

Africa Regional Workshop on Food Processing and Minor Forest Product Global Value Chains

I. INTRODUCTION

The Africa Regional Workshop on Food Processing and Minor Forest Product Global Value Chains was held from 10-12 December 2002, in Kampala, Uganda. The workshop which was the first of its kind to be convened for the Africa Region was organized by the African Center for Gender and Development (ACGD) of the ECA in collaboration with Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO), a global network of institutions and individuals concerned with improving the status of women in the informal economy. The workshop was organized within the framework of the East Africa Sub-regional Enterprise Development Facility for women entrepreneurs, an initiative of ACGD to be set up in Kampala, Uganda, which aims at promoting the capacities and capabilities of African women entrepreneurs through coordinated and effective support mechanisms. The workshop was sponsored by the Commonwealth Secretariat, the International Development Research Institution (IDRC) and the Uganda Investment Authority. (The Program of Work of the workshop is attached as Annex I.)

A total of 20 participants from Eastern, Southern and Western Africa participated in the workshop. Participants were drawn from grassroots women associations, NGOs working with informal women producers/workers; researchers undertaking studies on relevant issues; and specialist organizations engaged in providing technological and organizational solutions to women's involvement in competitive economic activities within the global economy. Topics relevant to the objectives of the workshop were covered by resource persons. (The list of participants and resource persons is attached as Annex II.)

The main purposes of the Regional Workshop were: to identify priority products/sub-sectors within the food processing and non-timber forest product sectors, where grassroots women are most involved/and or could be most effectively assisted to improve their lot within the context of globalization; and to develop a series of comparative studies which involve an in-depth analysis of specific global value chains in selected countries which could lead to policy recommendations on how best to intervene on behalf of grassroots women.

II. PROCEEDINGS OF THE WORKSHOP

Session I – Opening and Introductory Session

Facilitator: Ms. Melkrist Hailu

The session included self introduction of participants and resources persons, introduction on ACGD's Programme on the Sub-regional Enterprise Development Facility and on WIEGO's Global Markets Programme which was followed by the formal opening of the workshop.

In introducing ACGD's Programme on the Sub-regional Enterprise Development Facility for Women entrepreneurs, Dr. Hilda Tadria, Senior Regional Advisor on the Economic Empowerment of Women of ACGD/ECA, provided a brief background on the initiative and the services the Facility provides in terms of improving the capacity and capability of African Women engaged in informal and formal businesses. She further explained the activities that have been undertaken towards implementing the initiative since the finalization of the feasibility study in 2000. She emphasized on the partnership arrangement that ACGD/ECA is working on with the two host governments, namely Uganda for Eastern Africa and Togo for Western Africa and with other partners. In this regard she elaborated on the collaborative arrangement that ACGD and WIEGO entered to organize this workshop within the framework of the East African Sub-regional Enterprise Development Facility which will be operational before the second quarter of next year. In her concluding remark, she highlighted the need to expedite the finalization of the Memorandum of Understanding by the Government of Uganda so that the formal signature between ECA and the Government of Uganda could be done in the first quarter of Year 2003. (The Introduction on the ACGD's Initiative on Sub-regional Enterprise Development Facility is attached as Annex III).

The Director of WIEGO's Global Markets Programme, Dr. Marilyn Carr, introduced WIEGO's Global Markets Programme and provided a detailed explanation on the purpose and objectives of the workshop. In introducing WIEGO's Global Market Programme, she stated that the aim of the Programme was to assist associations of informal workers/producers (particularly home based workers/producers) to minimize the negative impact of global trade and investment policies on their livelihoods and to maximize the new economic opportunities arising.

She further pointed out that currently the Programme has two major components: one is the cross-regional comparative research on global commodity/value chains in the garment, food

processing and non-timber forest products sectors; and the second one is global marketing strategies on advice and assistance to grassroots associations of informal producers and workers with interventions aimed at helping their members increase their access to and competitiveness in overseas markets.

Dr. Carr gave a summary of the work so far done in South Asia and Latin America within the identified sectors of garments, food processing and non-timber forest products in which women are most involved and which are most subject to major changes as a consequence of liberalization and globalization.

In line with the proposed work in Africa, she explained the main purpose of the workshop which was to join in with this global initiative by helping to identify products which informal women producers are making for export and which would lend themselves to global value chain analysis. The aim is also to discuss ways in which such studies can be made comparable. Eventually all research teams will be brought together for a global sharing of experience. In the meantime, a list serve will be set up to link researchers and activists in Africa. (Introduction on WIEGO's Global Markets Programme is attached as Annex IV)

The workshop was then formally opened by Dr. Maggie Kigozi, Executive Director of the Ugandan Investment Authority. In her opening statement she welcomed all the participants and resource persons to Uganda and thanked the organizers of the workshop for holding the workshop in Kampala. She also promised to look into the matter of putting up the Eastern Africa Enterprise Development Facility with the concerned authorities in Uganda so that the Facility could start its operation early next year. While wishing all participants successful deliberations, she expressed UIA's commitments in implementing follow-up actions that would come out of the workshop.

