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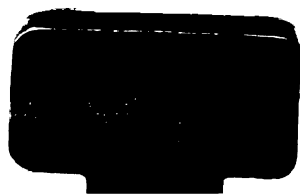


CATIE

Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Center

GENDER POLICY

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CATIE's
GENDER POLICY

Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Center
Turrialba, Costa Rica, 1996

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CATIE is an international, non-profit regional scientific and educational institution. Its main purpose is research and education in the fields of agricultural science and natural resources and related subjects in the American tropics, with emphasis on Central America and the Caribbean.

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Centro Agronómico Tropical de Investigación y Enseñanza

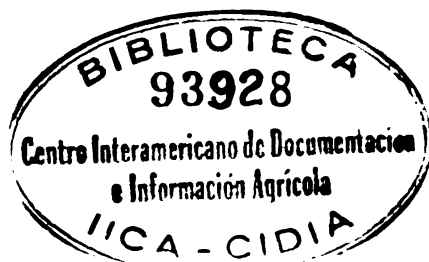
CATIE's gender policy / Centro Agronómico Tropical de Investigación y Enseñanza. -- Turrialba, C.R. : CATIE, 116.

22 p; 23 cm. -- (Serie institucional, Publicaciones misceláneas / CATIE ; no. 2)

ISBN 9977-57-260-7

1. Mujer 2. Género 3. CATIE - Políticas y programas I. CATIE
II. Título III. Serie.

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CATIE, Turrialba, Costa Rica.



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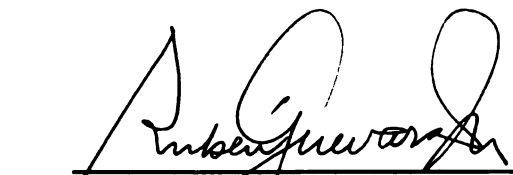
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Preface

CATIE is a regional center of excellence with a mandate to advance tropical agriculture, the integrated management of natural resources, and environmental protection so that our countries continue producing goods and services for an expanding population. In this role, CATIE must include all aspects associated with gender in development, and must confront the issues that are most important in order to allow the incorporation of women, children, and ethnic groups in sustainable development.

This policy paper was elaborated over the course of 1995. The content of the paper is based on the experience and opinion of a large number of staff members. Many of them participated in a workshop on "Incorporation of a Gender Component in CATIE", and others gave their comments on various versions of the document. Later, experts and clients in the region gave their input to the policy paper through a series of six gender workshops held in several countries, and in a Ministerial meeting involving the Ministers of Agriculture, Natural Resources/Environment, and Planning from Mexico, the seven countries of the Central American isthmus, the Dominican Republic, Venezuela, and Brazil. Finally, the policy paper was approved by CATIE's Board of Directors in December, 1995.

We acknowledge all of those who contributed to the formulation of the policy and hope that CATIE , and its partner institutions in Latin America and the Caribbean, will impact the future positively through the effective, and timely incorporation of gender matters in sustainable development.



Rubén Guevara Moncada
Director General

Executive Summary

Gender Policy

In the course of 1995 CATIE formulated its gender policy, with the participation of its professional staff and in consultation with experts and clients in the region. It was approved by the Board of Directors in October, 1995. IICA, along with the Governments of several European and non-European countries, have gender as a high priority on their agenda. The Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro and the World Conference on Women in Beijing drew specific attention to the relationship of women to natural resources management. CATIE follows this lead and recognizes its responsibility as a regional center to become a leader in this field, in higher education, research and outreach, building on promising findings in the socioeconomic field. The main aspects of this gender policy have been included in the Institution's Strategic Plan and the Institutional Development Plan. This policy paper is an attempt to elaborate and put into operation the objectives, strategies and actions mentioned in the Strategic Plan, with respect to gender. The assumption is that CATIE as a whole must change its attitude and seek wider knowledge on gender issues and that the same change in attitude will result in a change in the focus of CATIE's research, education, training and outreach activities, in such a way that they will contribute to an increase in the well-being of the male, as well as the female population of Latin America and the Caribbean.

Gender differences, specifically the sexual division of labor, are important factors in explaining why gender and environment are so closely connected: women are important contributors to agriculture, and are often responsible for firewood, fodder and water collection. Because of this division, women and men have different domains of knowledge and different interests regarding the use and management of natural resources. Migration of men away from rural areas underscores these differences. In order to promote equitable relations between men and women, and in terms of efficiency of development efforts, it is to CATIE's advantage to include a gender perspective.

