



# South-South Series: Empowering and Growing Women-led Business

Session 9: Engaging men as  
partners and champions of  
women's empowerment

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GOLDEN EXOTICS LTD · GHANA

# Gender Equity at the Banana Plantation

*From concept to continuous employment of women*

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*Project briefing · Gender Equity Programme update*

# Concept at a glance

Women's presence in the global banana industry is one of the lowest in the plantation sector. The Golden Exotics Ltd Gender Equity Project was launched to change that — at GEL first, and as a model for the industry.

**LAUNCHED**

**January 2018**

**ROOT RESEARCH**

**August 2017, independent consultant**

**PARTNERS**

**GEL · Bananalink · IUF · Fairtrade ·  
Compagnie Fruitière**

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*Advisory Committee discussion session*

# The challenge we set out to solve

*Three root issues surfaced in the August 2017 field research and the January 2018 multi-stakeholder validation workshop.*

**01**

## Education & training gap

Low levels of formal education and on-the-job workplace training for women on the plantation.

**02**

## A narrow set of tasks

Women were restricted to a small range of production tasks — most of the higher-skill roles were unavailable to them.

**03**

## Perception of 'high cost'

Women were perceived as expensive to employ because of maternity, breastfeeding and other caregiving roles.

# Six pillars of the project framework

*Policy: Increasing women's presence and improving living and working conditions of women employees within GEL.*

1

## Advisory Committee

Multi-stakeholder oversight body. Quarterly meetings. Monitors progress, develops strategies, advises GEL management.

2

## Organic Expansion as Vehicle

Use new organic farm expansion to bring women in. Target: 40% of new organic-farm hires are women.

3

## Gender Awareness Training

Consistent education of management, supervisors and workers on the company gender policy.

4

## Health & Safety with a Gender Lens

Pregnancy and breastfeeding-aware tasks. BOHESI programme. Sexual harassment policy. Upgraded facilities.

5

## Women in Community Outreach

Women workers as visible role models in surrounding communities — including youth and literacy programmes.

6

## Capacity Building of Committees

Strengthen women's committees, gender officer, local unions through training and leadership development.

# Dignity, health and safety — built into the workplace

*The project translated the gender lens into specific, durable changes in the way GEL operates.*

## Pregnancy & Breastfeeding

Light-duty rotation. Breastfeeding breaks honoured in the CBA. Transport reviewed so mothers can reach their babies on time.

## Crèche Facilities

First crèche under construction; second crèche planned for the middle of the farm to cut travel time.

## Sexual Harassment Policy

Signed off by all stakeholders. Women's Committee sensitised. Reporting procedure now under union review.

## Health & Safety Committee

Reconstituted to include the company's Occupational Health doctor and the Gender Officer. BOHESI training rolled out.

## Pack House Facilities

Separate toilets, washrooms and changing rooms now being rolled out to older sectors to match new pack-house standards.

## Maternity Rights Awareness

Women workers now aware of their maternity rights — and accessing them without friction.

# Sustaining women's employment at the plantation

*Five priorities to take this from a project to standard practice across GEL.*

<b>01</b>	<b>Expand the model into Sectors 24 &amp; 25</b>	Continue female recruitment into the next two organic sectors as construction completes — keeping the 40% target intact.
<b>02</b>	<b>Embed continuous gender awareness training</b>	Roll out further trainings in the year for supervisors and workers; cascade learning through the Women's Committee.
<b>03</b>	<b>Complete the crèche infrastructure</b>	Finish the first crèche, then proceed with the second mid-farm facility. Recruit qualified crèche staff.
<b>04</b>	<b>Operationalise the sexual harassment system</b>	Close out the unions' input on the reporting procedure, establish the sexual harassment committee, train HR and the training coordinator.
<b>05</b>	<b>Launch a women's literacy programme</b>	Establish in-house literacy support for women workers and strengthen partnerships with FTA, Bananalink, IUF (Dignity 4 All).



# Thank you

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