stakeholders was shared by Lotte-Marie Brouwer, who explained that role models and opinion leaders are good ways of approaching the husbands of the women they are working with:

I think it would also help, but it is a bit standard with all the interventions but it would help if you could get opinion leaders or role models or local authorities and figures to also agree with this approach. That is what we do with the sales ladies as well because the men are not happy with their wives going on the streets, of course not. But because we have either male NGO stuff that comes to their houses, explains it to them, or local government that is engaged in the project, so all these things can make you proud like "my wife and thus my family is part of this". (Personal communication, April 23, 2019).

As it is shown from the different examples, every expert shared their experience working together with different stakeholders. It is important to mention that the selection of the appropriate stakeholders to work with will depend on the context and the type of intervention that aims to be implemented. In that sense, the development organization in charge should analyze how aligned their objectives are with the stakeholders and how well received they are in the community in which the intervention will be implemented.

The key message from this section is that a stakeholder analysis of high relevance when designing a WEE intervention because it allows to (i) identify their role in the social norms and power dynamics; (ii) determine the capabilities of the development organization and the need of working together with different stakeholders and development organizations with the required expertise; and, (iii) look for local partners who are helpful for understanding the context and for implementing the program with a closer link to the community.

IV.3.2 Role of men in the interventions

The following paragraphs contain the main findings regarding the role of men in WEE interventions. This is important since men can be involved in this type of interventions in different ways depending on how much attention the development organization decides to pay on them. For example, there are cases in which men are only informed about the intervention and its benefits or are called only for the first meeting; and on the other hand, cases in which they are engaged in several sessions or in which their concerns are also taken into account.

The main result of this research regarding this point is that interventions have better results when men are included as participants, which means when men are also considered as part of the target group that is necessary to work with. This does not mean that men need to get the same benefits than women from the interventions. For example, if a development organization is giving loans or grants to women to improve their businesses, the engagement of men in the program does not mean that they should also get the same financial benefit. As it has been mentioned in section IV.2.1 their participation is related to a change in the gender norms and stereotypes, which also has a benefit on their lives:

[i]t is very important that the interventions are very clear for men that everyone benefits and that indeed not only the women benefit. Or it can be that the women benefit but it should be clear for them what are the positive effects if the women benefit. What are the positive effects for their family? what are the positive effects for their children? So it doesn't make that, for example, the men have to gain more money but that they feel what are the positive effects if their wives earn more money or if their wives are actives. So, for their wives, for themselves, for their children or even for their community. So it needs to be clear what the gains are. (R. van Zorge, personal communication, April 12, 2019).

In that sense, Machteld Ooijens elaborated on this idea and also explained what “engagement” (in the context of men’s engagement in WEE interventions) means for her:

For me, engagement is more like having a dialogue. Not so much about sending information and telling people what it is all about because I don't think that works. But it is more like a dialogue in a participatory approach, trying to understand what is going on in this context and trying to look at underneath, underlying root causes of the situation that is there. And that would differ in each context, even within countries. But engaging them in such a way, they can also come up with their own solutions, and their own ideas and their own vision towards an improved and more equal society. (Personal communication, May 10, 2019).

As it is explained in the quote above, the idea of engaging men in WEE interventions is to create an open dialogue in which their voices and ideas are relevant not only for identifying the gender issues that might be present in the community, but also the solutions to them.

This way of understanding the role of men in WEE relates with the key concepts of this research: understanding of “gender intervention”; and understanding of “WEE”. Regarding the first one, engaging men as participants implies the understanding of gender as a relational concept and recognizes that, as men are also gendered beings and therefore part of the gender norms, their inclusion in gender interventions is essential for its effectiveness. Regarding the second point, the engagement of men as participants helps to address also the second element of WEE: power to act because it makes it possible to change gender norms and stereotypes, which gives women more power to act and benefits men by releasing the pressure these stereotypes put on them.

IV.3.3 Ways of approaching and engaging men

During the fieldwork development organizations shared their experience about the best way of getting men on board in WEE interventions. The following paragraphs elaborate on these findings.

(i) Approaching men from the beginning, in a positive way and showing what is in it for them

In order to have higher possibilities of men being interested in WEE interventions, they should be approached from the first session (S. Bruinse, personal communication, April 16, 2019). In this first approach to men, it is important to make clear what are the aims of the intervention, why this intervention is taking place and how men's participation on it will benefit not only the women directly involved but also the household and men themselves (R. Brandes, personal communication, May 2, 2019).

For this to work, it is also important to take into account the way in which men are framed on the particular intervention. Normally, men are blamed by gender inequalities and treated as the problem against whom women and development organizations need to fight (E. Rijke, personal communication, April 11, 2019; A. Garg, personal communication, May 10, 2019). This approach makes it more complicated to make men interested in participating and fully engaging in WEE interventions.

