

**Date of Session:** February 18, 2019

**Title of Session:** Using Gender Data for Discussion Making in Complex Settings

**Session Description:** *Gender data can provide unique insights into a company's clients or a program's beneficiaries. Collecting such data can uncover truths of who is being reached and what their needs are, which in turn provides opportunities for the company or program to better meet those needs. Yet fulfilling this responsibility can be challenging, particularly in complex international settings with different cultures, politics, and funding opportunities. This panel will share the diverse experiences of international businesses, accelerators, and NGOs who are collecting and using gender-based data to help provide better SGB-focused programs and products. Rebecca Baylor, Research Associate at the William Davidson Institute at the University of Michigan, will facilitate a conversation on the complexities of collecting gender data in international settings, as well as practices for using these data to inform decision-making at the client, investee, and organizational level.*

**Speakers:**

- Moderator: Rebecca Baylor, William Davidson Institute at the University of Michigan
- Panelists:
  - Vava Angwenyi. Vava Coffe & Gente del Futuro.
  - Kattia Quirós, Hivos Latinoamérica.
  - Jorge Enrique Uribe Beltrán, Cámara de Comercio de Cali
  - Jennifer Hemmelstein, ACIDI/VOCA

**Session Objectives:**

The goal of this session is to understand the difficulties of collecting gender data in practice through the perspective of the panelists, which represent a range of stakeholder types, from entrepreneurs to researchers.

**Lead Discussants' Remarks:**

There are many challenges associated with collecting gender data in the field. The process begins with changing the perspective on gender focused measurement and its ability to improve the growth of companies. Additional challenges brought up by the panel include:

- Quantifying the qualitative changes (also a general data challenge)
- Changing the mindset to be focused on the beneficiaries
- Addressing the lack of dynamism in the entrepreneurship sector (financial obstacles)
- Understanding systems for the compilation of qualitative and quantitative data

**Insights from the panel:**

- Adapt negative results – finding negative results is equally as important as positive ones and making the value of these negative findings clear to stakeholders is key to using this information in future decision making.

- Research on qualitative and quantitative data – understanding how to combine these different types of insights requires the creation of a clear research structure and using that tool consistently to stay engaged and follow up with stakeholders.
- Knowledgeable staff – ensuring the data is collected by people trained to perform data collection and analysis in a consistent, standardized way is critical to avoid losing objectivity. To achieve this, it is important to clarify the processes with those staff members.
- Visualize the strategy – having a clear vision of what you want to obtain in terms of data, how you can obtain this, what skills your statistical team will need, whether you need specialized metrics and how to design direct, unbiased questions.
- Know your stakeholder – knowing who the beneficiary is, beyond a surface level, so that she feels part of the project and the dynamics specific to the stakeholder are being addressed.

**Key Takeaways:**

1. Understand the importance of measuring impact, whether you're an entrepreneur, investor, capacity development organization, or any other type of stakeholder.
2. When we not only collect gender data, but incorporate it into our decision-making processes, we bring ourselves closer to shrinking the gender gap in a significant way.
3. Generally, there is a great emphasis put on collecting empirical data; however, when collecting gender-specific data it's important to explore the qualitative world as well. Quantitative data does not always show the full picture, particularly when looking at gender equality in a socioeconomic setting.
4. Developing a data methodology that is based on the theory of change is a challenging aspect of creating a gender-data strategy; however, this will allow your metrics to best align with your organization's goals in a meaningful way.

**Links/Resources mentioned or discussed during session:**

- [Vava Coffee](#)
- [About Gente Del Futuro](#)
- [About Hivos' work in women's empowerment](#)
- [Cámara de Comercio de Cali](#)
- [ACDI/VOCA Gender First Tool](#)