*Date of Session***:** February 18, 2019
*Title of Session***:** TechnoServe's Gender Journey
Session Description: *In 2015, TechnoServe adopted a gender policy to mainstream gender sensitive programming in the organization, built around metrics at the portfolio and project levels. This session will share the gender journey of TechnoServe's entrepreneurship practice, still in progress today, and examine how introducing gender metrics has influenced our programs and the organization.*

Speakers:
- James Tinker, TechnoServe

Session Objectives:
- Present about TechnoServe's gender policy on the corporation level and on the project level
- Present examples where the policy was well implemented
- Present indicators and results over the years

Lead Discussants' Remarks:
 What it is important for developing a gender lens policy?
- Understanding staffing components, not only in the core business unit but in satellites of the enterprise as well.
- Requiring analysis on the gender dynamics on projects across business units.
- Looking at the ratio of male to female stakeholders, at the employee, leadership, borrower, farmer, and client level.
    - What is the gender makeup, percentage-wise, in these groups?
- Look at household dynamics

Note for following remarks: At TechnoServe, project level (all projects they work have a gender lens) and corporate level (refers to TechnoServe's policy itself).

At the corporate level, the following policies have been adopted:
- Gender sensitive language
- Equal payment and other gender sensitive HR policies
    - TechnoServe has developed a pay band considering the skills and responsibilities of employees, regardless of demographics including gender, and making sure staff is equally compensated for these activities.
- Gender focused training for staff
- Committed leadership: leaders reinforcing and communicating to the staff their commitment to adopting a gender lens policy

At the project level:
- Balancing family and business responsibilities
- Providing access to finance without legal ownership

- Increasing female participation in historically male-dominated environments
- Adopting policies around mobility; sexual harassment

TechnoServe requires that every project:
- Collect gender disaggregated data
- Conduct gender analysis
- Create using gender sensitive design
- Engage in systematic learning

James then presented a case, pulling out two main gender insights from the project:
- Women benefit better from women mentor and male from male mentors
- Time for trainings has been crucial

In another project they noticed that having a gender champion from staff on the ground helped to monitor outcomes and build capacity.

The impact of the gender policy has been connected to 5% growth over 5 years. James remarks that while this may seem small, it has taken a significant company-wide effort to get to this point and shows that this type of endemic change requires a long-term commitment. It takes time, effort and patient to see the changes and difference.

Q&A Overview:
Q: What should the goals be for a gender policy? Should we target a 50/50 male-female workforce?
A: The goal will depend on the business itself and the various dynamics at play, but in general having more women active in a traditionally male-dominant environment and making these environments more inviting and comfortable for women is a strategy that TechnoServe has implemented during projects. We do have some programs that are 100% women, but it is very context specific.

Q: How do you collect the data in the project level?
A: Almost all the projects has funding to collect the data and are corporate partners. Part of their field teams collect the data, which is sent back to HQ to be analyzed.

Q: Do you set a minimum percentage of the project budget to implement gender-focused activities?
A: We have done this successfully in the past, but since every project is different it doesn't always happen, and it is very challenging sometimes to get the money towards this specific focus. Another challenge is getting a good gender baseline. Even though we have a gender director and specialist on the ground, it can still be difficult to implement with some projects.

Q: How do you align the funder(s)' theory of change and the project's theory of change around gender?

A: This hasn't been something that TechnoServe has had to deal with, since we have over 50 funders it isn't feasible to customize a theory of change to line up between each funder and project. Instead, we focus on using our gender policy for projects.

Q: Do you have gender training for funders?
A: We do not have this in a structured way, but the gender specialist is in contact with them and plays the role of understand what is important to funders and their reports, and educating them regarding gender in that context.

Q: What exactly to we mean when we say "gender policy"?
A: A policy can target different things and thus can take on different meanings to different stakeholders–a policy can target stakeholders at the household level or broader.

Key Takeaways:
1. The are many ways to target gender and create policies; there needs to be a deep understanding of the policy's context and the most pressing needs.
2. Results around new gender policies take time to appear and grow at a gradual level. These expectations need to be aligned between all stakeholders. Policymakers need to be patient and committed to keeping these policies in place.
3. One of the insights from TechnoServe's experience is that there are a lot of variables that influence the outcomes of these policies. Understanding the various dynamics at play is very important.

Links/Resources mentioned or discussed during session:

- [TechnoServe's work with gender](#)
- [The United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals](#)