The lesson from these findings is that men should be approached in a positive way when trying to engage them in WEE interventions. Development organizations should understand them and make them feel as allies in the process of change and that their participation is also beneficial for them. Wessel van den Berg explained that a very effective way to reach men is to do it through facilitators from the same community:

If you can have a facilitator or a community mobilizer, as we call them, that comes from the community, that is also a valuable asset. We really depend on the skills of our facilitators to invite people to come along for a program like that (...). Those in the community ideally should know the one who is recruiting. So, if it is someone from the same community, the potential participants can identify with him. (Personal communication, May 10, 2019).

Partnering/up with local organizations or influential people may be a good way of reaching men in the community showing that the ideas that are proposed are not necessarily coming from outside but that they are also accepted among their peer group.

It is important to mention that this way of approaching men implies that they are really going to be taken into account in the interventions. Framing them in a positive way and showing them that they can also benefit from it should not be taken as strategies for getting them on board but as an honest approach that reflects the real intention to work with men and give them space and time to change their current understanding of gender norms and roles.

(ii) Using entry points and existent structures

Even when men are approached in a positive way, from the beginning and showing them what they can take out from a WEE intervention, it is normally complicated to keep them interested and to fully engage in the program for a long time (R. van Zorge, personal communication, April 12, 2019). This research found some interesting ways of dealing with this problem. The first one is to have good entry points, which means specific situations or moments in which men's interest in gender interventions

might increase. Ruth van Zorge explained that good entry points are, for example, fatherhood because when men become parents for the first time they are more likely to receive information about ways of taking care of the children and the idea of dividing responsibilities can be easier to reach (personal communication, April 12, 2019); the same goes for newlywed couples to start talking about GBV.

A different entry point that was mentioned by Ruth van Zorge was when men's partners start a WEE intervention:

Another entry point that links much more to the women economic empowerment component also it is engaging the men when there are women's economic empowerment programs like micro-credit programs or other programs and that the men are engaged. So, that they feel that the attention only goes to the female and actually they become the breadwinner and they are not supported in their role. Only women are supported in their role. (Personal communication, April 2019).

In this case, the mentioned entry point is directly linked with a WEE intervention. The experience that was shared was one called Journeys of Transformation, in which men were engaged in different sessions at the moment in which their partners joined a micro-credit program. The topics were related to household economics, joint decision-making and equal division of tasks. This intervention, working together with the micro-credit intervention, assesses also the context in which women live and makes it more likely for women to apply what was learned or earned during the intervention. This way of engaging men corresponds to the experience shared by Rachel Pierotti, who mentioned that it tends to be more effective to approach couples, like in this case, because it makes it easier for men to start sharing power with their partners and rethink household dynamics, which does not really happen when they are involved as individuals. (Personal communication, May 6, 2019).

Even when the two first entry points that were mentioned (fatherhood and newlyweds) were not directly mentioned in relation to WEE, it seems that they could also be applied to this type of interventions. It is important to remember that the household dynamics are essential for women to be able to develop reproductive activities. In that sense, making men aware of their role as caregivers and their responsibilities as fathers could also be useful to implement in the context of WEE interventions. In the same line, recently married couples could also be approached for having conversations about gender roles and household division of tasks since it is the moment in which they would more likely start living together and facing this situation.

The second way of dealing with the difficulty of making men interested in WEE interventions is using existent structures for engaging groups of men. Wessel van den Berg explained it:

The best way that we found for recruitment is to work with existent structures. So, run a program with a church group or a soccer team or whatever institution or instruction is existing already. I think we often implemented programs where we kind of randomly recruit people just by going around transport stops, shopping centers. That works but it is not very effective and it is also quite strange, you know? (Personal communication, May 10, 2019).

As it is shown in the quote above, the use of existent structures facilitates approaching men and engaging them in these already formed groups. This strategy also helps to tackle one of the challenges that is mentioned in section IV.2.2: men are resistant to change and a reason for that is that they fear

being ridiculed by their peers or losing power within their communities. Targeting men as part of football or religious teams may be a form of creating support groups for these men and avoid or reduce the peer pressure that creates resistance for these changes.

This strategy differs from the one mentioned above (that is more effective to engage men as part of couples and not as individuals). It is the task of the development organization to learn about the community before designing and implementing the intervention and determine which way of approaching men would work better with that given group of people.

(iii) Selecting a suitable time for the sessions

As it was mentioned in section IV.2.2, one important challenge that development organizations face when trying to engage men in WEE interventions is time constraints. Interventions that aim to engage men and change gender norms and roles should be long and time-consuming and therefore require a lot of effort and disposition from the participants. This is a practical matter that should be taken into account by development organizations. A possible solution for tackling this issue is to implement the interventions during the weeknights or weekends where more people are available (A. Garg, personal communication, May 10, 2019) or even in their workplace (W. van den Berg, personal communication, May 10, 2019). This strategy could also be beneficial for women who normally are in charge of both household tasks and reproductive activities and therefore have long and busy days.

As with all the other potential strategies, the selection of the time depends on the context and the best time for engaging men needs to be identified in the previous research that should be done before the design and implementation of the intervention.