CATIE's gender policy focuses on gender within the Center and gender in its external relations. Concerning gender within CATIE, the policy concentrates on four strategies:

1) Bringing CATIE staff up to date on gender. This will be done by the following actions: organizing workshops for CATIE staff; incorporating a gender focus into the Plan of Action for each of CATIE's Programs; producing informative leaflets and including information in internal newsletters; selecting gender-sensitive staff; stimulating staff to publish articles on gender in internal and external journals.

2) Increasing the number of women professionals including at higher levels. Measures to be taken to achieve this are: affirmative action towards women in staff recruitment; active head-hunting among women; adjusting the formulation of Terms of Reference in such a way that they conform better to women; valuing the work of women professionals and improving their working environment; management training for women staff; developing a gender project within each of CATIE's programs; obtaining the full commitment of the program directors and heads of areas.

3) Promoting and facilitating the participation of more women in postgraduate and training activities. Measures to be taken to achieve this are: actively seeking female students to take the entrance exam; giving priority to women in obtaining a scholarship through CATIE; promoting the organization of student spouses for arranging child-care; actively promoting postgraduate studies for female candidates; organizing training activities for student spouses.

4) Advancing the understanding of gender among students. This will be done by: including a compulsory course on gender issues in graduate education and stimulating the incorporation of gender issues in research proposals; including a gender focus in all training activities, where relevant; promoting theses containing a gender component; including a gender focus in the Education Program (EDECO) Plan of Action.

CATIE's policy concentrates on four strategies, where gender in external relations is concerned.

1) Improving CATIE's role in the exchange of knowledge, experience and expertise in gender issues, between and among institutions. The following actions will contribute to this strategy: establishing an exchange of knowledge, experience and expertise on gender issues, within the REDCA network; establishing agreements

with institutions that have a wide experience in combining gender with environmental topics; establishing relations with networks that have a gender issue emphasis; stimulating and coordinating conferences, seminars and/or workshops on gender related topics; stimulating the development of a gender focus in institutions in member countries by giving short courses or incidental consultancies and through the dissemination of appropriate materials on the subject; finding resources to publish a series on "Women and Rural Development"; producing a folder with information on its gender policy and planned activities.

2) Developing a strong gender component in higher education, training and outreach activities. Measures to be taken to achieve this are: developing a strategic course on gender and natural resources management; including gender aspects in other strategic courses; encouraging the acceptance of a gender focus at all levels with its training activities; utilizing the gender experience in the region and transmitting it through short courses, seminars, workshops and conferences; monitoring the advancement of integrating gender in training and education activities.

3) Including gender aspects in the design and implementation of research proposals, where relevant. Measures to achieve this are: distributing a manual on how to incorporate gender issues in research proposals; providing continuous support to professional staff on the implementation of gender concepts in research activities; establishing a monitoring system to track the advancement of integrating gender issues in research.; training research staff in gender aspects; giving priority to the dissemination of information on gender in sustainable rural development by delivering research results to international and national data banks; establishing a socio-economic data base for Agricultural and Natural Resource Management in CATIE member countries, with gender specific data.

4) Including women farmers in all phases of the outreach strategy. Measures to achieve this are: continuously promoting a democratic and participatory technology development and transfer model; developing and distributing instructions on how to incorporate gender in the outreach strategy, at institutional and individual levels; supporting professional staff in implementing a gender focus in the projects' activities; establishing a monitoring system of the advancement of incorporating a gender focus in outreach and on the impact of the projects on women; providing technical assistance to national institutions dealing with research, education or outreach to address problems with gender.



1. Introduction

In the Strategic Plan "Agenda for a Critical Decade" (1994) CATIE's mission was formulated as follows:

"To stimulate and promote research and education in agricultural and related sciences for natural resource development, conservation and sustainable use in the American tropics to improve the well-being of mankind".

Mankind consists of approximately 50% women, which in itself, justifies taking into account the characteristics and special needs of this part of the population, in relation to the other members of society, for any attempt to promote sustainable development. The need to work with rural women is important *"regardless of their socioeconomic and ethnic backgrounds and the production systems they use, because they constitute a key human resource in agriculture. Because of this, IICA is working to systematically incorporate the gender perspective into its work."* (IICA 1993). Furthermore, *"The advancement of women is a necessary component of development cooperation. It is required as a fair approach to the female half of the target group, which has too long been underestimated. Thus, while the improvement of women's position and status is fully valid as an emancipatory end in itself, the utilization of their potential is, at the same time, an efficient means of improving the quality of development as a whole"* (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1992).

