Entrepreneurial Engagement of Women in Selected Tourism Areas in the Philippines

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ABSTRACT

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This study analyzed the entrepreneurial engagements of women in 2 selected tourism areas in the Philippines. Specifically, it examined the respondents' profile and their business; assessed the women's enterprises as to employment generation, promotion of sociocultural authenticity of host community, support to agricultural and coastal endowments of the area, and economic empowerment of women. The women's engagement in tourism-related enterprises may be a manifestation of a sense of ownership, themselves being born and growing up in the locality. They expressed a sense of pride especially in receiving outsiders whom they regarded as visitors of their home community. They articulated that their livelihood helped promote their way of life, place, resources and products. Most women's enterprises in Tigaon were highly dependent on tourism. Although the same may be said of Caramoan, the women there were more enterprising and possessed some level of business resilience as they had set up other enterprises to get by while tourists were not around. More entrepreneurs from Caramoan than Tigaon came across tourists from other regions and abroad. The women's engagements were isolated from the mainstream of the tourism industry. Their businesses were struggling amidst strong and stable competition from big capitalists who owned the resorts, hotels and food businesses. Data revealed that the livelihood activities of women were still very small and minimal. Consequently, the enterprises had insignificant and negligible generation of employment. The gender-based issues faced by the respondents were those that relate to reproductive work such as tight household budget, home concerns, sickness in the family and too much work. Tourism development in both communities should give preferential option for small entrepreneurs. The women may organize themselves to enhance social capital.

Keywords : Entrepreneurial Engagement, Tourism Areas, Women

I. INTRODUCTION

The lot of literature underlines tourism and related activities, such as heritage, food processing and handicrafts, as a means to achieve rural development goals [1]. In Portugal, rural women often prove to be pioneers in entrepreneurial initiatives in these sectors, which are often observed as gendered because the nature of such activities have traditionally been performed by women in rural areas [2]. Due to poverty, women are forced to take productive work (income-generating activities) on top of their reproductive work (child-rearing and housekeeping) to help the husband augment household income [3]. In low and middle-income countries, 25-50% of the economy is comprised of the informal sector, which mostly constitutes self-employed individuals with micro and small enterprises [4].

In the Philippines, not only is the bulk of the poor composed of women; 95% of microenterprises involve women. A study in Poland characterized female-run tourism and hospitality businesses as examples of sustainable tourism oriented toward enhancing local prosperity, generating income and employment and at the same time maintaining socio-cultural authenticity of host communities, conserving cultural heritage and contributing to inter-cultural understanding [5]. supportive of agricultural/ coastal tourism.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study aimed to assess and compare the entrepreneurial engagement of women in tourism areas of Tigaon and Caramoan, and develop appropriate entrepreneurial activities supportive of agricultural/ coastal tourism. Specifically, it tried to: 1) examine the socioeconomic profile of respondents and status of their business; and 2) assess and compare

the entrepreneurial engagements of women in the 2 communities in terms of generating employment, maintaining sociocultural authenticity in host communities, supporting agricultural and coastal endowments of the areas, and economic empowerment of women.

III. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study was conducted in the villages of Gata, Oring and Daraga, all of which were part of the Lahuy Island in Caramoan; and Consocep, Casuna and Huyonhuyon of Tigaon. Caramoan was a coastal town while Tigaon had a mix of upland and coastal neighborhoods. Based on the municipal tourism websites, these villages housed some of the most attractive and popular tourist destinations in the Province of Camarines Sur. The main respondents were women who had been engaged in an enterprise in the past 12 months that catered to both domestic and foreign tourists. Primary data were gathered through a survey regarding the socioeconomic profile of the female operator, and detailed information about the enterprise. Key informant interview was conducted with selected personnel of the local government unit and officers of selected villages. Secondary data were taken from the Municipal Planning and Development Office and Municipal Tourism Office in order to determine the general situation of women-managed enterprises in the study areas. Data about the enterprises were analyzed to assess and compare, between Tigaon and Caramoan, the generation of employment, maintenance of socio-cultural authenticity of host communities, supporting agricultural and coastal endowments of the areas, and economic empowerment of women.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the information in answer to the objectives of the study.

Socioeconomic Profile of Respondents

Following is the profile of the respondents grouped into those based in Tigaon and those based in Caramoan.