IV.3.4 Important topics for WEE

The findings from the literature review and fieldwork are aligned in the fact that intra household dynamics between men and women are a key factor to look at when working in WEE (Promundo & CARE International in Rwanda, 2012; Wanner & Wadham, 2015). Interventions that do not tackle these topics are only assessing the first element of WEE: tools to act but not the power to do it. They do not assess the gender-based constraints that women face in the household that tend to constitute a limitation for taking advantage of the WEE interventions (A. Senders, personal communication, April 2, 2019)

Part of the findings of the fieldwork are the topics that development organizations assess when engaging men in WEE (and other gender-related) interventions. The following figure 7 contains the overview of the relevant topics that look at the context in which women live and therefore assess the second element of WEE: power to act.

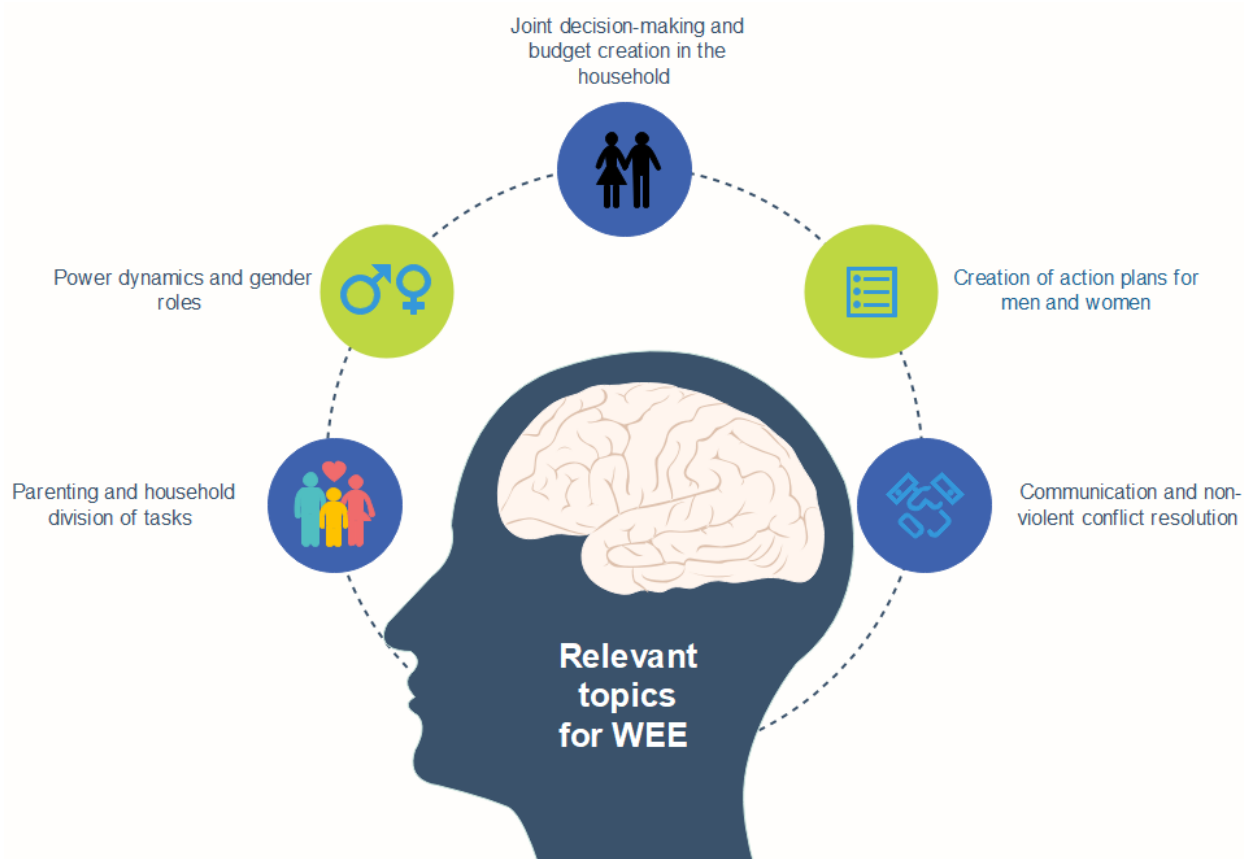


Figure 7: relevant topics for WEE. Own elaboration.

As it is shown, most of the topics have in common that they aim to contribute to a more equal division of tasks in the household and to give women the possibility to participate in the decision making in the household, including the budget creation. This stronger position in the household makes more likely for women to have time to dedicate to productive activities and to reinvest their earnings or have, at least more control over them. Additionally, the discussion of gender roles and stereotypes is also beneficial for men as it helps eliminating the pressure they feel of being the breadwinners of the household and allows them to explore different situations, like parenting that enrich their lives.

Additional important topics are parenting and discussions regarding power dynamics and gender roles. Together with the previously mentioned topics, these ones take into account the context in which women live and help in achieving the second element of WEE: power to act. This sphere tends to be overlooked by development organizations, which are more focused on reaching quantitative indicators like “number of women trained” or “number of women working”, for example. This concern was shared by Machteld Ooijens:

[T]here are so many different elements to take into account besides reaching a number of women participating in a training (...). What does it tell you? Is that a gender transformative approach? No way. It only tells you that some women have participated but did they voice out? Where they able to speak? After the training, did you see any changes happening? Were they participating in other kind of committees? (Personal communication, May 10, 2019).

