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IMPROVING LAND ACCESS FOR WOMEN (ILAW) LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE FIRST PHASE OF GALS AND SOCIAL DIALOGUE



APRIL 2023

This report is made possible by the support of the American People through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The contents of this report are the sole responsibility of Tetra Tech and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.

This publication was produced for review by the United States Agency for International Development by Tetra Tech, through USAID Contract No. 7200AA18D00003/72062421F00006, under the Strengthening Tenure and Resource Rights (STARR) II Indefinite Delivery Indefinite Quantity Contract (IDIQ).

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Cover Photo: The vice president of the women's group in Marahoué, Côte d'Ivoire, in her field (Source: Tetra Tech).

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ACRONYMS

AFOR	Agence Foncière Rurale
AFJCI	Association des Femmes Juristes de Côte d'Ivoire
ARK	Animation Rurale de Korhogo
AWP	Annual Work Plan
CAHD	Conseil pour l'Assistance Humanitaire et le Développement
CAMEL	Complexity-Aware Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
CDI	Côte d'Ivoire
CF	Certificat Foncier
CVGFR	Comité Villageois de Gestion Foncière Rurale
GALS	Gender Action Learning System
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
IDIQ	Indefinite Delivery Indefinite Quantity
ILAW	Improving Land Access for Women
INDIGO	Initiative de Dialogue et de Recherche-Action pour la Paix
KAP	Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices
MCLU	Ministère de la Construction du Logement et de l'Urbanisme
MFFE	Ministère de la Femme, de la Famille et de l'Enfant
MINADER	Ministère d'État, Ministère de l'Agriculture et du Développement Rural
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
ONEG	Observatoire National de l'Équité et du Genre
PEA	Political Economy Analysis
SBCC	Social Behavior Change Communication
SD	Social Dialogue
STARR II	Strengthening Tenure and Resource Rights II
ToR	Terms of Reference
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The goal of the Improving Land Access for Women (ILAW) Activity is to increase social cohesion, reduce land conflicts, and empower women to contribute to their communities economically by strengthening their legal access to land in the Northern and Western regions of Côte d'Ivoire (CDI). ILAW will achieve this goal through two performance objectives:

- *Objective 1* - Empower communities in Northern and Western CDI through awareness raising, advocacy, and communication campaigns on land and women's rights in Western and Northern CDI; and
- *Objective 2* - Strengthen women's access to legal and conflict mediation services in rural and urban areas to ensure their access to land in Northern and Western CDI.

At the beginning of ILAW, two baseline studies were carried out to understand the overall situation of gender inequalities with respect to land in the project's intervention zone.

These baseline studies highlighted five (05) main dynamics ripe for change:

- 1) The marginalization of women in the processes of discussion and decision-making around land at the level of the nuclear family, extended family, community and village;
- 2) The poor application of legal provisions on women's land rights, especially with respect to inheritance;
- 3) The unfavorable treatment of women in land disputes compared to men;
- 4) The exclusion of women from obtaining land documents including titles, contracts of use and wills;
- 5) Lack of action by community and government officials to proactively reduce land discrimination against women and negative attitudes and beliefs around women's property rights.

To contribute to changing these dynamics, the project undertook two complementary programmatic approaches.

The first approach was Social Dialogue (SD) around 5 themes using short videos produced by local partner INDIGO. This approach is premised on the fact that transformation is possible when people have the opportunity to participate in constructive and change-oriented discussions. The videos were developed using testimonials from community members themselves. In total, approximately 200 dialogue sessions were organized by the project's local partners, namely Council for Humanitarian Assistance and Development/CAHD (West) and Animation Rurale de Korhogo/ARK (North).

The second approach was the Gender Action Learning System (GALS). Developed in East Africa by OXFAM, GALS has three transformative phases for building gender justice with the help of participatory visual tools. GALS uses household economic development as the entry point for discussions about the distribution of resources and labor between men and women with the aim of increasing benefits for everyone. With the help of an external consultant, ILAW adapted the GALS methodology to its context. The first phase focused on the household level and was led by project partners (ARK and CAHD) with technical support from ILAW specialists.

ILAW made the decision to start with these social dialogue and GALS activities in order to create a favorable environment for change, based on the theory that this change is only possible when people have spaces for discussion and reflection, and that they perceive the link between their economic advancement and gender justice. This is also in line with the "Do No Harm" approach of the project insofar as ILAW did not wish to undertake awareness-raising and communication activities without this preliminary phase of dialogue, at the risk of generating misunderstandings or worse.

In line with its Complexity-Aware Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning plan (CAMEL), and its Annual Work Plan (AWP) 2022-2023, ILAW organized a pause and reflect workshop in January 2023 to discuss

among staff and partners the main results and trends from social dialogue and GALS. This report built upon those reflections and is organized as follows: results and lessons learned from GALS (Part One), followed by the main achievements and the lessons learned from social dialogue (Part Two) and finally reflections on next steps including recommendations (Part Three).