Session II – Global Value Chains/Markets

Facilitator: Dr. Hilda Tadria

This session was covered by the two resource persons, Dr. Marilyn Carr and Prof. S. Mpuchane.

Dr. Marilyn Carr, gave a brief overview of Global Value Chain (GVC) Analysis which is a useful framework for mapping who is doing what and getting what within production-consumption chains. She explained that GVC analysis can be used to identify various ways in which

informal women producers and workers can be assisted to benefit more from the positive economic opportunities arising from increased trade and investment liberalization. These include, finding ways of improving working conditions and economic returns for women already integrated into global value chains; assisting women to move from domestic to regional/global markets where returns are higher; expanding the numbers of informal women producers/workers involved in lucrative export markets; and assisting women to diversify into products for which there is a growing and high value export market.

She then explained the concept of value chain as a chain of activities needed to bring a product from conception to the final consumer with value increasing at each stage of the process. These chains are increasingly global with design, production and marketing taking place in different parts of the world. She used the examples of the 'global shirt' and the 'global Barbie doll' to demonstrate how – although a product sold in the US or Europe may be marked 'made in China', it is in fact manufactured in, and with parts from, many countries. Thus, although a 'Barbie' doll which sells for \$19.95 in the US may be marked 'made in China', only 60cents of this is represented by the wages of the women who work in the factories there. She further explained the two major types of global value chains as (a) buyer driven chains (e.g. clothing, food, footwear) where the markets are controlled by the retailers who have well known names (e.g. Levi Strauss, Nike) but who do not have their own factories. They source from hundreds of producers in the developing countries who in their turn sub-contract to smaller firms and homeworkers; and (b) producer driven chains (e.g. automobiles) where the producers control the whole the process and have their own manufacturing facilities in developing countries.

In providing details on GVC analysis which is derived from the discipline of industrial sociology, she highlighted the problems it encountered like the tendency of the analysis to focus on the firm, rather than on the worker/individual producer, and that it has rarely taken gender issues into consideration. She also mentioned the attempt that has been made to rectify some of these problems through the development of a methodology manual for global garment chains produced for WIEGO by IDS, Sussex and IDS, Nairobi.

She then cited some examples on the global value chains done in the food and forest product sub-sectors – both in Africa and elsewhere and demonstrated the methodology for undertaking global value chain analysis with reference to the manual developed for the garments sector.

Finally, she stressed the need to adapt the analysis of the garments sector for use in the differing circumstances of the food processing and non-timber forest product sub-sectors. She then expressed her hope that the current workshop would start to point towards what is needed in this respect and also provide some guidance on where research can be undertaken in the Africa region to add to the understanding of how to assist informal women producers/workers to benefit from the new economic opportunities arising as a result of increased trade and investment liberalization in the Africa region. (The full presentation is attached as Annex V)

Prof. Mpuchane first presented the paper on the Challenges facing Street Food Vendors and Ways of integrating them in the Global value Chains: The Botswana Experience. She divided her presentation in three parts, namely, the Street Food Vending Trade, the Microbiology of Street Vended Foods and the Strategies for Coping with Street Vended Foods.

Her presentation addressed several topical issues relating to street vended foods not only in Botswana, but in the whole region of Africa. She stated that street food vending and fast food catering establishments have mushroomed in many developing countries in the past few decades as a result of urbanisation and industrialisation. These activities play an important economic role by providing job opportunities to many unemployed sectors of the population. This rapid expansion of the trade without a similar increase in resources (both human and otherwise) to monitor the safety of such foods has resulted in concerns being raised by many sectors. Since food-borne diseases (infections and intoxications) can result from improperly handled food, an effective monitoring system for food delivery cannot be over-emphasized. Consumer education and street vendor education on the basic principles of food safety is an important component of prevention.

She further explained that food reaches the consumer through long chains of production in which many opportunities for contamination exist, and stressed on the crucial need for understanding the mechanisms by which contamination and disease transmission can occur well enough to interrupt them. She then highlighted the importance of implementing the Hazard Analysis of Critical Control Points (HACCP) principle.

The second part of her presentation was on the processing and export of caterpillars by women of Botswana. She explained the processes involved starting from the collection of the

caterpillars, the boiling process, the sun drying process, the packaging, the transportation to town and then exportation to South Africa by big trucks. She then pointed out the expenses that the women incur in the process chain and the small amount left for them from all the hard work they have to pass through. At the boiling stage, they have to pay a bigger amount for water which is usually fetched by men, they negotiate with truck owners for transporting the product to town which in most of the cases is charged on the high side, and they interact with middlemen who take most of the profit for the activity.

She then pointed out the studies that were being undertaken by the University of Botswana in minimizing the contamination of the caterpillars through all the processes involved as well as in creating a better and improved working condition for the women. She also mentioned the efforts that were being made to sensitize the women in forming groups or associations so that they could handle all the processes themselves and avoid the interventions by middlemen. (The full presentation is attached as Annex VI)

Discussion on the two presentations were held in the form of questions, responses and comments. With regards to global value chains, questions were raised based on the Chinese experience on as to how African women could be helped to integrate themselves in the global food chains. As a response to this question, Dr. Carr explained that the workshop was the first phase towards that end and in the final analysis the whole exercise would help to integrate African women in the global chain.