This quote illustrates what is pointed out by the literature: one of the main criticisms of GAD is the fact that it has not been taken to reality and one of the reasons is that looking beyond the first element of WEE and trying to change gender norms and roles is a very challenging and complex task (Rathgeber, 1990). Despite its difficulty, the outcomes of this research show that WEE interventions that ignore the household dynamics and continue giving women only tools to act without looking at the context in which they live cannot be considered to be complete since they do not assess the root causes of gender inequality.

IV.3.5 Recommended approaches/dynamics

The engagement of men in WEE interventions aims to change the gender norms and roles and create a more equal context for women to develop productive and reproductive activities. The topics that are assessed during this type of interventions are, therefore, sensitive and have to be approached in a way that incentivizes and encourages change and that shows that change is beneficial for everybody.

The main finding of this research regarding what tool or approach for engaging men should be used in WEE interventions is that there is no blueprint that can be applied universally. Each case requires the search for the best tool or approach that suits the gender roles, power dynamics, and topics that need to be assessed. The only general characteristic that this tool should have, according to the experts, is that it should be a participatory or bottom-up methodology which allows the development organization to learn from the context, not only in what the problems are but mostly on what are the solutions for those problems. The following paragraphs contain a description of the most important approaches or dynamics recommended by the development organizations, based on their experience engaging men in gender interventions.

Participatory methodologies make people reflect and come up with their own perception of what the problems are in the community and the best way of solving them. An example of a participatory method is the GALS (Gender Action Learning System), which was developed by Oxfam and local partners in different developing countries. It has been applied also as a framework for value chain development interventions, which are also related to WEE and therefore relevant for this research. It aims to improve the livelihoods of the participants (both men and women) in an equal way. (Reemer & Makanza, 2014).

According to what is explained by Reemer & Makanza (2014), the basic framework of the methodology is a road journey that pays attention to three different levels: (i) happy life and livelihood; (ii) gender relations at the household level; (iii) wider community, family or business relations. For this, it uses different tools and graphical representations that allow the participants to express their vision of different problems and be the active agents of change. A practical example of how it can be applied was given by Thies Reemer:

Here (showing a picture) they are still constructing the diamond and you have what women like of their identity, what women dislike of their identity, what men like and what men dislike. In the center, you can put things that are in common. You have indicators for happy family or unhappy family and you can also use this as indicators for change. So, for example, sharing things together, traveling together, eating together, because they didn't eat together, you know? Women would get up really early, prepare breakfast, take the children to school and then the men get up later and eat and goes to work or something. (Personal communication, April 24, 2019).

As it is demonstrated in this example, the participants constructed their identities and established common points between men and women. This allows the identification of problematic issues like violence, unequal division of tasks in the household or participation in the decision-making, among others. The use of visual and dynamic tools makes it easier to discuss delicate topics like gender power dynamics and also to work with non-literate participants (Reemer & Makanza, 2014). This methodology allows development organizations to

(...) start from their reality, the reality of both women and men and just look for the things that they want to change, the things that they don't like. That is very typical for the Gender Action Learning System, you don't come to impose something, you guide people through a process in which they discover what they would like to change in their lives and enable them to plan a pathway. (T. Reemer, personal communication, April 24, 2019).

Another tool that was recommended by development organizations during the fieldwork (which can also be used as part of the GALS) was the use of 24-hour diaries to illustrate the normal day of men and women in the community in which the intervention is conducted (W. van den Berg, personal communication, May 10, 2019). This exercise can serve as an entry point for discussing the involvement of men in household tasks as a way to give women more time for developing productive activities (see also section IV.1.3). This tool also enables participants to discover inequalities by themselves and to start a dialogue about potential solutions for these situations.

Another approach that can be used for complementing WEE interventions is the Household Approach. This methodology is centered on the household dynamics and implemented in order to make the division of tasks more equal between men and women, which normally means the need to involve men in parenting or household chores. It is also applied in the case of family businesses with the aim of making women more engaged in the decision-making and understanding of the business.

Even when women work for the family businesses they are not necessarily aware of the returns that it generates for the family, the way in which the income is spent or do not have much participation in the decision-making (Senders, Lentink de Triodos Facet, Vanderschaeghe, Terrillon, & Snelder, n.d.). Angelica Senders shared an experience using the Household Approach:

[T]here is one case from a coffee company in Uganda who applied this household approach and integrated it in the capacity building of farmers' approach. It's a company selling UTZ certified coffee and it's very nice to see that they really see that if they invest in these households, the women-men managing their coffee at the household in general jointly, thus they produce more coffee, better coffee, that they are more reliable suppliers for the company. So it is good for them. And it is good for both. So it's a nice case description that goes together with the household approach. (Personal communication, April 2, 2019).