Table 1. Sociodemographic Profile of Respondents

Age	Based in Tigaon	Based in Caramoan	F	%
20-29	9	0	9	12
30-39	11	9	20	26
40-49	12	6	18	24
50-59	9	9	18	24
60-69	3	5	8	11
70 & above	0	3	3	4
Village				
Consocep	24	0	24	32
Huyonhuyon	11	0	11	14
Casuna	9	0	9	12
Oring	0	14	14	18
Daraga	0	9	9	12
Gata	0	9	9	12
Place of birth				
Tigaon	32	0	32	42
Caramoan	1	29	30	39
Ocampo	5	0	5	7
Iriga City	3	0	3	4
Garchitorea	0	1	1	1
Cavite	2	0	2	3
Dapitan	0	1	1	1
Catanduanes	0	1	1	1
Ozamis	1	0	1	1
Zamboanga	0	1	1	1
No. of years in municipality				
9 & below	17	2	19	39
10-19	0	2	2	0
20-29	9	0	9	20
30-39	6	11	17	14
40-49	5	3	8	11
50-59	6	9	6	14
60 & above	1	5	1	2
Relationship				

to HH head				
Household head	4	4	8	11
Spouse/partner	40	28	68	89
Civil status				
Married	34	30	64	84
Widow/er	1	1	2	3
Common law/live in	9	1	10	13
Highest education				
Elementary	15	2	17	22
Elementary graduate	9	13	22	29
High school	4	0	4	5
High school graduate	11	9	20	26
College	2	4	6	8
College graduate	1	3	4	5
Vocational	2	1	3	4
	44	32	76	100%

Table 1 shows that 27% or 12 of 44 respondents of Tigaon were 40-49 years old, while 28% or 9 of 32 respondents of Caramoan were 30-39 and another 28% were 50-59. All in all, 74% of the total 76 respondents from both localities were middle-aged, i.e., within the age range of 30-59 years old. Table 1 reveals that 24 or 55% of 44 respondents of Tigaon were based in Consocep, while 14 or 44% of 32 women of Caramoan were based in Oring. Table 1 conveys that 32 or 73% of the 44 respondents from Tigaon were born in said municipality, while 29 or 91% of the 32 respondents from Caramoan were born in the same town. This is consistent with the data presented in the same table that 11 or 34% of women entrepreneurs in Caramoan lived in the municipality in the past 30-39 years. However, data reveal another story for Tigaon in that 17 or 39% of female entrepreneurs in Tigaon lived in the municipality for

a short period of 0-9 years. Upon further probing, 9 of these 17 females were actually born in Consocep, Casuna or Libod, all in Tigaon. Four were born in Libod but eventually transferred to Consocep for certain reasons. Two were born in Consocep and 3 born in Casuna. Both groups left their home town for some time and returned later. Nonetheless, the data still demonstrate that 26 or 59% of the respondents from Tigaon lived in the municipality for the last 20-59 years. Most female entrepreneurs in both areas were married, 77% in Tigaon and 94% in Caramoan. Majority declared themselves as spouse or partner of the household head, 91% in Tigaon and 88% in Lahuy, which logically implies that majority of households in both areas were still dominantly male-headed. In Tigaon, 15 or 34% of 44 respondents reached elementary while 11 or 25% were high school graduates. In Caramoan, 13 or 41% were elementary graduates and 9 or 28% were high school graduates.

Table 2. Economic Profile of Respondents

Ownership of House	Tigaon	Caramoan	F	%
Owner, owner-like possession of house & lot	18	13	31	41
Rent house/room, including lot	0	1	1	1
Own house, rent-free lot with owner's consent	9	21	30	39
Own house, rent-free lot no owner's consent	2	1	3	4
Rent-free house & lot with owner's consent	3	6	9	12
Rent-free house & lot no owner's	0	2	2	3

consent				
Toilet Facility				
Own toilet	32	11	43	57
Shared	0	15	15	20
Pit/ latrine	0	8	8	10
No toilet/ open field	0	8	8	10
Consocep Resort	0	2	2	3
Source of Drinking Water				
Own use	5	0	5	6
Shared	23	8	31	41
Deep well/ artesian well	13	21	34	45
Streams	0	3	3	4
Resort	2	0	2	3
Neighbor	1	0	1	1
Source of Electricity				
Own connection	22	27	49	65
Shared connection	9	4	13	17
Generator	0	1	1	1
None	13	0	13	17
	44	32	76	100

In terms of ownership of house, most women entrepreneurs had owner or owner-like possession of the house and lot (31 or 41%). Nonetheless, many owned the house, lot was rent-free with consent of owner (30 or 39%). Majority owned a toilet (43 or 57%), drinking water was sourced from deep well or artesian well (34 or 45%), and most of them owned an electricity connection (49 or 65%).

