

identify to which extent income coincides with expenditures. When there is a lot of income but little expenditure, these will be the times when the most loan repayment can take place. The reverse, when there is no income but high costs, are obviously the seasons when farmers really cannot repay any loans without having to borrow that money elsewhere.

Step 6: Drawing of ideal loan repayment calendar

As a group, make a calendar for ideal loan repayment schedules, separately for women and men.

Recommendations for the process

Try to be open-minded and flexible during the workshop. It may be difficult for the target group to think in concepts and draw simplified maps and calendars of their activities. The focus should be on gathering input from the clients to be able to design useful products for the target group of the service provider.

EXAMPLE: COAC MAQUITA

This tool was used in a one-day workshop with clients of COAC Maquita. The Savings and Credit Cooperative Maquita Cushunchic (COAC Maquita) was founded in 1998 by grassroots organizations of women living in the South of Quito, the MCCH Foundation (Trading as Cushunchic Maquita Brothers), the New Land Foundation, and the Fund Ecuadorian Populorum Progressio (FEPP), with the aim of providing financial services to its members in the Southern suburbs of Quito.



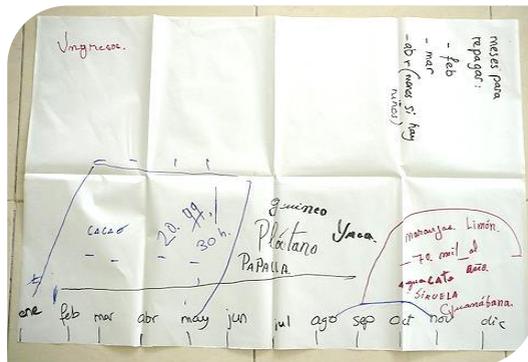
Drawing income and expenditures calendars, women's group (left) and men's group (right) (Source: van Swinderen, 2013)

During the workshop two staff members of Maquita were present, as well as the Triodos Facet consultant. Male and female producers drew their own maps in small groups (see pictures above)

During the discussion of the maps in plenary it became apparent that the incomes of the groups are well divided over the seasons; only a few months were identified in which loan repayment is not possible. Specifically women have several income sources, although modest, such as the sale of chicken eggs. These can be sold throughout the year. In

addition, they can cope with emergencies by selling the chickens or other small animals they own.

Specialized producers in a product (monoculture) have cash flows that are much more concentrated. Cocoa farmers in particular receive their income during the months of January to April. The costs are higher during May to August, because in these months people need to spend money on labour for maintenance and renewal of land plants and cocoa. For this segment it would be useful to have a repayment schedule focused on the months of January to April and less repayment during May to August.



The income (ingresos) and expenditures (egresos) calendar of the women group (left) and income (ingresos) calendar of the men group (right) (Source: van Swinderen, 2013)

Ideal repayment schedules for men and women were quite distinct. Men are often owners of cash crops; they need a lot of money at once to invest in the planting and cultivation of the cash crop. Afterwards they sell slowly and can pay back their money in smaller amounts. These are the traditional microfinance loans. Often, women's finance needs are the opposite. For example, they rear meat chickens (broilers) and need finance for several inputs such as feed, medicines, etc. They need this finance gradually, right from the beginning of the production up to the end of the production cycle. This means they need access to finance that is disbursed in small, frequent amounts. Financial solutions for women could involve depositing their microfinance loan in a mobile wallet and withdraw it gradually as they need to buy inputs. Or they need the possibility to arrange an overdraft on their account.

Credits

Swinderen, A.M., van, (Triodos Facet) 2013, within the 'Sustainable Agricultural Finance Expansion Programme for Partners of Hivos and Hivos Triodos Fund', 2013-2015. The programme aims to increase access to finance for small agricultural producers, agricultural

SMEs and producer organizations by strengthening the capacity of MFIs. The tool above was developed working with Maquita (Ecuador) and Sembrar Sartawi (Bolivia) and based on Participatory Action Learning and PRA methodologies.