



ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT & FOOD SECURITY

VAM GENDER AND MARKETS BRIEFING #8

GENDER AND STREET FOOD IN ABIDJAN, IVORY COAST

KEY MESSAGES:

- 57 % of Women and 61% of men consume street food mainly because of the proximity between their work and the street food vendors.
- Street food is mostly a women’s activity, occupied by women of all ages, often coming from disadvantaged environments where they have not been able to receive education. The rare men devoted to the street kitchen are mostly Nigerians and sellers of garba, (attiéké and fish dish).
- All food products (vegetables, fruits, tubers, tuber roots, fish and selected meat) are sold by women. Men are often selling the meats and most of time hold shops where they sell processed food products (cans, cubes of seasoning ...).

The multiples challenges faced by women

The recurring problem of street vendors is financial. 81.5% of them and they complain of financial difficulties due to the lack of profitability of their work. Living on credit is common because the daily profits are sometimes not enough to refuel the next day.

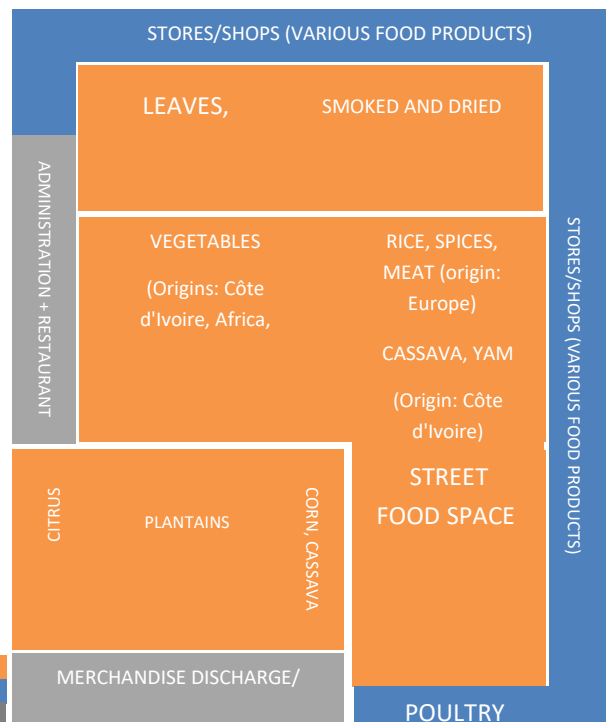
The hours of work are long and physically intense. In the majority of cases, women and men get up between 4 and 5 am, work an average of 12 hours a day. Since street cooking is a profession nearly 90% of which is occupied by women, they spend more than two and a half hours of their time doing domestic chores.

More than half of them use wood and / or charcoal as a source of energy for cooking. The smoke from burning wood and coal is inhaled all day by women and the few men cooking. This smoke can be extremely toxic to health, causing respiratory tract infections.

In one out of 10 cases, the children are in the workplace and work with their parents. Child labor, without being the job of street vendors and street vendors, is a proven reality in food markets. They often handle the transport of

products and the sale of water or other miscellaneous products. A case all the more disturbing is that of the children left to themselves who also represent a tenth of the cases.

GRAPH 1 : ROLES DISTRIBUTION IN FOOD SALES ON COCOPROVI (GOURO) MARKET OF ADJAMÉ



Only 40% of women sellers surveyed bring their children to school

Of all the women surveyed, 40% of them never went to school

42% of women join self-help « tontines »

REPLENISH RESOURCES FOR REGULAR ASSISTANCE	MAKE CBT MORE FLEXIBLE SO THAT BENEFICIARIES CAN BUY NON-FOOD PRODUCTS AS WELL	PROMOTE ACCESS TO CREDIT	PROMOTE THE TRAINING OF WOMEN AND YOUNG PEOPLE TO INCREASE THEIR EMPLOYABILITY POTENTIAL	PROMOTE INTEGRATED INITIATIVES THROUGH CBT
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TAKING ACTION

Financial support, for example through bank loans, would serve to expand food stocks by means of conservation that would avoid grueling and dangerous daily movements. Many restorers would no longer be living on credit and could reap the benefits of investing in the health and education of their children.

Access to quality water and a source of energy such as gas (which would no longer expose them to respiratory diseases and anemia) is also a wish for major improvement. Easily accessible and potable water would avoid travel or extra costs to purchase water and improve food and space hygiene.

Women seller with young children would like to have child care facilities close to their workplace so that they do not have to look after them during working hours and no longer have to rely on family or friends.

Formalized street cooking spaces could include a childcare space so that they are no longer a burden for women during their work. Finally, a reinforced cooperative logic would make women more resilient along the value chain.

In order to make workplaces safe for men and women, security personnel present during working hours would protect workers.

It would be relevant to encourage WFP initiatives in urban areas such as school canteens. The ever-increasing urbanization brings new challenges in terms of food security and new needs within cities are being felt. Canteen meals could be prepared by women and men practicing street cooking. This would enable them to have access to a regular clientele and partnerships with nearby schools could positively influence the schooling and nutritional status of the children of the meal preparers.

TO GO FURTHER :

Gender and Market Initiative: Empowering West African Women through Market-based Food Assistance : <https://resources.vam.wfp.org/node/106>

FOR THE LATEST INFO ON IVORY COAST:

<http://www1.wfp.org/countries/cote-divoire>

SOURCE(S) :

WFP , 2017. Gender and Markets Case Studies #8:Gender and street food in Abidjan, Ivory Coast.

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Photo page 1: WFP/Johana Simao