The "Earth Summit", which took place in 1992 in Rio de Janeiro, recognized that one of the important objectives to assure sustainable development is to incorporate the participation of women in all areas of the programs of Agenda 21, and to stimulate the creation of a global consciousness of the important role of women in sustainable development. It even dedicated a separate chapter (the 24th) to women, titled: "Global Measures in favor of Women for achieving Sustainable and Equitable Development". In addition, during the fourth World Conference on Women, held at Beijing in September 1995, Women and the Environment was one of the twelve themes of the meeting. The Declaration and Platform of Action, the official document, approved by the Conference, which will guide the actions at international and national level, contains three strate-

gic objectives concerning Women and the Environment the second , of which is to integrate gender perspective and aspects in sustainable development policies and programs.

Both meetings show that CATIE, through its timely inclusion of gender in its policies, is following an international and non-reversible trend, and by doing so, will contribute to better the position of women as well as promote a more sustainable development.

CATIE has incorporated gender issues in most of its projects since the 1980's. The results to date are encouraging, and it is time to adopt an institution-wide policy on gender which will permeate all of our actions. This policy is motivated by the premise that sustainable development is equitable development, referring to an equal share of men as well as women in the sacrifices and benefits of development efforts. In addition it anticipates that by taking into account the special needs and interests of the female population, its contribution to sustainable development in the region will become more effective.

At a regional level, few institutions in the field of sustainable development have experience and knowledge of gender issues in agriculture and natural resources. CATIE recognizes its responsibility as a regional center to become a leader in this field, in higher education, research, and outreach. This leadership is crucial to influence national and private universities, research institutes, and development agencies and institutions in the member countries.

Historically CATIE has concentrated mainly on technical research, but has gradually incorporated extension and socioeconomic issues into its activities over the years. In the seventies, CATIE's pioneer role in Farming Systems Research reflects the institution's first interest in the contribution of family members other than the male farmer, though this was not as part of a gender focus. In the nineties the projects "Sustainable Agro-silvopastoral Systems for Small Farmers in the Dry Zones of Central America" (CATIE/ACDI), and "Socioeconomics and Biodiversity of Home Gardens in Central America"

(CATIE/IDRC), made significant contributions to the development of knowledge and experience in gender issues within CATIE, and the region.

The Strategic Plan was revised in 1995 to include the main aspects of this gender policy. In the Institutional Development Plan (CATIE 1995), gender and social issues have been taken into consideration and the establishment of a new position at CATIE in Gender, Environment, and Development in the Sociology and Economics of Production and Conservation Area is another important step on the way to integrate a gender sensitive focus into its activities.

This policy paper is an attempt to elaborate and put into operation the objectives, strategies and actions mentioned in the Strategic Plan, with respect to gender, in such a way that the wider adoption of a gender focus by the institution becomes tangible. It concentrates on concrete actions rather than on theoretical elaborations.

The following chapters explain the relevance of a gender focus at CATIE, as well as indicating problems and suggesting strategies and measures to improve the situation both within CATIE and in its external relations. These strategies and measures are interrelated, influence each other and should be seen as an integral means to stimulate an effective introduction and implementation of a gender policy.

The assumption is that CATIE as a whole must change its attitude and seek wider knowledge on gender issues, endeavoring to influence the outside world, especially partner institutions, on these matters, while respecting the norms and values of the Latin American and Caribbean culture.

The same change in attitude and knowledge will result in a change in the focus of CATIE's research, education, training and outreach activities, in such a way that they will contribute to an increase in the well-being of the male as well as the female half of the population of Latin America and the Caribbean.



2. The relevance of a gender focus at CATIE

Deforestation, soil degradation, contamination by agrochemicals, the impact of agrochemicals on health, threats to biodiversity, sedimentation in rivers and watersheds, over-exploitation of pastures, excessive use of non-renewable resources, increased poverty and a growing need for food are some of the subjects that CATIE must consider in order to comply with the general objective of the institution:

To establish and generate programs in research, education and technical cooperation that contribute to the resolution of socioeconomic and agro-ecological problems of the American Tropics in terms of sustainable development of agricultural and livestock production, forestry, and the management and conservation of natural resources, for the well-being of the population (CATIE 1994).