2.0 LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE FIRST PHASE OF GENDER ACTION LEARNING SYSTEM (GALS) ACTIVITIES

The Gender Action Learning System (GALS) is a community-led empowerment methodology aimed at giving women and men more control over their lives, all while catalyzing a sustainable movement for gender justice. GALS increases the self-esteem and agency of community members and strengthens their negotiation skills to engage meaningfully with others, including economic and political actors.

As a central part of ILAW's strategy, GALS was designed as a "gateway" activity aimed at catalyzing change at the individual and collective level (households, women's economic groups) in the project's intervention areas. GALS is founded on participatory planning principles and processes, using visual tools so that anyone irrespective of literacy can understand and participate. (See the [GALS training guide produced by OXFAM](#), which pioneered this approach.)

2.1 COMPLETED ACTIVITIES

GALS was adapted to ILAW's needs and organized around three phases:

- **Phase 1 : Catalyst workshops and monitoring of individual action plans (6 months).** In this first phase, ILAW organized training workshops on GALS tools with 4 participants per target village (120 people, half of them women and the other half men). At the end of these workshops, the participants developed a personal action plan which was followed up by the field agents of the local partners. During these workshops, the 5 basic tools of GALS were introduced, namely :
 - The *Vision Journey* that allows one to identify economic objectives over a year divided into sub-periods of three months;
 - The *Gender Balance Tree*, which identifies and analyzes the distribution of tasks, access to and control of resources, expenses and the decision-making process in the household;
 - The *Diamond Dream* which focuses on desired changes in interpersonal relationships in the couple including addressing potentially Gender-Based Violence (GBV);
 - The *Empowerment Leadership Map* which allows one to analyze social networks and identify people with whom to share the GALS tools so they also become empowered;
 - The *Multilane Highway Action Plan* that synthesizes commitments on the economic level (Lane 1), gender dynamics (Lane 2) and sharing tools in one's social network (path 3).

At the end of this first phase, ILAW organized self-assessments for each GALS champion and then participatory gender review workshops. During the participatory review workshop, two participants per village were invited to review the implementation of their action plans and transition to Phase 2.

- **Phase 2 : Organization of community activities (6 months).** GALS Champions will organize GALS activities within their organizations (cooperatives, associations) and communities. For example, members of a women's association will perform exercises at the individual and collective level. New tools will be used to highlight economic objectives at the collective level as well as land and organizational objectives. At the time of writing this document, this phase was underway but not yet completed.
- **Phase 3 : Consolidation and networking (1 year).** Champions will continue to work individually and collectively on their action plans. In addition, they will participate in regional forums for discussion and coordination in order to build a network of people committed to gender justice.

The present document focuses on the first phase of GALS which worked on the individual level. The summary table below gives an overview of the implementation schedule for these activities:

	Time Period	Location
Phase I : Catalyst workshops and monitoring of individual action plans (May-July 2022)		
1	17-19/05/2022	Yamoussoukro (Training of trainers)
2	23-28/05/2022	Catalyst workshop Guémon
3	06-11/06/2022	Catalyst workshop Cavally
4	10-15/06/2022	Catalyst workshop Béré
5	20-24/06/2022	Catalyst workshop Man
6	20-24/06/2022	Catalyst workshop Tchologo
7	28/06-03/07/2022	Catalyst workshop Poro
Phase I : Participatory gender review and identification of gender champions (September-November 2022)		
8	19-30/09/2022	Training of partner field agents on self-evaluation
9	19-28/09/2022	Self-evaluation exercises Tchologo
10	21/09-07/10/2022	Self-evaluation exercises Tonkpi
11	21/09-13/10/2022	Self-evaluation exercises Guemon
12	22-30/09/2022	Self-evaluation exercises Poro
13	29-29/06/2022	Self-evaluation exercises Béré
14	30-09-11/10/2022	Self-evaluation exercises Cavally
15	24-29/10/2022	Participatory gender review - North
16	31/10-05/11/2022	Participatory gender review - West

These activities reached a total of (3,136) people in the two intervention areas, namely (1,870) women and (1,266) men. This figure includes the 120 people initially trained as well as people in their family and social networks who were introduced to the tools and invited to learning and discussion sessions.

2.2 OUTCOMES, TRENDS AND LESSONS LEARNED

Several results related to the implementation of this methodology were noted by partner field agents and by the champions themselves during the participatory gender review workshops. The analysis that follows draws preliminary conclusions about changes that go beyond individuals and are noticeable within the household and multiple people in the target communities.