A suggestion was raised on the importance of including regulatory bodies and agents in such kind of workshops as each one of them play significant role in the global chains. The response provided was as that the workshop was to guide all those concerned on how to move forward, and that discussion forums should be organised at national levels that would involve, among others, producers, traders, agents and regulatory bodies.

Another question raised was how to change attitudes so that traditional foods are appreciated and preferred more than imported ones. Organising a competition forum for traditional foods was pointed out as one of the ways by which traditional foods could be promoted. The experience of Latin America for successfully promoting traditional foods with such kind of competitions was given as an example.

As to the process of collecting and exporting caterpillars a number of questions were raised. One of the questions was on the type of the caterpillar. While providing explanation on the type of edible caterpillar, it was noted that there are two kinds, greenish and dark brownish with tastes of shrimps and high nutritional values.

Another point raised was on the possibility of reducing the long process involved to collect and dry the caterpillars, and a suggestion was put forward on collecting the caterpillars as they were and then sun drying them. In this way, contamination would be avoided and time required to pick and take out the edible part of the caterpillars as well as the boiling process would be reduced. In the response it was explained that research on the best and hygienic way of collecting and drying the caterpillars was underway, however, for now the boiling process was found necessary to salt the caterpillars.

As to the question raised on the nutritional value of the caterpillars, mention was made of the identification of five types of oils with high nutritional values. It was further explained that the cholesterol content of the oils was being checked. In this regard, it was pointed out that good manufacturing practices would need to be adopted to link the market of the South to that of the North.

A question was also raised on how Hazard Analysis of Critical Control Points (HACCP) could be useful in the oil industry. It was explained that detecting the failure on the process line and then stopping on that point would help rather than going through all the processes and wasting resources and time.

Session III – The Challenges and Needs of Local Women Entrepreneurs in the Global Market **Facilitators: Dr. Hilda Tadria & Prof. S. Mpuchane**

In this session, Dr. Maggie Kigozi presented a paper on the Challenges and Needs of Local Women Entrepreneurs in the Global Market. This was followed by participants' presentations.

Dr. Maggie Kigozi's presentation focused on the experience of Ugandan investors in general and on women entrepreneurs in particular. She listed the sectors where women entrepreneurs are mostly engaged, namely, agriculture and agro processing including textiles and garments, tourism, construction and services.

She then pointed out the challenges women entrepreneurs face in Uganda and elsewhere in Africa. The challenges, among others, are lack of access to information and credit. With regards to information she stressed the need to access adequate market information at the regional and international levels. Marketing agreements at the sub-regional level should be well communicated to the business community. The requirements of the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), World Trade Organization (WTO) and European Union (EU) should also be communicated to entrepreneurs. Governments should make efforts to build the capacities of entrepreneurs in the area of quality and standards and provide access to research undertaken on these issues.

She further stressed that the environment on investment can be improved and pointed out the need for political stability and good governance, improved infrastructure, liberalised banking and finance, trained human resources, and in general a conducive environment for a private sector led economy.

Dr. Kigozi's presentation was followed by presentations of grassroots women representatives and NGOs. 12 presentations were made. (Most of the presentations made in this session are attached as Annex VII)

The two participants from Ghana, **Ms. Abigal Burgesson of the African Women Development Fund (AWDF) and Ms. Faustina Donkor of Dzinpa & Adom Women's Oil Processing Group** made a joint presentation. Ms. Burgesson first explained the mission of AWDF as the first Africa-wide fund raising and grant-giving organisation that provides grants to women's groups and organisations in Africa as a way of supporting the African women's movement.

AWDF started providing grants in October 2001 and has awarded grants to 104 women organizations in 30 African countries to the tune of \$US 848,000.00.

The small grants programme gives support to rural women's groups undertaking a particular programme or working in a particular trade. Grants under this programme are given in the

form of equipment or cash towards specific projects. Capacity building programmes such as training in business management as well as book keeping are provided.

So far AWDF has supported 11 women's groups of this kind in various capacities by giving equipment such as oil processing machines, cassava processing machines and power tillers. Most of these groups have carried out food processing for a life time on manual basis and AWDF's support is to enhance their work as well as to increase productivity to improve their conditions of living.

She also pointed out the constraints women in agriculture are facing and emphasised on the significant contribution that women in the informal sector are making which calls for further improvements with the support of science and technology.

Ms. Faustina Donkor, provided a background on the formation of the Dzinpa and Adom Women's Oil Processing Group 8 years ago in Kofi-Gyan, a village in the western Region in Ghana. It has a membership of 30 women.

All members are farmers who own their farmlands and oil palm plantations. The palm fruit is used for producing the palm oil and kernel oils. Initially the group produced the oil manually by pounding the palm fruits, but later it was able to purchase oil processing equipment which increased productivity and quality. The group has received training in simple record keeping and leadership style and responsibilities from the Village Infrastructure Project (VIP) of the Government of Ghana. The group gets regular training from agricultural extension officers on group formation, improved methods of farming, improved edible oil processing and handling new palm seedlings. The group has also received a grant from the African Women's Development fund towards a hand dug well and the purchase of a boiler.