The social relations between women and men include certain roles and characteristics that are assigned to each gender. These refer to a set of rules and norms that are learned, reinforced and sanctioned within the society of which they form a part (Karremans 1994).

The sexual division of labor, a basic concept in defining gender differences, is an important factor in explaining why gender and environment are so closely connected. It shows that women, especially poor rural women, are important contributors to agriculture¹, and are often responsible for firewood, fodder and water collection (UICN 1993). This sexual division of labor implies that women and men have different domains of knowledge regarding the use and management of natural resources, and different interests in these matters. Women's knowledge about the environment may sometimes be more comprehensive, because of the diversity of their tasks. Women may have more responsibility for sustaining the family, due to male migration away from degraded rural areas,

¹ IICA in a recent study shows that the participation of women in the Economically Active Population (EAP) for Central American countries varies between 20 and 35%, and not as indicated by official figures between 5 and 12% (IICA/IDB study, 1995).

and therefore have more interest in natural resource conservation. (Homberg 1993). In Central America, the percentage of women who claim to have no male companion or who identify themselves as heads of household, or who manage their own plots, ranges from 29% to 48%, with El Salvador and Guatemala showing the highest percentages (IICA/IDB 1995).

Country	Official statistics		Interviews IICA
	Total	Rural	
Costa Rica	17	12	34
Nicaragua	25	18	31
Honduras	22	15	29
El Salvador	31	25	48
Guatemala	28	-	48

In terms of efficiency of development efforts, it is advantageous to include women, because of their high motivation and integral knowledge, as mentioned above, and because of their more continuous presence in the community. In particular, women's organizations at the community level have often shown a more solid and enthusiastic development than men's organizations (Karremans & Lok 1993).

3. Gender within CATIE

3.1 Bringing CATIE staff up to date on gender issues

With reference to the need to implement a gender policy in CATIE's work, the most important starting point is with the human resources on which CATIE depends. Although there are several people with knowledge and experience in this field, the majority of CATIE's staff have little or no idea how to apply a gender viewpoint in their work.

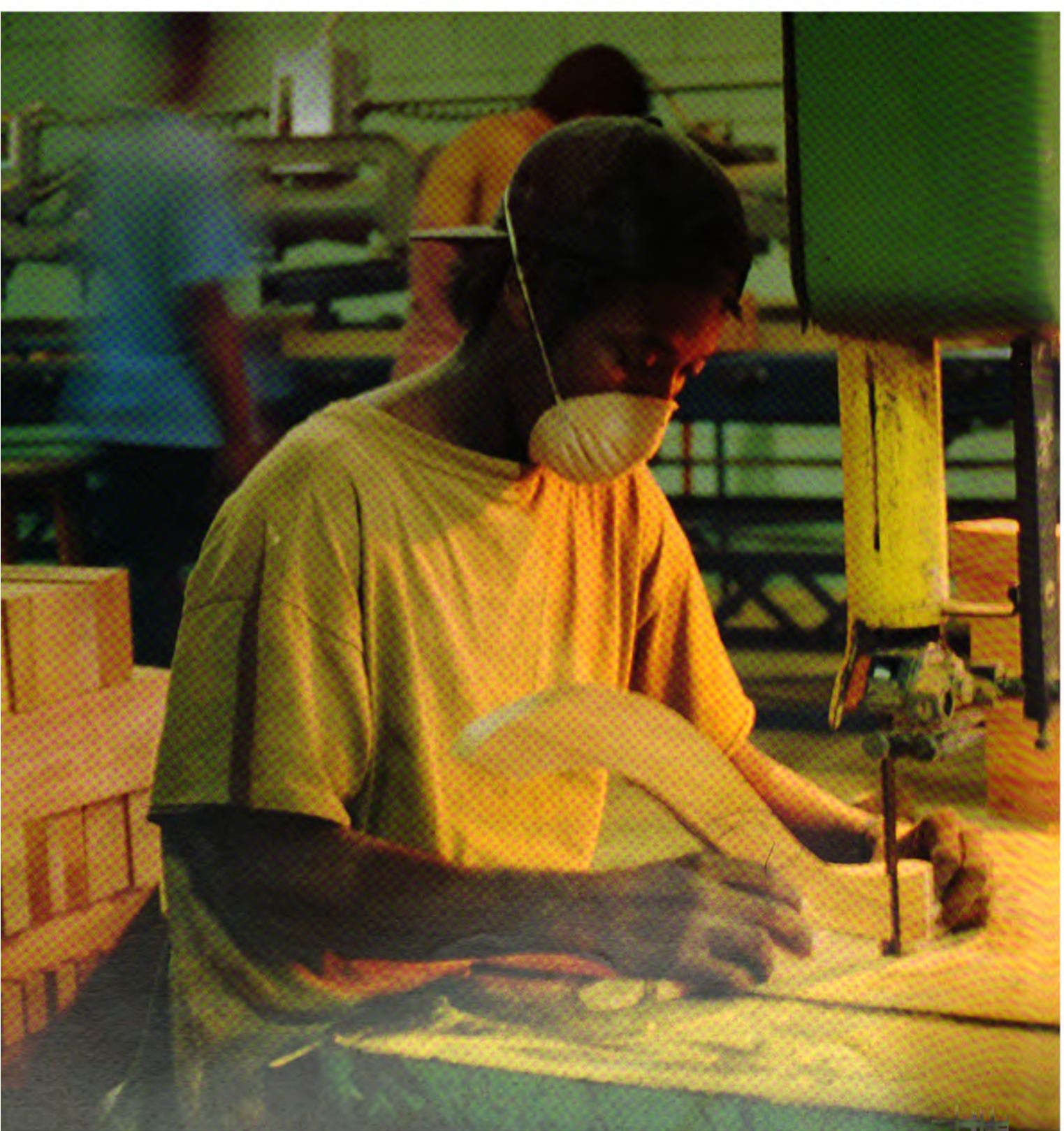
The **strategy** to improve this situation is:

Develop the understanding and implementation of a gender focus by CATIE's professional, support, administrative, and field staff.

Measures to achieve this are:

Organize workshops with follow-up on gender issues for CATIE's staff.

In these workshops explanations should be given concerning what a gender focus entails, why it is needed, and how it can be applied, in concrete terms, within each program, area or project. The course will be given regularly at all levels.



- Incorporate a gender focus into the Plan of Action for each of CATIE's Programs.

This is the only way to guarantee that gender will be taken into consideration within each specific program. The elaboration of each program's gender focus will have to be done in collaboration with CATIE's gender experts.

- Produce an informative leaflet about CATIE's gender policy to be distributed among all staff.
- Include information on CATIE's gender activities in the internal CATIE newsletter.
- Include "experience with gender issues is an advantage" in the requirements when recruiting new staff and, as a consequence, include gender activities in the terms of reference for new staff, where relevant.
- Include "gender-sensitivity" in interviews with candidates for coordinators and project leaders. To date, much of the application of a gender focus has depended on the personal predisposition of Program, Area, Unit, and Project leaders.
- Use the available female and male human resources within the institution who have knowledge and experience in gender issues. Several professionals in CATIE do have training or experience (to a high level) on gender issues. These should be recognized and exploited fully.
- Monitor and evaluate the implementation of CATIE's gender policies.
- Stimulate staff to publish articles on gender in the "Revista Forestal Centroamericana", "Agroforestería en las Américas", "MIP"(Integrated Pest Management) and outside journals.

3.2 Personnel recruitment and promotion

Professional staff (M.Sc. or higher) at CATIE headquarters and in the region currently totals 118 (data for October 1995). Of these 118 professionals only 17 are women, (14.4%). A more detailed examination of these figures reveals that of the 44 professionals with a Ph.D. degree, only three are female (7%) and of the 74 with a M.Sc. degree, 14 are female (19%)². Nevertheless, this representation is, on average, higher than the population of existing women with Doctorate and Master's degrees in management in the region. Although this situation is typical in the agricultural and forestry sector worldwide, CATIE considers it to be undesirable. It perpetuates a male biased focus in research, education and training, and limits the capacity of CATIE's projects to work with rural women in agriculture, forestry and agroforestry.

Professional staff in CATIE by sex:

sex	staff		
	MSc	PhD	Total
male	60 (89%)	41 (93%)	101 (85.5%)
female	14 (19%)	3 (7%)	17 (14.4%)
Total	74 (100%)	44 (100%)	118 (100%)

The **strategy** to improve this situation is:

Steadily increase the number of women professionals up to the year 2002, including the incorporation of qualified women at higher levels of management.