2.2.1 THE VISION JOURNEY TOOL WAS APPRECIATED BY ALL

The first GALS tool, the Vision Journey, was particularly helpful for ILAW in defusing apprehension around the project because it focuses on the non-threatening topic of wealth creation. This helped plant the idea that gender and development are closely related, and that gender is relevant to the practical needs of individuals and households. Communities were more open to these tools because the tool addressed these tangible issues. Deploying this tool was also essential to respect the principle of doing no harm, since it reduced the risks of negative outcomes associated with a gender equality project.

The Vision Journey tool also had the advantage of resulting in tailor-made, practical and realistic solutions to address the economic challenges of everyday life. This helped build community acceptance not just of the tool but of the project as a whole. Indeed, given the participants' interest in this tool, customary authorities of the target communities joined in many of these trainings and encouraged their continuation. For example, the village chiefs of northern villages Kapounon and Nabonkaha, after being trained by the ILAW team and partner ARK, spoke positively about the potential economic impact of the tool in their villages. The chief of Kapounon, although not chosen as the GALS champion, went on to participate in the exercises with the women's groups as they defined their collective visions (see text box for his testimonial).

In the west, the village chief of Dinegouiné, trained by GALS champions, said he considers the Vision Journey tool very useful for improving the economic situation of his village. He himself started training other traditional leaders in his community in the tools. This was possible because the tool addresses a neutral and relevant subject for everyone and allows a more natural evolution towards gender balance within the household.

These examples demonstrate that the Vision Journey tool catalyzes change in the lives of those who use it. Indeed, the tool helped change the perception of the champions by community members. Thanks to their visions, they become a positive example within their community and contribute to the creation of a favorable environment to address more sensitive issues.

 *Ferkessédougou*

“I have done several workshops in my life and this is the first time that I have attended a workshop where we do not write. I never went to school but thanks to this workshop I managed to express myself. Know that if it was a question of getting some per diem money me Silué I would have gone home because I think I am financially sufficient. But I found something very, very important in the tools. The vision journey tool showed me that as long as I am not yet dead I can still realize my dreams and prioritize them. »

2.2.2 CLEAR LINK BETWEEN THE CREATION OF WEALTH AND THE NEED FOR COLLABORATION BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS

If the Vision Journey revolves around the need for rigorous planning with realistic and ambitious objectives, the Gender Balance Tree addresses the contributions of all household members towards achieving their goals. The Gender Balance Tree enabled participants to realize that better communication and collaboration in the households leads to a better pooling and allocation of resources. The tool also fosters a culture of joint savings and a joint reflection on the future, which of course has a positive impact on the empowerment of women, including an openness by spouses to allowing women to invest in land and other economic areas that are otherwise off limits.

Through the following testimonials, we see the link between better communication and the objective of creating wealth. It is clear that the GALS champions are able to see this link for themselves and to understand its importance. This trend suggests that addressing gender issues primarily from a legal perspective without emphasizing economic gains at the household and community level can meet with resistance and reduce the potential for success. Land being the main means of economic production, it becomes easier to convince men and communities of the need for secure access to land for women in order to facilitate the production of food crops benefitting both men and women, for example.

 *GALS champion.*

“Since the training, I have been able to control my heart and be patient to speak clearly with my husband. And also now I manage to manage the women's group well. If you're in front of a group of people and every day it's you who talks, it's not good, so I give the chance to others. »

2.2.3 HOUSEHOLD HARMONY AND COMMUNICATION

The Diamond Dream tool helped improve communication and harmony in the household which contributed to achieving the national law's vision of both men and women being joint household heads. This is because after going through the exercise, members of the household or group appreciate each other's contributions and usefulness. The balance of power is thus positively impacted when adjustments are made and new spaces for discussion and negotiation. This can positively impact land access because the couple realizes that if negotiations are possible on the subjects like the distribution household work, then discussions are also possible on more difficult questions like land.

XXXXXXXXXX from Toa-Zeo:

"Thanks to my per diem received during the 1st GALS workshop held in Duekoué, I made the decision to buy 15 beams for the construction of my house, then I rented new plots for the production of lowland rice and finally financed the trip of my wife and my children to Burkina Faso with her father-in-law who was sick. Moreover, having noticed that in my neighborhood, there is no women's group, I helped to train and regroup a group of women into 3 groups of Village Association of Savings and Credit (VSLA). These 3 groups form the WENDPANDA group".

XXXXXXXXXX GALS champion

"Before going to training, I worked alone, I did not inform my wife and my children of what I earned. But now I bring them together, we talk and we budget our expenses. Among the Senoufos, there was no communication between men and women. But now I understood that it's when we talk to each other, and we get along, that we can give each other new ideas to move forward and everyone is happy. So I talk, I discuss, and now they are no longer afraid to come and talk to me."