The group faces various constraints which among others include, poor infrastructure, lack of adequate storage facilities and lack of working capital.

Ms. Agnes Malimba of the Shimbala Women Farmer's Association of Zambia gave a brief background on how the association was formed in 1999 with 10 members and with the objective of growing and selling vegetables to augment their income. The membership has now grown to 50 women who grow and dry the vegetables and fruits for sale.

She identified the major bottlenecks that the association encounters such as: lack of bargaining power by the women, lack of business capacity, poor infrastructure, inability to use modern processing equipment and lack of access to financial services. She then concluded by pointing out solutions to the above constraints such as: provision of training and information on prices and markets to the group as well as enabling policies put in place by the government to access credit and financial services.

Mr. Angello Ndyaguma, Fruits of the Nile Uganda, stated that since 1990, the main activity of the company has been dealing with solar dried fruits. The company produces dried fruits and vegetables for the export market. The products include: apples, bananas, bogoya, pineapples, papaya, chillies and mushrooms. Solar drying takes place in the rural areas across the Central and Southern part of Uganda. At present the company has producer groups totalling 110 of which 70% are women and about 20% are the youth.

He further explained that at present export volume stands at about 60,000Kg per year of dried products. ACORD, EDF Micro Projects, USAID have given the producer groups assistance, but most of this has been the provision of drying chambers/driers. Therefore, Fruits of the Nile has done much of the technical assistance for these producer groups. Recently, UNIFEM extended assistance for training the producers in areas of quality control/assurance. This training was carried out by the staff of Fruits of the Nile.

He then provided a value chain for dried fruits and vegetables in Uganda and listed the constraints involved in the processing and marketing of dried fruits and vegetables for international markets. Constraints were grouped under production constraints, local and foreign market constraints and inconsistencies of government and NGOs policies. Finally he stressed the

importance of interventions at different levels of the value chains, which could be summed up in training, research and direct financial intervention.

Dr. Marianna Smith of Agribusiness in Sustainable Natural African Plant Products (A-SNAPP), South Africa, gave a summary of the visions of A-SNAPP as economic, social and environmental and explained the mission of A-SNAPP as a programme which seeks to develop and enhance African rural SMME's in natural plant products, maximizing profits and empowering African agribusinesses while ensuring high quality products and sustainable utilization of the environment. She pointed out that A-SNAPP's social vision is to improve the quality of life in African rural communities/people by developing entrepreneurship in natural plant products in an earth-friendly manner. Currently, it has projects in Ghana, South Africa, Madagascar, Uganda and Zambia, and will be starting operations in Kenya. One of the South African products is Rooibos tea. It is a tea low in tannin and caffeine and has good anti-oxidant properties and anti-mutagenic activities. The tea has its own brand name and packaging. In addition, tea, cosmetics and soap are produced from rooibos. In Ghana one of the projects is on Shea butter and in Zambia it is marula and essential oils extraction where there is 80 % women's involvement.

Ms. Happiness Mchomvu, Women Entrepreneurship Development Programme (WED) and Ms. Aripa Marealles, Food Processors Association of Tanzania, made a joint presentation. Ms. Mchomvu introduced the WED Programme as one being implemented jointly by UNIDO and the Small Industries Development Organization (SIDO). She pointed out the fact that WED covers 15 regions in Tanzania and has touched base in Zanzibar. With respect to the food industry, she explained that WED has modern facilities for training entrepreneurs in the areas of food processing methods and technologies, food safety and hygiene as well as quality assurance. It also provides advisory services on business management, helps in the preparation of feasibility studies and proposal writing. To date it has trained 1,800 women of whom 70% are entrepreneurs. WED organizes trade fairs to promote food products and assists women to actively participate in such events. The major outcome of WED's activities is the creation of a Food Processors Association (TAFOPA) operating independently from the programme and with over 140 paid up members.

Ms. Marealles, provided a short brief on the activities of TAFOPA which for now is providing support to women engaged in the processing and drying of fruits and vegetables for the local market. The association provides technical advisory services as well as micro credit to its

members. She pointed out the constraints that the association and its members are facing. Some of the problems include, lack of information and credit, lack of appropriate and affordable technologies, unavailability of testing centres near production points and lack of rules and regulations supporting micro and small producers. She finally concluded by saying that the association will try to work on the mapping of the value chains and specifically come up with the constraints its members are facing.

Ms. Elizabeth Lapenga, Kennex Ltd of Uganda, indicated that the Kennex Oil Mill was built in 1996 in order to tap the abundant oil seeds grown locally in the northern region. She explained that Kennex has formed an association of oil seed out growers whose members are all women. She mentioned the rationale behind this intervention was to support women who are usually the producers but often marginalized. The women are thus organized in groups of 10 based on the availability of land and their willingness to grow and sell their crops on a commercial basis. Kennex assists the groups by distributing high yielding sunflower seeds (Sunfola) and hoes.

