

# GENDER PRACTICE

Promoting gender equality and women's empowerment is key to building prosperous households, communities, businesses and cooperatives.

Evidence suggests that gender inequities—the differences in access and opportunities among women, men, girls and boys—significantly impact development outcomes. NCBA CLUSA recognizes the critical importance of addressing gender dynamics in its work to empower individuals and families to achieve resilience and economic security and exercise a better, longer and healthier quality of life. NCBA CLUSA's approach emphasizes that its "clients are the decision-makers when it comes to solving their communities' most pressing



development needs. This community-led approach highlights the importance of collective action, shared values and a focus on process. NCBA CLUSA applies this approach to its work in gender integration and the way it addresses gender in building resilience, promoting economic growth, and supporting cooperative

development. As members of households, communities and programs, women's agency and decision-making ability are a priority in all aspects of NCBA CLUSA's work.

Beyond supporting gender integration to challenge inequitable norms and practices between women and men in its programming, NCBA CLUSA also recognizes the importance of addressing gender as part of its wider efforts in diversity, equity, and inclusion.

## BUILDING RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

Our resilience work addresses systems and institutions and seeks to build the capacity of households and communities to respond and adapt to shocks such as natural disasters, income loss, illness and other expected stresses. It ensures that women are not only part of the conversation, but that they are empowered to make decisions to participate meaningfully in preparation, response and adaptation

## OUR GENDER STRATEGY PRINCIPLES

Gender mainstreaming is essential to empowerment and gender equality.

Advancing women's agency is important to achieving gender equality.

Achieving gender equality depends on understanding socio-cultural-economic contexts.

To maximize intervention benefits and achieve wider results, integrated programming is needed.

Advancing gender equality and women's empowerment is the responsibility of every staff member and community-based service provider.

Building new or stronger partnerships at the local, national and international levels helps address inequity in political, social, and economic systems.

to unexpected challenges within their household or in their community. Projects in this portfolio focus on gender integration and women's empowerment in the areas of governance, health and nutrition, agriculture, climate change adaptation, natural resource management, and disaster risk reduction. Approaches include support for women's land tenure, literacy and numeracy initiatives, husbands' schools for improved family nutrition, addressing household decision-making, and strengthening women's groups and networks.

### CREATING ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

This practice addresses gaps and barriers for women and men in specific value chains, including gendered division of labor, equity in pay, access to financial services, access to technology or inputs, and market linkages. Beyond value chains, other avenues for income generation are explored, including



entrepreneurship and other women-led economic initiatives. Gender-related research in this practice may include value chain analysis to understand gender roles and inequities. Approaches include identifying and promoting alternative sources of income, helping create community-based savings and loans for women, or addressing obstacles for growth through capacity building, engaging industry leaders, creating market linkages, and advocating for more equitable policies.

### STRENGTHENING COOPERATIVES AND PRODUCER GROUPS

Our work to strengthen cooperatives and producer groups supports women's participation and leadership. We support women's empowerment and entry into their local economy through cooperative development—promoting, strengthening and helping grow cooperative businesses. Approaches in this practice area include capacity building for women's participation on cooperative boards; strengthening cooperatives and producer organizations, including women's cooperatives; and addressing women's barriers to economic opportunities through member equity.

◀ **NCBA CLUSA's Feed the Future Kawolor project** in Senegal works to improve nutrition for children and mothers through a systems approach to the availability, education and sustainability of nutritious foods. While traditionally women alone are tasked with family nutrition, Kawolor's strategy is to work with the family unit on a multisectoral approach. Kawolor uses Debbo Galle groups as a platform to work with mothers, women of reproductive age and fathers on nutrition education, horticulture activities, savings for investment, income-generating activities and household decision-making. By addressing the needs of the entire household, Kawolor is building transferable skills and providing tools, ensuring that these approaches lead to the adoption of better practices and, ultimately, better outcomes for all members of the family.