The following examples demonstrate this well. In Tiékpè, XXXXXXXX is a married farmer and father of 5 children. He is part of the group of 4 GALS champions in the village. During the Gender Balance Tree exercise, XXXXXXXX noticed that all household expenses fell on him, that he encountered difficulties in meeting them and that he realized that he needed help from his wife. Before she came along with him to the field and was like an extra field hand. In his action plan he decided to instead acquiesce to a repeated request from his wife to support her to develop an income-generating activity. After he took this initiative, he lost one of his oxen, and it was his wife who voluntarily supported him in buying a new ox thanks to new income she was earning.

These types of testimonials show that creating a harmonious environment through improved communication and mutual respect leads to improved relationships with more opportunities to negotiate or obtain concessions that seemed out of reach. When people are more satisfied with their partners, they are more willing to concede things to them, recognize their rights and defend them. Therefore, we can have more women with land granted by their husbands, or more men accepting to formalize the land rights of their wives in recognition for their many economic contributions to the household.

XXXXXXXXXX is a young single cocoa planter from Ganhia (Cavally).

"Before I drank too much but after the Vision Journey exercise I reduced my alcohol consumption because I saw that it was harming me. Now I can better organize myself and manage my finances, to plan better things. After the exercises, I gave 0.5 hectares to the older of my two sisters who is here in the village. She can make papers on her land, that's not a problem. Regarding my land, my future daughters and my future sons will each have their share."

2.2.4 IMPACT OF DEEP PERSONAL CHANGES

GALS brought about positive radical personal changes generally perceived as difficult to achieve. For example, there were multiple people who reported stopping to drink alcohol, plus people known for

bad tempers who changed to the surprise of community members. Having these kinds of results shows others that big personal transformations are possible. This convinced people that other changes such as social norms around land access are also possible. Tools such as the Gender Balance Tree and the Diamond Dream revealed to the trained people the need to do something to improve their economic situations but also their relationships with their loved ones. Many of them, after realizing that some of their behaviors prevent them from realizing their dreams, voluntarily decided to change despite having made unsuccessful attempts in the past.

GALS Training / Poro Region - Testimonial of a participant

"At the beginning of the training, I thought, with the drawings, that it was child's play, but when we started the second day of training, I saw that it was serious training. I realized that I am the one who controls all the assets in my family, so now I tell myself that if I get home, I will involve my wife in the management of the store. Secondly, I will now discuss with her the decisions to be made in planning our activities.

For example, quitting drinking to save money and improve his relationship with his wife was a difficult decision for [REDACTED] (see text box on previous page). But if such changes are possible, there is hope that the changes sought by ILAW can come about through similar personal transformations. This helps break the belief that customs around women's land access are so fixed that they cannot change. GALS therefore makes it possible to inspire others on the possibilities of change and to bring out new community role models even though at first the changed behavior may not be directly related to land.

2.2.5 SELF-ESTEEM AND LEADERSHIP IN MEN AND WOMEN.

Another trend noted is the increase in the participation of women in the management of household affairs. The Leadership and Empowerment Map tool revealed to those trained the important role they can play within their households and communities in improving the economic situation of their loved ones and those around them. The exercises showed them that they can be people who are listened to, respected and influential. This has boosted their self-esteem and can help make them important allies as advocates for women's land rights.

[REDACTED] (in the sub-prefecture of Bouandougou, Béré region)

"When I made my tree, I noticed that it was unbalanced at several levels: I was the one doing the housework alone and my husband was doing the income-generating activities (fields), I had regular expenses (clothes, shoes, etc.) that I find useless today, and which were intended for me alone while my husband took care of the household. In this situation I complained that my husband did not allow me to participate in the decisions of our couple. I also had a vision of having a field and becoming a successful trader but I didn't know how to do it so I was spinning on my own. Now, for the first time in my life, I made my own field and I am so proud of myself (...) my husband was also surprised and is proud of me, today we follow each other, I will continue to work with my husband and help him feed our children. He too has changed, he is generous, he encourages me and congratulates me. He is ready to support me. He even gives me gifts, the day before yesterday he gave me the uniform for the Maouloud festival when I was wondering how to buy it."

2.2.6 AWARENESS OF INJUSTICES AND INEQUALITIES WITHIN HOUSEHOLDS

The Gender Balance Tee was a powerful tool that subtly revealed to the trainees the unequal distribution of resources, expenses and chores within the household. Awareness of these realities made it possible to develop empathy for their spouse or other members of their family, which constitutes an important catalyzer for change. If there is more empathy and understanding, there will be more access to productive assets including land by those who hold the power to grant that access. In this way more empathy helps to create an enabling environment to accept women's land rights.