She pointed out the challenges the company faces which include, continuous power load shedding and abrupt power cuts, unfair competition from cheap imported edible oil, lack of modern technology, lack of access to information on regional and international markets and lack of adequate working capital.

In conclusion she stressed that small scale industries located in the rural areas are very crucial in the fight against poverty not only in adding value to the local produce, but also in providing employment, increasing rural productivity and empowering rural people economically. There is, therefore, need to support such investments through provision of marketing information and access to capital for the timely purchase of raw materials and for expansion.

Ms. Phides Mazhawidza of Women in Business Zimbabwe, provided a brief introduction on Women in Business in Zimbabwe (WIB) which is a non profit membership organisation, which promotes entrepreneurship among women.

She explained that WIB has four programmes, namely, training in business management skills; financial, and market linkages, and which links its members to markets through trade fairs and exhibitions, and e-commerce.

WIB's membership is 60% rural and 40% urban and peri-urban. There are common programmes for all the members and others which are specific to rural grassroots women. Technical skills are on oil extraction, peanut butter making, household commodities making ie soap, candles, floor polish etc. They also make fruit jams and fruit juices mostly in the eastern part of the country where there are a lot of fruits such as guavas, mangoes, peaches and pineapple.

Ms. Grace Wakhungu of Western Women Network (WWN) of Kenya, introduced WWN as a collaborative effort by women of Western Province which mobilizes both men and women in the community to develop a joint approach in identifying and addressing issues that hinder the socio-economic development in the Province. The overall objective of WWN is to raise the levels of income for women of the Province and their families and thus empower them economically. WWN provides capacity building programmes for women engaged in growing, processing and drying of fruits and vegetables as well as in the processing of oils and honey. Constraints that are hampering the full participation of women in the global market include: use of outdated technologies, lack of information on markets and lack of understanding on quality control.

Ms. Victoria Sebageka of Uganda, provided a background on how she organised women groups to grow vanilla flowers. Eventhough the road they have travelled was quite difficult she pointed out the successes the groups have achieved. They have managed to get their own revolving fund running, and are networking with women from other districts.

Constraints that the groups are facing, include: the lack of appropriate technology like the unavailability of the right kind of curing plant that would help in blocking the middlemen, lack of information on foreign markets that need organically grown vanilla and lack of knowledge on ICT.

Ms. Masephephe Matete of the National Council of Women, Lesotho, presented a brief on the situation of rural women in Lesotho in general and those at the grassroots level in particular. She pointed out the areas of tapestry, wool and mohair as products which could fetch higher prices for women producers locally and internationally. She also picked out some areas in agro-processing that have potential if well developed. Some of the areas included dairy products, asparagus, processed fruits and vegetables and leather products.

Finally, she concluded by making a strong remark that secondary and tertiary products from agro-industry could improve the status of women in Lesotho.

Ms. Sophie Kayongo of Agricare, Uganda, provided a short history of her company which is engaged in the agro processing sector. The company manages a 5 acre farm of pineapples and bananas and processes fruit juices. The company is planning to go into the field of exporting dried fruits and vegetables and has been looking for joint venture partnership with South African companies. With its plan of entering the export market, the company will incorporate an out-growers scheme for fruits.

Ms. Kayongo cited the major problems that her company is facing, as lack of credit and financial resources, lack of information on markets and appropriate technologies for processing and drying and packing fruits, and lack of networking among businesses in Uganda and elsewhere engaged in such kind of activities.

There were several interesting discussion points relating to the above presentation including: a) how to package for the European Market; b) how to act information on appropriate technologies; c) how to get information on competition in international markets; d) how to deal with quality standards and quantities; e) how to get into organic markets; f) how to form effective partnerships; g) how is the market reacting to new producers – or are these just old products seeking new markets?

Session IV – Some Experiences from Research and Technical Institutes

Facilitator: Dr. Marilyn Carr

The session included presentations from five technical and research institutions followed by discussions.

Dr. Francois Gasengayire of IDRC, Kenya, presented the overview and lessons learned on the Network for Valorization of Plant Materials in Africa (VPMA). He started by highlighting the efforts that have been made by IDRC in promoting and funding research and development on the utilization of plant materials in Africa in order to generate income and provide jobs for local underprivileged communities. One of these efforts has been the creation of the Network on the Valorization of Plant Materials in Africa (VPMA) that was conceived as a South-

South and South-North collaborative mechanism to address a number of common problems and concerns encountered by researchers involved in R& D on natural products from plant origin. He then provided a list of projects that have been implemented in this area. More than twenty projects have been implemented in thirteen countries throughout Africa: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ghana, Guinea, Malawi, Morocco, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, and Zimbabwe. The projects deal with a number of natural products, including essential oils (such as the essential oils) from Thyme, Verbena, Artemisia herba alba, Rosemary, Lemongrass, Citronella, Mints, Ocimums, Eucalyptus, Ammi visnaga, Pelargonium graveolens, Tagetes minuta, Clausena, anisata, Lippia multiflora, Melaleuca quinquinerva, etc., vegetable oils such as shea nut butter, neem oil, rubber seed oil, argan oil, seaweeds, specific compounds (such as l-camphor, d-borneol, tabersonine, indigo, carraghenans), wood adhesives, wood preservatives, starch adhesives and value-added products from cassava.