Profile of Women's Enterprises

This segment tackles the entrepreneurial engagement of women and profile of their enterprises.

Fig.1. Type of women's enterprises

Figure 1 lists multiple responses as there were female entrepreneurs who had more than 1 type of business which is likewise discussed herewith. The 44 respondents from Tigaon had a total of 56 types of livelihood while the 32 respondents from Caramoan had 60. Of the types of enterprise in Tigaon, there were 27% on abaca weaving, 25% on variety store, and 21% on sale of agricultural products. Among the types of business in Lahuy, 18% were on vending of fish/sea products and 17% on boat rent. The engagement of women entrepreneurs in both towns was principally focused on the production and trading of agricultural products (10 or 26%). In Tigaon, 38 or 86% of the 44 respondents had 1 type of business particularly abaca weaving, planting agricultural products, or variety store; while only 6 had more than 1 type of livelihood like variety store and eatery, or weaving abaca and selling cassava, or selling agricultural products and making broom.

In contrast, 21 or 65% of the 32 respondents in Caramoan maintained more than 1 type of enterprise. For instance, 10 respondents who owned motorized

boats used the asset for several business purposes, such as fishing, transfer of people to and from the mainland, delivery of their agricultural products, fishing and boat rental. Three of this 10 mentioned that in summer, they used their boat as mobile store of fresh coconut juice and iced mixed fruits for tourists who were island hopping. Moreover, 1 was also into rental of videoke machine and piggery. Three respondents offered floating cottage for rent and at the same time sold lobster, fish and food stuff. Two were engaged in buying fish and crabs from Oring then sold to tourists at the sandbar Manlawi Beach, or cooked their produce for excursionists.

Fig.2. Start-up cost of women's enterprises

In Tigaon, 30% of 44 entrepreneurs started operations with a minimal capital of P1000 and below. These were mainly those engaged in abaca weaving or selling of cooked agricultural products like banana and sweet potato. In Caramoan, 34% of 32 respondents started with P2001-3000, and 28% with P10000.

Fig.3. Origin of tourist-customers of women's enterprises

Figure 3 reflects multiple answers as there were respondents who encountered tourists originating from all geographical clusters – Bicol, other regions, and abroad. In Tigaon, there were 16 or 37% of 44 entrepreneurs while in Caramoan, there were 24 or 75% of 32 women. In Tigaon, 41 of the total 76 responses reflected that tourist-customers came from Region 5, while in Caramoan, 30 of the total 73. Although there were more respondents from Tigaon, more entrepreneurs from Caramoan came across tourists from other regions and abroad. There were 22 enterprises in Lahuy as against 18 in Tigaon which served tourists from other regions, and 21 as against 17 which served foreigners.

Generation of Income and Employment

The respondents were asked to estimate earnings from the enterprise per week. To facilitate the estimation for abaca weaving, the researcher asked the selling price per unit i.e. bundle, the number of units normally produced per day, the number of days of business operation per week. For producing agricultural products, the income per cropping season was estimated by respondent then the amount per

week was determined by the researcher based on the number of weeks per cropping season. For selling of products, the respondent estimated the daily income and multiplied by 7 days. If the livelihood did not operate daily, the multiplier was adjusted accordingly.

Fig.4. Weekly income of women's enterprises

Fig.5. Type of workers required by women's enterprises

Fig.6. Number of workers hired by women's enterprises

Figure 4 displays that in Tigao, 45% earned P1000 and below while in Caramoan, 41% gained P2001-3000 and 34% secured P1001-2000. The respondents were asked what workers were required in their enterprise. Figure 5 indicates that of the 44 women in Tigao, 13 or 30% needed weaver/bundler while 10 or 23% needed store attendant. Among the 32 entrepreneurs in Caramoan, 16 or 50% needed store attendants while 10 or 31% needed boater. Some women hired a worker, some remarked that they cannot afford so they got their husband or other family members to assist them. There were 2 women entrepreneurs in Lahuy who hired one store attendant and one boater each. One has a variety store in Daraga who engaged in conjugal business. The couple had a motorized boat and the husband served as boater. The other one had a store in Oring where she hired a store attendant. Riding in their boat which was operated by the husband, they went to the sandbar during peak seasons to sell mixed iced fruits and food to tourists. Figure 6 reveals the

number of workers hired who, as declared by respondents, were not on regular employment i.e. weaver/bundler worked 4 hours a day or 3 times a week, boater was hired only when there was request for boat rent, cottage attendant only during peak seasons, store attendant only when the entrepreneur was going elsewhere.