2.2.7 MORE AND MORE PEOPLE ARE INSPIRED BY THE TOOLS

The tools introduced by the GALS methodology have the advantage of being simple and accessible at all levels. Being done through drawings, the participants in the training courses understand them more easily and discover an approach based on playful and participatory learning. The tools are also easy to teach and GALS champions are able to teach them to others with the support of partners. Building a gender justice movement requires developing a network of GALS champions. The project was able to lay the foundations for this network per the testimonials that follow.

GALS Training / Cavally Region - Testimony of a participant

“Through the training, all the drawings we made led me to change. I will create balance between my wife and me, on an equal footing and what I learned will lead to lasting and better change. »

 *Fizankoro, S/P Sarhala*

“I came to find that this training develops the creative spirit of people. It’s a spirit that can allow you to take charge of yourself, to achieve something and also to train your loved ones to take charge of themselves too, so that we can all succeed together.”

 *young farmer, married and father of 3 boys, Babadougou.*

Ibrahim heard about GALS during a Social Dialogue session organized in the home of his village in which he participated. After the dialogue, he approached a champion to learn more before deciding to take the training. The testimonials of the champion and people who had already received the training motivated him more, especially since he had strongly welcomed the creation of a framework for discussion on land (social dialogue) which he believes is appropriate.

Today, after realizing his Vision Journey and starting to improve his relationship with his wife, he says he is satisfied: “I am satisfied with the training. Before, everything rested on me, which made it difficult for me to conceive that my wife had a stake in our couple and that she could decide on the life of our couple, and it was difficult. Now it is much better.”

3.0 LESSONS LEARNED FROM SOCIAL DIALOGUE ACTIVITIES

3.1 COMPLETED ACTIVITIES

Social Dialogue (SD) is a form of participatory learning for transformative action. Social dialogue acts as a catalyst for debate and discussion within communities. Furthermore, social dialogue creates spaces for discussions on “taboo” subjects and helps to connect people from different regions/classes.

The social dialogue sessions were organized between July 8, 2022 and December 16, 2022 in the 30 project implementation villages. In all, 184 social dialogue sessions were organized and reached 3,078 people, including 1,516 women and 1,562 men. The sessions were organized around 5 themes (and 5 capsules corresponding to each theme) namely:

- Gender and land use
- The participation of women in land management
- Women as landowners
- Inheritance between spouses
- Intergenerational inheritance

Social dialogue films are available in [here](#).



Photo 1. Social dialogue session in the West (Source: CAHD).

3.2 OUTCOMES, TRENDS AND LESSONS LEARNED

3.2.1 THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A CULTURE OF INCLUSIVE DEBATE

The targeted communities were not used to inclusive discussions that bring together all classes and touches upon all topics that affect village life. The social dialogue exercises made it possible to create different types of spaces that included all social strata – men, women, natives, and foreigners. Dialogue therefore showed itself as a tool for social inclusion capable of uniting different social groups around a subject of common interest.

The establishment of these discussion spaces provided a framework for debate around themes that are not often the subject of discussion. It does this by encouraging the expression of ideas, opinions and points of view in a friendly and free atmosphere. There was a real interest in this activity, which was not based on any position or specific messages to be disseminated. Allowing all social strata of the village to participate allowed a kind of relaxation and liberation of speech on a sensitive subject. For example, in the west, although the non-native communities were initially reluctant to speak up, they gradually understood the spirit of the activity and ended up participating actively under the leadership of their community representative. As for the north, one could see a real commitment of the Fulani who participated without reservation in the discussions, just like the Senoufos in the Béré region. And in both areas, contrary to expectations, the

"There will be change because our men have started to listen to us a little bit more and they know that no one else can take better care of the children in their absence except their wives."

the need to pay attention to the question of inheritance during upcoming communication activities. It will also be important to be attentive and to consider the options and opportunities to ensure that this transition from temporary usage rights to full property rights actually takes place as per the law.

3.2.5 INTERGENERATIONAL HERITAGE IS AT THE HEART OF THE DISTRIBUTION AND RENEGOTIATION OF LAND RIGHTS.

If the management of inheritance between spouses is a source of conflict, the same remains true for intergenerational inheritance. The fundamental reason is the fact that most people fear that the part of inheritance granted to a woman will bring in people whom they consider to be outsiders to their family (her children or their husbands). The belief is that giving women land rights risks dividing the family's land. Inheritance thus becomes an important process in the distribution and renegotiation of land rights. Indeed, the discussions revealed that the sister can inherit under certain conditions such as not being married or not having children. It is in this sense that the words of ██████████ who took part in social dialogue in Blody in Guémon said: "We know each other to help our sisters. We give them our land but their children come to sell these portions of land and when we want to talk our sisters complain that we don't want them to come back as a family with their children."