This example illustrates that the use of the Household Approach is useful for enabling joint management of the family business between men and women. In that way, it tackles the gender constraints mentioned in the previous paragraphs: lack of participation in the decision-making; lack of information or understanding about the business, among others. Stronger participation of women in the business and in the decision-making makes it more likely to achieve also the second element of WEE: power to act.

Additionally, as it was mentioned in section IV.1.3 some experts explained that companies, most of the time, need financial incentives to work in gender-related issues. Development organizations have started to show companies that there is a business case on working in reducing inequalities. They've called this approach "the business case of gender". This example shows that there is also a business case in working at the household level (engaging men). The company mentioned in the quote above decided to apply the Household Approach and the improvement of the power balances at the household level resulted in joint management of the family business (with more participation of the women) which led to better, stronger and more reliable coffee suppliers.

An improvement in the suppliers creates benefits for the company as well because it receives better coffee from a more trustworthy family business. So, even in the case of a more market-oriented motivation to work in WEE, paying attention to the household dynamics makes interventions more effective, which leads to better economic results, like in this case.

Something that is applicable to all the methodologies mentioned above is that *"in the interventions, it is very important that you have the ability of women to sit together, men to sit together and women and men to sit together. So your interventions should always provide those abilities."* (R. van Zorge, personal communication, April 12, 2019). The composition of the discussion groups depends on the topic and the dynamics that are identified during the previous research in the area. It is necessary to give women the possibility to express themselves about their vision of inequality, violence and other aspects that might be affecting WEE.

The same reasoning applies for men: it is important to give them the space to reflect, to manifest their concerns and frustrations and challenge them. As men do not always need to be present in discussions about inequality; women also do not need to be always present to make men reflect on power dynamics and gender stereotypes. Gender norms and roles can be delicate topics to work on and giving each group the possibility to express freely seems to be essential for a more open reflection process.

The coping strategies recommended by the experts assess all the challenges that were identified during the fieldwork. The following Figure 9 contains a graphical representation of the relationship between the two sections of this research:



Figure 8: comparison between challenges and guidelines. Own elaboration

The figure above shows that the findings of this research contain both the limitations that are normally faced by development organizations when engaging men in WEE interventions but also the potential strategies for dealing with them. As it has been mentioned, the most important challenges to overcome (the ones which entail structural change) are the ones faced by development organizations and donors (number 1,2,3 and 4 in Figure 8). The experiences that are being considered as potential solutions for these challenges are only examples given by the experts. More work needs to be done by development organizations and institutions to raise awareness of the importance of the engagement of men in WEE interventions in order to make it a new trend in the way in which these interventions are implemented.

Taking this information into account, the next section elaborates on the experience of development organizations in men's engagement in WEE interventions.

IV.4 Experience of development organizations with men engagement

This section elaborates on the experience that development organizations have in engaging men in WEE interventions and answers sub-question 1: *What is the experience of development organizations on men-engagement in PSD interventions for achieving WEE?* This question is answered with the information provided in section IV, which contains the results and discussion of this thesis.

First, as it is shown in Figure 8 above, the experience of development organization shows that the challenges that they face for engaging men in WEE interventions can be assessed by paying attention to the context and its particularities and taking the guidelines proposed in section IV.3 as examples of successful experiences. The most important lessons learned from their experience is that every intervention needs to be context-based and implemented with a participatory approach, giving the community the possibility to identify their gender constraints and the possible solutions for them.

Second, the acknowledgment of the importance of engaging men in WEE interventions has come from the request of women in the field. Female participants in women-only type of interventions have requested development organizations to involve their husbands, fathers, brothers or any other men to which they related to making them also aware of the importance of the topics under discussion (R. van Zorge, personal communication, April 12, 2019; J. Reynders, personal communication, April 4, 2019). These findings show even clearer how important it is to start working with men and paying attention to the way in which they perceive gender roles and norms.

Last, development organizations have experienced that the reaction from men and women is normally positive when men are engaged in WEE interventions and only a few of them are reluctant to it (J. Reynders, personal communication, April 4, 2019). So, even when in practice there is no much work done with men, when this happens and men are somehow involved, their reaction is positive and the interventions happen to have better results for both groups.

These findings add important information to the one provided by the literature, in which there is still a high degree of concern regarding the way in which women and men would react to the engagement of men in WEE interventions and how the position of women might be undermined by it (Chant & Gutmann, 2002). From the results of this research, it seems that if the interventions are properly designed, taking into account the reality and context in which it aims to be implemented and assesses the relevant topics in a careful way, the mentioned risks can be neutralized.