Measures to be taken to achieve this are:

Affirmative action towards women in staff recruitment.

Although CATIE is applying a strategy of Equal Opportunities for men and women, measures should be taken to guarantee that if persons of

both sexes qualify equally for a position, preference should be given to women².

- Active "head hunting" among female professionals specialized in relevant fields, for new positions at CATIE.

CATIE should make contact with professional women's networks, place advertisements in publications with a high female readership, maintain a database of potential women applicants and mail them directly.

- Formulate Terms of Reference in such a way that they conform better to women.
- Value the work of women professionals by publishing their contributions and stimulate their participation in international seminars or meetings.
- Implement affirmative action in the recruitment of professionals with experience in the field of gender issues. If two persons qualify for a job and one has experience with gender issues, preference should be given to the latter.
- Improve the working environment for professional women at CATIE.

This can be done by, for example, promoting the organization of child care facilities. CATIE can contribute by providing premises. Other possibilities are flexible working hours (which exist already to a certain degree in CATIE) or assisting spouses/partners of employees in finding work or training opportunities.

- Provide women staff with training, especially in management, so that they become more prepared for high level functions and will have more opportunity to be considered for promotion.
- Include in each project proposal the clause that every attempt will be made to assign some professional staff positions to women.

² CATIE is an equal opportunity employer and makes no discrimination for gender, race or religion.

- Develop at least one special gender project within each of CATIE's programs. These would be specific projects, headed by women for rural women. CATIE can play a leading role in the development of certain subjects (e.g. natural resources management by women) in the region.
- Obtain the full commitment of the program directors and heads of areas to implement measures to integrate, promote and advance women at all levels of their work.

3.3. Student recruitment

The participation of women in CATIE's postgraduate program is limited, but gradually increasing.

sex	93/94		94/95		95/96		96/97	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
male	34	81	40	80	36	84	43	71
female	8	19	10	20	7	16	17	29
total	42	100	50	100	43	100	60	100

This is the case throughout Latin America in agricultural sciences and natural resource management schools. However, an external evaluation by the Nordic countries in 1994 showed that CATIE already gives preference to women in its administrative policy.

In addition, there is a general lack of understanding among students of what gender issues are, why it is necessary to work with a gender focus and how to implement it in their research.

The **strategies** to overcome this situation are:

Promote and facilitate the participation of more women in postgraduate studies and training activities.

Measures to be taken to achieve this are:

- Actively seek female students to take the entrance exam.
- Give priority to those women students who have passed the admissions exam to obtain a scholarship through CATIE.
- Promote the admission of more women as national counterparts in the region.
- Promote the organization of student spouses for arranging child-care programs, possibly in coordination with personnel child-care. CATIE would contribute facilities for this purpose.
- Actively promote postgraduate studies and training opportunities for potential female candidates.
- Organize training activities for student spouses.

The increase in female students will also contribute to a greater availability of women professionals for employment in CATIE and elsewhere.

3.4 Gender focus in CATIE's graduate education programs

Advance the understanding of gender among students of the graduate program and specialization courses.

The **measures** to achieve this are:

- Include a compulsory course on gender issues in graduate education and stimulate the incorporation of gender issues in research proposals.
- Include a gender focus in all training activities, where relevant.
- Promote theses containing a gender component.
- Include a gender focus in the Education Program (EDECO) Plan of Action.



4. Gender and CATIE: External relations

4.1 Cooperating institutions

CATIE has many contacts outside the institute, varying from the institutions participating in REDCA (Regional Network for Higher Education, Research and Transfer in Agricultural and Natural Resource Management) in which over 150 institutions participate, to individual agreements with universities and Non-Governmental Organizations. This proves that CATIE is actively present in many countries. Gender, however, has not been an explicit subject in these relations.

The **strategy** to change this situation is:

Improve CATIE's role in the exchange of knowledge, experience and expertise in gender issues, between and among institutions.

Measures to be taken to achieve this are:

- Establish an exchange of knowledge, experience and expertise on gender issues, within the REDCA network. This network forms an ideal basis for interchange and CATIE, as the operational base of the network, should stimulate the incorporation of gender in the network's actions.
- Establish agreements with institutions that have a wide experience in combining gender with environmental topics. This could include institutions in the region, such as IUCN, or institutions in other regions, such as The Women's Studies Research Center at the University of Wisconsin, The Association for Women in Development (AWID) in the United States, The International Center

for Research on Women (ICRW) in Washington, D.C., The Third World Organization of Women in Science and Technology (TWOWS) in Italy, or INDRA, Institute for Development Research Amsterdam, Department of Gender, Environment and Development in the Netherlands.