There is a clear need to remind communities of the letter and the spirit of the law on succession revised in 2019 while putting in place approaches to reassure each other. For example, taking measures to reduce land sales, or promoting the law prohibiting the sale of uncertified land, can be reassuring for people who put forward this argument. In addition, collective land certification can alleviate some fears.

Ganhia youth social dialogue. Participant in social dialogue

"Our relatives have always guaranteed us that when the woman marries, her property is with her husband, but in reality the majority of widowed women have nothing and are hardly able to even feed their children. Few divorced or widowed women have been able to inherit land from their parents."

3.2.6 A LOT OF TENSION, RETICENCE, OPPOSITION ON WOMEN'S LAND OWNERSHIP

Although usage rights are accepted for women, the right of ownership with definitive transfer of rights is not really accepted by most of the targeted communities. And there is a form of reluctance to establish documents for fear that this will be considered as the recognition of a right of land ownership for women. Whether in large or nuclear families, women are not associated with the division of land between family members or obtaining land ownership documents. The testimony of ██████████ in Zienkolo is a good illustration of this when he spoke during a social dialogue session: "With us here, women can never become landowners. Our lands are distributed by large families always managed by a man. As others have said in the film, that's it, women don't have a right of ownership. In addition, the girl child cannot become a landowner because she is called to go elsewhere to another home and another family when she marries."

Rare are the cases where family members consent to a woman obtain land ownership documents. This is why it would be interesting to promote role models like ██████████ from Babadougou in the Bere who declared: "In my opinion men must bring together all their family and show them his wife's share of the inheritance before he leaves for heaven. Currently where I am speaking to you, I am the owner of a plantation and the men of the family have accepted that I obtain paperwork for it without any problem."

3.2.7 GROWING AWARENESS OF THE NEED TO FORESEE PROBLEMS.

Fostering awareness on the need to not wait until disputes following a death but to proactively prepare can positively impact social cohesion and the broader land management situation. For example, during social dialogue with the women of Nambokaha, all the participants wanted their men to share their property before their deaths, always in writing and in front of several witnesses. Beyond the expression of this opinion, it was noted the existence within certain communities of people who, after having become aware of the danger linked to the mismanagement of their inheritance at their death, take measures to anticipate potential conflicts (see textbox).

In the west in particular, several spoke of good practices during the social dialogue sessions, such as [REDACTED] deputy village chief, who stated that "during the mapping of my rubber plantation, I put my daughter's name on the document because people are mean, if you die your brothers can take everything away from them, so I'm already talking about it to my wife and my children". His experience reveals that the most suitable strategies are thought out and considered by the communities themselves as a way to avoid problems following a death.

[REDACTED] Babadougou, Bere
"Change is already present here in our village. Here there are several men of our generation who have given portions of land to their wives. Areas ranging from 0.25 to 1 ha, they farm these plots and they can even apply for papers for them."

3.2.8 SOCIAL DIALOGUE PRODUCES CHANGES IN SOCIAL NORMS.

The approach used in this first phase of social dialogue was essentially focused on the experience of the participants, testimonies and examples of those who went against the common practice. This approach made it possible to portray and discuss negative social norms but also to begin to normalize and value new positive social norms. Seeing a few positive examples with very few participants criticizing or vilifying them helped normalize these examples by reassuring everyone that they were acceptable. This is encouraging for the project, as one of the concerns at the start was related to the reaction of communities to changes in social norms. One hopes that ILAW can build on the cases that already exist in the communities so as to reduce the feeling that it is the project that is disrupting the existing social order rather than accelerating changes that are already happening.

3.2.9 MEN LESS RESISTANT TO CHANGE THAN EXPECTED

Social dialogue highlighted how men who were supposed to be more conservative or resistant to change instead become allies faster than expected when they become convinced of the value of the preservation of peace and social harmony. As a result, social dialogue has challenged the stereotype that men are the most resistant to change. It has been noted that they are more open than one might think, provided that gender is presented within a framework of social inclusion, and not in the spirit of favoring women over men. For example, during the workshop of customary authorities and religious leaders from the north, there were recommendations by chiefs on how to facilitate women's access to land while respecting tradition by adapting certain rituals and ceremonies.

Similarly, during the social dialogue exercises, certain interventions demonstrated the open-mindedness of some men. Others in leadership positions have also supported women's land rights such as [REDACTED] a customary chief, who said: "We must apply the law, it is non-negotiable." If a customary chief affirms this publicly in front of his community members, awareness-raising and behavior change activities will be made more effective.