In Caramoan, the respondents with 2 workers managed a boat and a store but the other worker was the husband who was obviously unpaid. The entrepreneurs called the boater if there was a client who wanted to rent a boat, or called the store attendant during summer as tourists arrived. The only enterprise with 5 workers was a homotel accommodation. The female owner hired her nieces and nephews to clean and wash but again only when occupants were expected. Twelve of the 32 entrepreneurs operated their business with the help of their husband who served as boater, store attendant or cottage attendant. There were 7 who hired workers other than their husband who served as boater and cottage attendant. In Tigao, among the 17 entrepreneurs with only 1 worker, 3 had the husband as assistant, and therefore unpaid. Two of these entrepreneurs are engaged in fishing and selling their catch. The husband caught the fish and the wife took her turn as vendor.

Sociocultural Authenticity in Host Communities

Table 3. Promotion of Local Resources, Products, Skills

Response	Tigao n	Caramoan	F	%
Yes	42	29	71	93
No	0	0	0	0
Do not know	2	3	5	7
	44	32	76	100

Female respondents were asked about their view if the enterprise promoted local resources, products and

skills. Forty-two or 95% of respondents from Tigaon and 29 or 91% from Caramoan believed that their enterprise promoted local resources, products and skills.

Table 4. How Enterprise Promoted Local Resources, Products, Skills

Response (multiple)	Tigaon n	Caramoan	F
Our place is known	5	16	21
Unique/local products/resources are known	17	2	19
Agricultural products are known	8	3	11
Promote tourism in our place	3	7	10
Tourists say we are kind & sociable	3	4	7
Our coastal products (variety of fishes) are known	2	4	6
Visitors know our way of life	0	4	4
We are praised	4	0	4
Our products reach other places	3	0	3
Share my knowledge on planting crops	2	0	2
Encourage others to engage in weaving	1	0	1
Our work of abaca weaving is known	1	0	1
Cannot explain	0	2	2
Do not know	9	3	11

Of the 44 respondents in Tigaon, 17 or 39% shared the sentiment that because of their business, the unique local products of their town became known.

They had enumerated several agricultural and coastal products which will be tackled in the next section. The women of Consocep declared that their place got known as source of abaca. Of the 9 female entrepreneurs who answered “do not know,” 7 said their business promoted local resources, products & skills but did not know how. Of the 32 respondents in Caramoan, 16 or 50% shared the view that their livelihood made their place known and 7 or 22% believed that their business promoted tourism.

Support to Agricultural and Coastal Endowments

Table 5. Utilization of Agricultural, Coastal Resources in Enterprise

Response	Tigaon	Caramoan n	F	%
Yes	38	30	68	89
No	1	0	1	1
Do not know/not sure	5	2	7	10
	44	32	76	100

Of the 44 females from Tigaon, 38 or 86%, and of the 32 from Caramoan, 30 or 94%, believed that their livelihood supported agricultural and coastal endowments of the area. In Tigaon, at the top of the list were abaca products, then root crops, squash, banana, peanut, sweet potato, *upo*, *camoteng cahoy*, *sayote*, *bungkukan*; then broom and ornamental plants like dahlia and rose. In Caramoan, at the top of the list were coastal products like crab, lobster, squid, *malasugi*, abalone, seaweed, *buraw*, *salay salay*, *espada*, *langkoy*, *bantayaw*, *balaw*; followed by agricultural products such as coconut, vegetables, banana, squash.