V. CONCLUSIONS

This thesis has shown that in the context of PSD, the interventions that aim to achieve WEE are more comprehensive when they engage men. Their inclusion contributes in different ways. The three main ways in which this contribution occurs are represented in the following Figure 9:

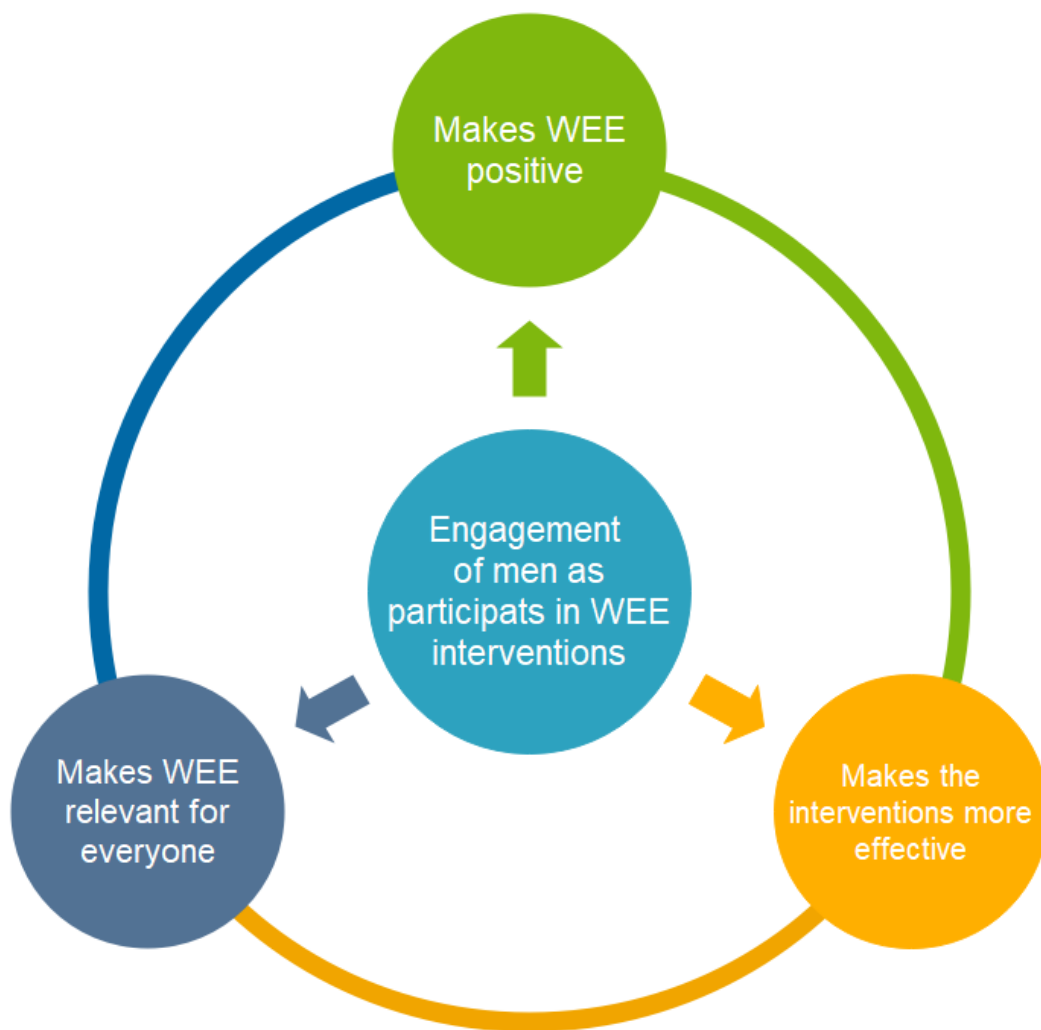


Figure 9: main contributions of the engagement of men to WEE. Own elaboration

First, when men are engaged in WEE interventions, it is more likely to achieve its two elements: tools to act and power to act. The first one is easier to achieve through more traditional women-only interventions like micro-credits, access to land and assets, etc. The second element is much more complicated to achieve if men are not part of the intervention and aware of its benefits. For different reasons, men tend to act as barriers for women to participate in productive activities or, when they do, to have control of their income. Additionally, the assumption that women are responsible for the household tasks and childcare also limits the time they have for developing reproductive activities.

In order to give women the power to participate in the decision-making of the household, to be able to co-design with their husbands a budget for the household and share the care work that they perform, it is necessary to change the traditional gender norms and roles that are normally embedded in society. This is not possible to achieve when the work is done only with half of the population. It would be like imposing women the huge work of solving gender inequality by themselves. In that sense, it is important to consider men as participants of the interventions, which means that attention should also be given to their frustrations, concerns, and understandings of gender roles. Only in this way, it is possible to continue giving steps towards a more equal society.

Second, the engagement of men makes WEE interventions more effective. More collaborative partners (or any other men which they relate), which understand the importance of WEE and respect women's position in decision-making makes more likely for women to put in practice what has been learned in the WEE programs. Men start becoming their partners in a personal sense but also as supporters of their productive activities instead of opposing the interventions, as it tends to happen when they are excluded. The engagement of men in WEE intervention contributes to tackling the real root of the problem: gender roles and norms, which gives women a better position in the household but also in the labor market. All this makes it more likely to achieve the second element of WEE: power to act.