3.2.10 YOUTH RESISTANCE TO WOMEN'S LAND RIGHTS MORE THAN EXPECTED

Contrary to the pleasant surprise of having identified men in favor of women's land rights, young people in the west were often fiercely opposed to it. The resistance therefore stems from the new generation and not from the old generation as we often tend to believe. And this because of a context of land pressure and economic frustration that characterizes the west in particular, as described in the Political Economy Analysis (PEA) completed at the start of the project.

For example, during social dialogue with the youth group in Bledy Dieya, some participants objected to the participation of women in decision-making on land under the pretext that it has always been so since ancient times. Similarly during the Ganhia social dialogue sessions, young people told participants that they agreed with certain practices of their ancestors who said that “women have no right to land”. Some young people want this practice to remain unchanged, while others want to see a change that gives a little more rights to women but not anything that would affect their interests.

As far as the north is concerned, it is rather the question of nephews and the change from matrilineal to patrilineal systems that is strongly questioned by young people. It should be noted, however, that young people and women in the northern zone are subject to the effects of land pressure, which reduces the land allocated to them. It is therefore important to consider a programmatic approach specifically targeting young people in the awareness-raising campaign. If one manages to influence their thoughts on this issue, this will be positive since they are the decision-makers of tomorrow. They would therefore become the promoters of new norms in favor of women's land rights.

3.2.11 AWARENESS OF THE NEED TO SECURE WOMEN'S LANDS (ESPECIALLY GROUPS) TO IMPROVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The film on gender and land allocation facilitated awareness of the link between food security and women's land rights, especially with respect to the need to protect areas farmed by women such as lowlands. This idea is innovative because until now these lands were made available to women orally by the heads of the village, land or large family. We noted particularly in the north a kind of consensus on the fact that the lands of women's groups must be secured with documents to allow them to be exploited peacefully which will be beneficial to the whole community. Moreover, the role of women in providing food is recognized everywhere and everyone is aware that the expansion of tree crops could end up threatening the food supply of communities. This is then an important argument around which awareness messages for behavior change can be framed.

In addition, participants in the west indicated that women do not have the right to the lowland areas because it is the property of the men. The women of one village used to grow hillside rice but because all the hillsides were taken up by cacao trees they switched to lowland rice even though men owned the lowlands. “The lowlands belong to men, they sell them and rent them out. The little lowland that remains is reserved for their small families.” This concern of western women can be used as an argument to explain the difficulties of food production, thus making the link between securing women's land and food security.

4.0 ACTION POINTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 ON THE IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

At the end of this reflection, the project observed trends and results arising from the process of implementing these GALS and social dialogue activities which it considers important to note and learn from for the rest of the project.

4.1.1 THE EFFECT OF THE COMBINATION OF THE TWO PROGRAMMATIC APPROACHES.

The combination of social dialogue and GALS has contributed to deconstructing prejudices, preconceived ideas and the insistence to maintain the existing social order characterized by sexist stereotypes and gender roles. It has also strongly contributed to the good adhesion of the communities to the project. The fact that these joint activities were essentially built by the communities themselves was well received. GALS took from its starting point the economic objectives and desired changes in the household in a series of exercises that included rigorous planning. The success of GALS created a positive perception of ILAW overall as a project aimed at promoting peace and prosperity.

For its part, the social dialogue exercises worked at the community level and introduced discussions around the needs for changes defended by the members of the communities themselves. Nothing was conveyed to communities in a top-down or heavy-handed way. The free exchanges without preaching or messages put the communities at the heart of the process and strengthened their confidence in the activities to come. The words of ██████████ illustrate this well: “There will be a change because the men of the village have begun to understand thanks to your various projects and the fact that we are able to exchange easily today with our men.”

4.1.2 THE ROLE OF AUDIO-VISUAL TOOLS IN GALS AND SOCIAL DIALOGUE ACTIVITIES

Social dialogue activities were facilitated with video capsules developed from interviews filmed during the Political Economy Analysis (PEA) study. Seeing one’s peers made it possible to approach the themes in an easier and uninhibited way. Most of the participants felt represented in the videos because there was a diversity of perspectives including regressive ones. The audiovisual approach, similar to the drawing used in GALS, makes sensitive subjects more accessible and makes it possible to break down any barriers that could have made the discussion process more cumbersome and tense.

4.1.3 THE PARTNERSHIP WITH KNOWN LOCAL COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS CONTRIBUTED TO GOOD ACCEPTANCE OF THE PROJECT

In each area of intervention, the activities were implemented jointly by ILAW and a local partner well known in the areas due to their long presence with the communities. In terms of knowledge of the context, practices and appropriate preparatory actions, this approach has contributed to the positive results observed. Moreover, the achievements of their previous interventions in these villages have been noted by the communities. For example in the northern zone, most of the communities were previously covered by agricultural projects of ARK and the communities kept recalling and showing the achievements made in these projects. This dynamic constituted a good basis which strengthened the links already established with these communities.