- Establish relations with networks that have a gender issue emphasis, such as the FAO Network of Institutions and Organizations on Technical Cooperation to Assist the Rural Woman, Consejo Consultativo de Centro America del Plan de Acción Forestal para Centro America, Group of Central American First Ladies and national committees on gender and sustainable development.
- Stimulate and coordinate conferences, seminars and/or workshops on gender related topics.
- Stimulate the development of a gender focus in institutions in member countries by giving short courses or incidental consultancies.
- Stimulate attention on gender issues through the dissemination of appropriate materials on the subject.
- Stimulate professionals in the region with experience in gender issues to publish in CATIE's journals, and make use of CATIE's high capacity to disseminate information.
- Find resources to publish a series on "Women and Rural Development", based on its experiences as well as those in other institutions in the region.
- Produce a folder with information on its gender policy and planned activities, and disseminate it worldwide, in order to focus attention on CATIE's gender sensitive viewpoint.

4.2 CATIE's clients: training and education

CATIE has established a strong reputation for short courses. At this moment 20 strategic courses in different areas are being taught at CATIE, varying in duration from one to two and half months. These courses reach professionals in Latin America and the Caribbean. Subjects are mainly technical, with a few exceptions. The same is true for short courses (one to two weeks), seminars, conferences, and workshops.

In training and education, in association with its clients, CATIE should apply the following **strategy**:

Develop a strong gender component in higher education, training and outreach activities.

Measures to be taken to achieve this are:

- Develop a strategic course on gender and sustainable agricultural development, and gender and the integrated management of natural resources.
- Integrate gender aspects in strategic courses where appropriate. Many of the courses should integrate a gender focus and dedicate a considerable part to these issues. In order to achieve this, gender experts should be consulted about all course programs.
- Encourage the acceptance of a gender focus at all levels with its training activities for top executives, university professors, educators, mid-level professionals, extension workers at field level and farmers.
- Utilize the gender experience in the region and transmit it through short courses, seminars, workshops, and conferences.
- Monitor the advancement of integrating gender in training and education activities.

4.3 Research and validation activities

CATIE is renowned throughout the world for its high quality scientific research. Since its inception, this research has been mainly focused on the technical aspects of agriculture, forestry and natural resource management. In recent years social issues have been integrated into the ongoing research projects. Nevertheless, gender issues have been incorporated much more slowly here than in other institutional activities.

The following **strategy** should improve this situation:

Integrate gender aspects in the design and implementation of research proposals, where relevant.

Measures to achieve this are:

- Develop and distribute a manual on how to incorporate gender issues in research proposals.
- Provide continuous support to professional staff on the implementation of gender concepts in research activities.
- Establish a monitoring system to track the advancement of integrating gender issues in research.
- Train research staff in gender aspects as mentioned in chapter 3.4. This will enable them to carry out the above mentioned measures.
- Give priority to the dissemination of information on gender in sustainable rural development by delivering research results to international and national data banks.
- Establish a socioeconomic data base for Agricultural and Natural Resource Management in CATIE member countries, with gender specific data.

4.4 Outreach and CATIE's beneficiaries

CATIE's outreach methodology provides for decisive participation by male and female producers, from the moment that the technology development process commences, often in the form of a project.

Ensuring real female participation consists of empowering them in the decision-making process, in this case, in technology development.

In its outreach activities, CATIE should apply the following **strategy**:

Where relevant, include women farmers in all phases of the outreach strategy, in order to contribute to improving their social, economic and political situation.

Measures to achieve this are:

- Continuously promote a democratic and participatory technology development and transfer model.
- Develop and distribute instructions on how to incorporate gender in the outreach strategy, at institutional and individual levels.
- Support professional staff in implementing a gender focus in the projects' activities.
- Establish a monitoring system on the advancement of incorporating a gender focus in outreach and on the impact of the projects on women.
- Provide technical assistance to national (private and governmental) institutions dealing with research, education or outreach to address problems with gender.



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CATIE		93928
SI		
PM-2		
Autor		
Título		CATIE's GENDER POLICY
Fecha	Nombre del solicitante	
Devolución		

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