Third, the engagement of men makes WEE relevant and beneficial for everyone and not only for women. Men are also harmed by gender norms and roles because they are pressured by what society and their peers expect from them. The engagement of men in WEE interventions helps them to realize that equality is also beneficial for them. Being a caring parent, a caring partner, taking care of the household tasks, recognizing the value of their wives' jobs, being supportive, etc., is not only positive for women but also for men, for families and for the communities at large.

Besides this proved importance that the engagement of men has on WEE, this is not still the trend used by development organizations when implementing interventions. This is related to the challenges that were identified during this research. Different from what has been found in literature, the main challenges for engaging men in WEE seem to be the ones at the level of the organization. The fact that the system is designed expecting short-term results is, for instance, one of the main obstacles for achieving deep and sustainable change in gender norms and roles. It would help to the process of change to be open to longer interventions, where the possibility is given to the participants to reflect, challenge their ideas; and to have follow-up interventions where the development organization can observe if the changes remain.

Linked with this is the need to be very careful in the type of interventions that are implemented and the way in which the information reaches the participants. When working with men, another important challenge for development organizations is to be sure that their work is not reinforcing the existing power structures or stereotypes. Gender stereotypes can be present in a very subtle way but overlooking them may have the opposite effect that the intervention wants to achieve. In that sense, it is important to team up with organizations with experience working with men who are aware of these situations.

Another important recommendation related to the one mentioned in the previous paragraph for coping with the challenges of engaging men in WEE interventions is to do a previous baseline study and learn from the context in which the intervention aims to be implemented. It is important for development organizations to remember that every context is different, with different stakeholders, different power relations and different ways in which gender constraints are manifested. It is important to learn about this context as much as possible before making decisions about the way in which the intervention will be implemented. It is important to identify the most relevant stakeholders, their role in the community and in the power structures that are in place in order to select the ones that could be helpful for the aims of the intervention. Part of these stakeholders may be company managers, community leaders, religious leaders, political leaders, teachers, parents, among others. The main stakeholder whose role has been discussed throughout this thesis is men.

The way in which development organizations approach men and try to engage them in WEE interventions is one of the main recommendations of this thesis for coping with their resistance to change and lack of interest in this type of interventions. When men are framed as the problem or feel attacked by the way in which development organizations refer to them, they will not be willing to participate in WEE interventions and, in some cases, they can even be opposed to them. Men should be approached and framed in a positive way, like allies and active agents of the process of change. This should be seen not as a strategy for bringing them on board but as an honest approach that implies that men have a lot to give to these interventions but also a lot to gain from equality. Showing men what is in there for them and working on that is the most honest and comprehensive perspective that development organizations can have when engaging men in WEE interventions.

Once they are on board, it is important to create a platform for long-lasting and sustainable change. Peer pressure can act as a limitation as other men (or even women) which are not part of the intervention can ridicule them or make them feel embarrassed of performing tasks that are traditionally understood as part of women's role. For this reason, it is important to work with a large group of men that allows them to have a support group with which they feel comfortable enough to deviate from the existent gender norms without caring about the opinions of other people.

Part of the next steps for development organizations is to continue doing research about this topic, showing the results and sharing experiences so others can also take advantage of it. More information is needed first in the engagement of men in WEE interventions from the side of the people in the field showing how they perceive this type of intervention, how it helped them and which dynamics were more useful to make them realize the importance of WEE and gender equality. Like every other social problem, gender issues are not easy to solve. Looking at the root causes might be frustrating and perceived as impossible to tackle and solve. There is no blueprint for how to do it and there is no unique solution. What is important now is to acknowledge the role that men have in the fight for gender justice and to continue giving steps into that direction.

Looking at WEE from this perspective allows development organizations and participants in the interventions to realize that the empowerment of women does not mean necessarily the disempowerment of men. Men's engagement in WEE would empower men in different ways: would empower them to be better fathers, to be better partners, to be more sensitive. It would empower them to explore new emotions and feelings that in most societies men do not feel comfortable to show. WEE would not be achieved by fighting against each other but by working together.

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Appendix 1 – Information of participants

The following Table 2 contains the general information of the experts that participated in the research and their organizations:

ORGANIZATION	COUNTRY	EXPERT	POSITION
Fair & Sustainable	Netherlands	Angelica Senders	Consultant in Gender in Value Chains
Independent consultant	Netherlands	Jan Reynders	
Independent consultant	Netherlands	Els Rijke	Gender and Development Expert
Rutgers	Netherlands	Ruth van Zorge	Program Manager of the Department of International Programs
Confidential	Confidential (International)	Confidential	Advisor
Ex Plan International	Netherlands	Sandra Bruinse	
BoPInc	Netherlands	Lotte-Marie Brouwer	Project Manager
Oxfam	Netherlands	Thies Reemer	Program leader of WEMAN
Jens van Tricht	Netherlands	Emancipator	Founder
Agriprofocus	Netherlands	Rolf Schinkel	Network facilitator
SNV	Kenya	Raymond Brandes	FLOW Program Manager
AGIL	USA	Rachel Pierotti	Social Development Specialist
MenEngage Spain	Spain	Krizia Nardini	Member
Partnering for Social Impact	Netherlands	Machteld Ooijens	Founder

Sonke Gender Justice	South Africa	Wessel van den Berg	Co-Coordinator of the MenCare Global Fatherhood Campaign
Promundo	USA	Aapta Garg	Program Officer

Table 2: information of participants

Appendix 2 – Interview Guide

This appendix contains the interview guide. The following questions were used as a reference and were complemented or adapted depending on the organization that was being interviewed, the expertise of the interviewee and the way in which the interview developed.