He pointed out the main results obtained through the implementation of these projects in terms of technological development, capacity building, marketing, and improvements in the social and economic standards of women involved in the projects. He also stated the constraints being encountered as illiteracy, lack of entrepreneurial skills, lack of investment capacity and marketing skills, and lack of a conducive technical, economical and policy environment. He then provided summaries of case studies of three different projects in three African countries.

The experience of **Intermediate Technology Development Group ITDG Southern Africa**, was presented by **Mr. Michael Gezana**. He explained that ITDG (Southern Africa) Small Scale Food Processing Support Programme (SSFPSP) was established in 1990 and although a fair amount of work was carried out in neighboring countries, his presentation focused on the work done in Zimbabwe. He further explained that all ITDG Southern Africa *Agro-Processing* technology area projects involve women. In some of the cases, women entrepreneurs are the owners of the businesses. However, with the current economic hardships in Zimbabwe, the involvement of rural women in meaningful agro-processing businesses is shrinking.

He clarified that programmes are usually developed based on beneficiary requests for assistance in a certain field or for a certain specified processing technology. Programmes are donor funded, have a regional focus and have a five year cycle.

Case studies were provided on past projects with the lessons learned and also on current projects whose implementation is underway. Past projects included oil milling, maize

milling, peanut butter, honey processing and a number of others which fall in the cottage as well as small scale levels. Present projects are on bee keeping and mushroom production.

In conclusion, he put forward two project ideas that would raise the involvement of women in the value chains, namely, the oyster mushroom production project and the tree nut oil production project. He explained that the advantage of these new projects is that they demand a fairly low capital outlay, for products having reasonably high value.

The experience of **Intermediate Technology Development Group, ITDG Eastern Africa**, was presented by **Ms. Talaso Chucha**. In introducing ITDG East Africa located in Kenya, Ms. Talaso explained that the organization supports development activities in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi, Sudan, Ethiopia and Djibouti. The seven technology areas in which the organization is engaged include building materials and shelter, energy, transport, manufacturing, food security, agro processing and disaster mitigation. She further pointed out that ITDG-EA's action research and policy advocacy programmes aim to be practical and analytical, to demonstrate successful experiences of technical change and to address particular local needs investigated and developed with local communities. In relation to ITDG-EA's activities, she presented a case study on the Apiary Management and Honey Production Project by the Torbi women's group in Marsabit District of Kenya. The group was assisted by ITDG-EA in the acquisition of beehives and harvesting equipment. ITDG-EA has also provided training in the basic concepts of beekeeping and management. The beehives were installed in 2001 and have been running successfully despite some constraints that are holding back the group's efforts. Some of these constraints include poor infrastructure, lack of credit, low level of skills, inadequate and untimely market information and poor marketing strategies. ITDG-EA will help the group to overcome some of the constraints.

Discussion followed after the presentations of the representatives of the three technical institutes. One issue raised was how and from where to get information on markets and technologies given the current inaccessible communication facilities and poor power infrastructure in Africa. Governments and research institutes need to be involved in filling the information gap that is currently hindering development efforts. (Governments need to be involved in every aspect of development from the beginning rather than being approached when problems arise.

Dr. Florence Muranga, of the Food Science and Technology Department of the Makerere University, presented a research project on Linking Research to Household Level and Industrial Processing – The Case of Adding Value to Matooke in Uganda. In explaining the reasons for considering the banana crop for (the) research, she pointed out the facts that bananas provide very high calorie requirement and occupy over 50% of peasant farmers most of whom are women. However,, it provides fluctuating contributions to food security and very marginal economic returns to farmers. In addition, every year more than 20% of the banana crop is considered as farm loss. She then stated the overall objective of the research was to provide baseline data on the physicochemical properties of the key components of the different banana varieties in order to add value to banana prior to marketing, to stimulate alternative utilisation of bananas through processing and to support the breeding research for resistant varieties to enhance the sustainability of production. She then provided the encouraging results of experiments on applications on banana flour in terms of its nutritional values and substitutability in pastry. The research has formulated strategies for developing a network of stakeholders in the banana production and potential processing chains. The strategies include training at the primary processing level and at the small scale industrialist level; conducting action research on the economic benefit of banana processing; mainstreaming women in the project and lobbying concerned institutions and consumers. The project has good government support and working relationships with American universities and is trying to overcome the critical shortfalls in the budget.

Ms. Sylvia B.Kaye of the University of Botswana, presented the results of her research on 46 women owned small businesses selected from four locations in Botswana. The categories of the businesses selected were manufacturing, services and retail trade. The main challenges facing these businesses were identified to be market and credit. The recommendation of her study focused on the provision of training to women business owners so that they could acquire self confidence, provision of information on markets and the requirements on quality and standards, development of networks, and organising businesswomen in groups or associations for stronger actions.

Questions were raised and comments made after the presentations of the two research institutes. The first batch of questions were related to the banana (Matooke) research. The questions were on the type of equipment used for powdering the banana, on how rural women could make use of the powdered banana, on the nutritional content of the powdered banana, on how

the white colour of the powder could be maintained, and on whether a market research has already been done.