In the west, CAHD had previously worked with some villages as part of a project on land conflict management. Their relationships with village committees, village chiefs and community leaders were also noted and this greatly facilitated entry into the targeted communities. Similarly, the fact that they are present in the areas and have a good command of GALS and social dialogue tools increases the chances

of the sustainability of ILAW's approach. For example, during the internal workshop in January 2023, the two partners indicated that they plan to develop project proposals around the GALS methodology.

4.1.4 THE REGULAR PRESENCE OF FIELD AGENTS IN THE 5 VILLAGES INCLUDING SPENDING TIME AT NIGHT

In order to maintain a constant presence with the communities, ILAW encourages overnight stays in the community by field agents. This approach not only made it possible to hold activities at favorable times for the communities, but also created closer ties with them. Sharing the daily life of people is an important factor in creating trust that facilitates the work of behavior change. Most of the social dialogue activities were done in the evening after 5:00 p.m. to allow communities to go about their business during the day and free up time in the evening. Thus, the entire planned target of at least 15 participants per session was respected.



Photo 2. GALS training at Tiguissikaha I at night
(Source: ARK)

4.2 ACTION POINTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

At the end of the analysis of trends and results that emerge from the implementation of GALS and social dialogue activities, several lessons have been learned. The analysis of these leads to the formulation of action points and recommendations for the next phases of the project but also for other actors directly affected by the issue of gender and land tenure.

4.2.1 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ILAW

Lack of knowledge of the GALS methodology

The innovative GALS approach which produced results in a very short time, i.e. 3 months, with significant economic, behavioral and social changes is very little known in Côte d'Ivoire. Apart from one example in the rubber sector, we have not yet found any other structure that knows and uses this powerful tool. In light of its relevance and very practical nature in rural areas, ILAW should promote it among actors working in rural development.

Recommendation: Target and strengthen the capacities of institutions in charge of gender and land tenure issues and networks of agricultural organizations so that they become aware of GALS and integrate it into their programming.

Networking and creation of a gender justice network

At the end of this first phase of GALS, we see GALS champions with notable and visible changes within their communities. These are very good examples that can inspire and from which other communities can be affected. This is one of the objectives of the GALS methodology which turns out to be just as relevant for the context of the areas where the project operates.

Recommendation: Identify opportunities for ILAW champions to share their experiences and continue to work even after the end of the project.

Lack of an inclusive discussion framework on land

The targeted communities accepted the social dialogue approach on land issues. In none of the communities was there any opposition or rejection of the methodology. On the contrary, some testimonials showed a good level of satisfaction with these discussions. It is important to ensure that this culture of dialogue is nurtured and maintained in these communities beyond the project.

Recommendation: Support land management bodies to initiate and maintain spaces for inclusive discussions on land issues.

4.2.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ILAW PARTNERS

Need for follow-up and support for GALS champions and targeted communities in the implementation of their action plan

The communities are very often busy with social activities like funerals and marriages which take up a lot of economic resources. This can affect their ability to follow through on their action plans. This is why it will be important in the other phases of the project to introduce new activities to ensure that all people trained continue to be engaged and feel empowered to implement their plans and share with others.

Recommendation: Develop a monitoring strategy for GALS champions

Strengthening the culture of social dialogue

The informal social dialogue initiated in a complementary way to the formal dialogue sessions has the advantage of deepening the discussions started during the formal dialogue. It also makes it possible to approach the questions from another angle in view of its more restricted nature. It can also offer the opportunity to work with change-oriented people and make them important allies for the project.

Recommendation: Continuation of informal social dialogue with specific targets such as young people as part of the awareness-raising and legal education campaign.

4.2.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GOVERNMENT

Low use of innovative tools by institutions having gender and land in their attribution

There is no framework and mechanism that identifies them, tracks them in order to learn from them and possibly contextualize them. These institutions and government entities should become aware of these approaches and tools in order to develop reflections and actions around them. A pro-active approach would make it possible to capitalize on the results and inspire other future programming.

Recommendation: Make an inventory of current initiatives on gender and land and take advantage of the “round table on gender and land” activity to promote the idea of coordination and experience-sharing.

4.2.4 TO LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND COMMUNITIES

Large families are an important player in decision-making on land

Large land-owning families play a central role in land management. Often these families’ leaders are not very sensitive to gender. Customary authorities who increasingly understand the challenges of taking gender into account in land governance could interact with them to raise awareness on the issue and initiate discussions to improve women's participation. In general, it appears that women do not participate or if certain large families allow it, it is only the oldest woman in the family who is associated.

Recommendation: Systematically involve the heads of large families in project activities and hold sessions within traditional leaders to raise their awareness of the importance of gender.

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