I. Background information

* Describe the information contained in the website of the organization related to the topic of the thesis.

1. Can you elaborate on that?
Probes: aims, main projects, main areas, main regions
2. Can you describe the process the organization follows when designing a gender intervention?
Probes: Baseline studies, decision of region, decision of topic.
3. What is your understanding of gender?
Probes: gender as relational, WID vs. WAD.
4. How does your understanding of gender is related to the understanding of the organization?
Probes: share the same understanding, differs, examples
5. How is this understanding of gender translated to the interventions?
Probes: Analysis of gender relations, type of interventions, target group
6. How do you understand women empowerment?
Probes: Tools, power, WEE
7. How do you contribute to women empowerment?
Probes: tools to act, power to act, examples.

II. Empowerment / Interventions

8. In the context of PSD, what are the type of interventions designed by the organization to achieve women empowerment?
Probes: Female entrepreneurship, female employment.
9. So, the organization started designing interventions for gender equality in (*). How were the interventions at that moment? How have they changed? Why did they change? What were the turning points or events that led to that change?
Probes: changing in literature, activist movements, different understanding of masculinity, examples.

III. Men's engagement

10. What role do you think men can play in these women empowerment interventions?

Probes: Not participate, participate, WEE, care work, awareness, support.

11. What do you think are the challenges for including men in women empowerment interventions?
Probes: Budget, men take over, women lose space, concrete examples.
12. What would you suggest for improving the way men are engaged in women empowerment interventions at the moment?
Probes: Baseline study, as participants, also assessing their needs, separately or together.
13. Can you describe an experience you had including men in gender interventions?
Probes: challenges, benefits, space for improvement, reactions of men and women, reactions of not participants.
14. If you would be asked to give advice to another organization on how to design a women empowerment intervention including men, what would you recommend?
What steps would you follow?
Probes: target only women, women and men, type of intervention.
15. Do you think men (in developing countries) are ready for this type of interventions?
Probes: concept of masculinity, social pressure, examples

Appendix 3 – Infographic: How to engage men in WEE interventions?

The following pages contain an infographic with a graphical summary of the main recommendations contained in this thesis for a better engagement of men in WEE interventions. These recommendations are based on the experience of the interviewed development organizations. The aim of the document is to serve as a guide for development organizations who want to start or get more ideas on how to further engage men in their WEE interventions.

How to

engage men in WEE interventions?

By Alejandra Flecha Corvetto

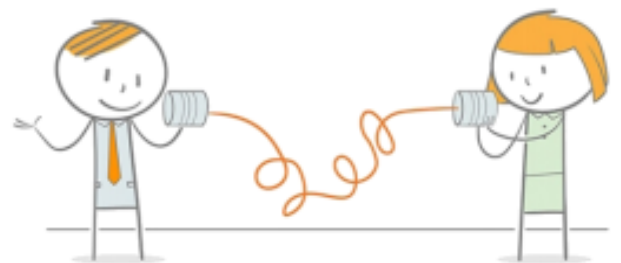


Learn about the context

- ➔ Discover the position of men and women in the community and the way they relate.
- ➔ Look for gender stereotypes. Be careful, they are not always easy to perceive!
- ➔ Partner-up with important stakeholders (e.g., religious leaders, companies, community leaders, etc.) and local organizations.
- ➔ Go for a multi-stakeholder approach. Not everyone has the same expertise.

Engage men as participants

- ➔ Men should be invited as participants of the interventions.
- ➔ Have an open structure that allows you to have a dialogue about their frustrations and concerns.
- ➔ Remember, they are also harmed by gender stereotypes!



Approach men in a positive way

- ➔ Approach men from the beginning and in a positive way. They are allies in the change process.
- ➔ Show them that it is beneficial for them.
- ➔ Use entry points (fatherhood, newlyweds, WEE, etc.) as moments in which men are more willing to discuss.
- ➔ Use existing structures (football team, church group, etc.). This also helps dealing with peer pressure.



Let's talk about...

- ➔ Parenting, division of household tasks, gender stereotypes, power dynamics, joint decision-making, etc.
- ➔ Remember that not only business related topics are important for WEE.



Use a participatory method

- ➔ Use bottom-up methods that allow participants identify the problems and potential solutions.
- ➔ Examples of these methods are: Household Approach, GALS approach, 24hr diary, etc.



WEE is not a fight of women against men. It is a fight of both against current gender stereotypes. Equality is beneficial for everyone and can only be achieved when everyone is involved.



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These recommendations were elaborated based on the experience shared by the development organizations interviewed during the fieldwork of the Master's Thesis called "We are better together. The engagement of men in WEE interventions".