The presenter replied to all the questions accordingly. She explained that the extruding machine was built locally for 15 million Ugandan Shillings (USD 8,333). The machine is well adapted to the local environment and is found to be appropriate. She emphasised on the effort that is being done to educate rural women on the use of the powdered banana which is a good fit with wheat and a weaning food for children. She further pointed out the high protein content of matooke and its compatibility with simsim and soy bean to feed HIV/AIDS patients. She explained that no chemicals were added to maintain the colour, the powder remains white naturally. She also mentioned the fact that the market study on the powdered banana would soon be finalised.

The second batch of questions and points of discussion were of general type focusing on the problems that women in business mostly face. Most of the points were on the provision of training in a package that includes simple management on running business and employing others to perform different tasks. It was stressed that the missing link in developing businesses was the management aspect which women in business lack and it was believed that with the appropriate and right training modules women in business would gradually acquire self confidence in themselves. (The presentations made in this session are attached as Annex VIII)

Session V – Information & Communication Technologies

Facilitator – Dr. Hilda Tadria

This session was broken down into two sub-sessions.

a) **ICTs as Cost Effective Entry Points for Information** by

Ms. Paule Koki, an IT consultant from the ECA

b) **ICTs for Promoting the Products of Grassroots Women** by

Ms. Goretti Zavuga, Manager, ICTs Project of the Ugandan Chapter of the Economic Empowerment of Women (CEEWA-U)

Ms. Paule Koki, provided general introductory remarks on modern ICTs and their advantages as compared to other means of communication. Her introduction focused on CD-ROMs, E-mail, Websites and DVDs. In listing out the pros and cons of different types of modern

ICTs, she mentioned the facilities for combining texts, images, sounds, etc.; the huge storage capacity they possess and their ability for interacting in time.

She mentioned some of the advantages that ICTs provide to have the maximum information on a topic at a single place like the CD-ROM, the use at one's own convenience, easiness in disseminating information and their attractiveness as learning tools.

She then provided an example on how the internet can be the most cost and time efficient means of getting information on markets, technologies and related news for entrepreneurs. Finally, she pointed out that women entrepreneurs should seriously consider best strategies for an efficient use of ICTs. One of the strategies could be hiring someone to look for the required information on the internet which sometimes could take a lot of time, and another could be developing and strengthening networks and getting information through them.

Ms. Zavuga of CEEWA-U introduced the ICT project that has been implemented since 1999. Within this project, three telecenters have been set up for women entrepreneurs. The telecenters are well equipped with computers, telephones and related communication facilities. The project aims to reach both urban and rural women, and programmes have been formulated accordingly. The District Net programme was designed for women at district levels, the NARO programme for rural grassroots women and there is also the Africa highland initiative which networks with other programmes in Africa and elsewhere.

CEEWA-U has its own website (www.ceewawires.org) and information is provided to users with fees prevailing at the market rate. The information being supplied has reduced the distance between suppliers and consumers as well as exploitation by middlemen. In relation to this she introduced the CD-ROM produced by IWTC in Uganda for women at the grassroots level. The CD-ROM has been prepared in the local language and its application has been simplified in such a way that grassroots women can easily make use of it. In her final remarks she concluded by saying that ICTs would reduce cost of production and enhance knowledge in the economic, political and social fields.

Most of the discussion that followed the presentation focused on the exciting experience of CEEWA-U's telecenters. In providing clarifications to some of the questions raised in relation to the telecentres Ms. Zavuga stated that the number of women and youth using the facilities of the

telecentres including the CR-ROM prepared by the IWTC project has been steadily increasing with time. She also informed the participants that the information provided by the telecentres was not only of economic content but covered social issues related to the lives of women. She also made a remark on how the project is considering the sustainability of the telecentres. In the near future a certain amount of fee would be attached for the use of the facilities of the telecentres.

Session VI – Where are we and how do we do action research

Facilitators: Dr. Marilyn Carr, Dr. Hilda Tadria & Prof. S. Mpuchane

It was in this session that the main and targeted purpose of the workshop was met. Three working groups were formed and country level consultations were made. Then the feed back from the working groups and country level consultations were reported back to the plenary and further discussions were carried out.

Dr. Marilyn Carr provided the working groups with guidelines on the points of discussion. The guidelines included the following points:

1. WHY - The main purpose of moving towards exports and thus of the whole exercise - To benefit and create positive economic opportunities for women as a result of globalisation, i.e, for obtaining higher value and to overcome competition from imports.
2. HOW –
 - i) By creating better conditions for women already integrated in the global chains
 - ii) Moving from domestic to regional and from regional to international market chains
 - iii) Expanding the number and sizes of global markets
 - iv) Diversifying into new products and markets taking into account buyers requirements such as quality, price, response time, punctuality, flexible orders and innovative design.
3. Prioritisation of Products – A list of products that were covered during the presentations and discussions was produced. The products were processed fruits and vegetables, nuts and oil seed, herbs/herbal teas, honey and caterpillars. It was from this list that priority products were to be identified by the groups.
4. Mapping Exercise – The groups were requested to map the value chains matrix for the products to be prioritised if they had enough information to be included. This would help to

identify gaps where research could be carried out. The outcome of the research could then lead to designing projects at country and regional levels.

5. Identification of research institutes from where already available researches in the above areas could be accessed.
6. Identification of research which could be done internationally e.g. market research, requirement on standards.

A. Feedbacks from Working Groups and Country Level Consultations

Working Groups

Group 1

- a. Identified products according to the following priority,
 - i. Dried and processed fruits and vegetables (for which a map was produced)
 - ii. Honey
 - iii. Ground and cashew nuts
 - iv. Palm Oil and cassava starch

- b. Made the following recommendations that need to be considered when projects are designed.
 - Bigger companies should be helping smaller ones so that they could be involved in the export business
 - Because of the seasonal nature of food products, countries should find a way of forming a chain by which the supply to foreign markets is not disrupted.
 - Ways and means should be looked into for processing products at sites closer to the sources of raw materials.

- c. Participants would make full assessments on researches so far undertaken in the area of food processing and export in their respective countries.

Group 2

- a. Identified and prioritised the following products,
 - i. Medicinal herbs/teas and spices
 - ii. Dried and processed fruits and vegetables
 - iii. Palm oil

- iv. Caterpillars, silk worms, honey and beeswax
- b. Identified areas for research projects,
 - Global market information on selected products
 - Packaging, labelling and developing logos for women's products
 - Research on appropriate processing technologies
 - Study on skills and training needs of women entrepreneurs in the area of ICTs.
 - Training needs assessment for export promotion
 - Research on domestication of wild crops and sustainable harvesting of such crops like tree nuts.
- c. Identified Institutions/Organizations to carry out research or be consulted on the above mentioned areas.
 - i. Gender and trade related institutions
 - ii. Investment promotion authorities
 - iii. Export promotion agencies
 - iv. Universities
 - v. National councils for science and technology
 - vi. Industrial research institutes
 - vii. Intermediate technologies development group
 - viii. Bureaus of standards
 - ix. Agricultural research institutions
 - x. Business studies institutions

Group 3

- a. Identified priority products as follows:
 - i. Products and by products of small livestock that includes caterpillars, honey and by products (map was produced for beeswax candles)
 - ii. Dried herbs and spices
 - iii. Dried and processed fruits and vegetables
 - iv. Nuts and oil seeds
 - v. Crafts
- b. Identified the following areas for further research,
 - Market information on natural products including competitive prices and sources of such products

- Developing regional training modules
 - Inventory of available engineering and training service providers in the region
 - Promotion of locally processed products
 - Research into formation of women producers group at the regional level.
- c. Made the following recommendations,
- i. Each participant to provide information on research institutions involved in the above products and their marketing
 - ii. A secretariat should be set up to follow up on the outcomes of the workshop and coordinate the activities that would follow.

Country Level Consultations

Each country had different priorities as follows:

1. Tanzania – honey, spices, dried fruits and fruit wines;
2. Kenya – honey, medicinal plants
3. Uganda – dried fruits and vegetables, cooking oils, vanilla
4. Zimbabwe – honey, bees, caterpillars
5. Zambia –cashews, mangoes
6. South Africa – herbal teas, tree nut oils, caterpillars
7. Botswana – caterpillars, medicinal plants
8. Ghana – palm oils, cassava starch, fruits

B. Recommendations of the Workshop

After considering the feedback from the working groups and country level consultations, and having a thorough discussion, participants agreed on the following list of products where grassroots women are mostly involved.

1. Dried and processed fruits and vegetable
2. Honey and by products
3. Small livestock (caterpillars, silk worms, grasshoppers)
4. Nuts and Oils
5. Spices/herbs/teas

There were also some general and complementary research issues which are common to

all global value chains. These are:

1. packaging
2. market information e.g. trade protocols
3. regional promotion measures for products
4. grouping of countries to meet large orders

The workshop further agreed that an assessment of the current situation of the products and their marketing be done mainly based on researches so far carried out and then map out the value chains initially based on what is already known. Following that primary research would be undertaken to fill gaps in knowledge so that more detailed chains can be mapped out across countries and regions and areas identified where positive interventions can be proposed to help change the balance of power and returns within the chains in favour of the working poor.

In order to carry out the above activities the workshop agreed on the designation of focal points among the participants – one for each product. Initially these focal will identify other countries/agencies/producers who are interest in their a particular product and work with them to p produce short proposal outlines setting out main ideas behind the research, which countries would be involves, which researchers and activists would be involved, a timeline for the research and an estimated budget. Once these outlines have been produced, WIEGO and ACGD will work with participants on developing full-scale budgets and help with securing funds with which to undertake the research studies.

III. CLOSING OF THE WORKSHOP

The workshop was formally closed by Ms. Nancy Spence of the Commonwealth Secretariat. In her closing remarks she congratulated participants, resource persons and organizers on the successful outcome of the workshop. She then promised that the Commonwealth Secretariat would continue to help in the promotion of women at the grassroots level.