Economic Empowerment of Women

Table 6. Issues & Concerns of Women Entrepreneurs

Response (multiple)	Tigaon	Caramoan	F
Lack of capital	21	16	37
Delinquent debtors	6	13	19

Bad weather	7	0	7
No government support	1	5	6
Tight household budget	6	0	6
Stiff competition	0	6	6
Household chores, home concerns	1	3	4
Sickness in the family	4	0	4
Low entrepreneurial know how	3	0	3
Maintenance cost	2	1	3
Low sales	0	3	3
Indebtedness	0	3	3
Lack of raw materials (abaca)	2	0	2
Lack of equipment	2	0	2
Worker's salaries	2	0	2
Poor electricity	0	2	2
Too much work	1	0	1
High interest on loan	0	1	1
None	2	0	2

Economic empowerment was analyzed by looking into the issues and concerns faced by the entrepreneurs. The respondents from both communities replied that lack of capital was top in their list, followed by delinquent debtors. The common issues faced by women entrepreneurs were absence of government support and low entrepreneurial know-how, and those that relate to reproductive or parenting work such as household chores, home concerns, tight household budget, sickness in the family and too much work. These issues surfaced mostly from the interviews with women from Tigaon.

V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

In Tigaon's tourism website, the village of Casuna was declared as tourist spot. But when the researchers got to the area, it was underdeveloped. There were no cottages, no restaurants or canteens, no comfort rooms, no parking areas. But the road from the national highway to the Casuna beaches was ready for motorists. In the website that promotes Lahuy Island as a tourism spot, the island appeared to be well developed and prepared for tourists. However, upon arrival at the 3 villages that covered the island, the researcher discovered that the situation was far from how the area was packaged. Upon closer look, however, the website mentioned that what was presented was just a plan.

An ocular observation of the 3 villages that covered the Lahuy Island revealed that the economic benefits of tourism in Caramoan did not trickle down. The small entrepreneurs were engaged in micro businesses, e.g. selling iced mixed fruits, fresh coconut juice or coconut fruit, which can close down anytime. In Gata for instance, there were no trace of the hustle and bustle of an active economy. There was only one noticeable business, a variety store. The rest of the businesses, at least along the coastline, were small and almost unnoticeable. The situation was the same in Oring and Daraga. According to the women respondents in the villages, small entrepreneurs like them had to go to the tourist spots like the sandbank at Manlawi Beach, so that they can find customers for their products and services.

Based on data gathered and ocular observation, the author infers that most women's enterprises in Tigaon were highly dependent on tourism. In Consocep, when there were no tourists, the enterprises were on hold or partially operational and variety stores were closed. The women who were engaged in cooking food for tourists were practically out of business. During the fieldwork in Casuna and Huyonhuyon, there was

no trace of tourism activity. A few female entrepreneurs went on with their variety store and eatery. Some were out of business at the time of data gathering but asserted that they sell raw or cooked products when tourists were around. The local officials remarked that tourism in the 2 barangays could not take off due to the competition from Nato, an adjacent village belonging to another municipality, with shores that connect with that of the 2.

Although the same may be said about Caramoan, the women possessed some level of business resilience since they had set up other enterprises to get by while tourists were not around. The businesswomen in Lahuy were more enterprising than their counterparts Tigaon. The 44 respondents in Tigaon had a total of 56 types of enterprise while the 32 respondents in Caramoan had 60. Most entrepreneurs in Caramoan maintained more than 1 type of business. Respondents who owned motorized boats used the asset for several business purposes.

During the fieldwork, the researcher found it easier to find entrepreneurs in Consocep than in Casuna and Huyonhuyon. In Caramoan, it was easy to come across women entrepreneurs especially when the research team went to the sandbank. The entrepreneurs present at the site were based in the 3 barangays but more were from Oring, which may be because it was the nearest village. Based on ocular survey by the researcher, Consocep, Oring and Daraga were the villages where tourism was relatively more developed. This may reveal that the level of tourism development provided greater entrepreneurial opportunities for women.

Consocep was more accessible especially if visitors had private vehicles. Although public transport was not readily available, there were motorcycles or jeepneys that can be rented. The road from the nearest commercial center was well-constructed so as the road

from the main highway to the tourist site. The area had many natural attractions which tourists could easily reach on foot. Cemented steps were in place all the way from the entrance up to the site of the Tumagithi Falls located at the foot of Mount Isarog. Walking past the entrance to the falls, tourists could walk up farther to the peak of the mountain by walking or riding a motorcycle. Along the way, there were structures for tourists like a shaded cottage and benches, with cool breeze and trees around since the spot was along the mountain slopes. After some more steps, there was a coffee shop and restaurant. There was also a local government personnel who was collecting entrance fees and was ready to assist visitors. In contrast, Casuna and Huyonhuyon appeared to be substantially less developed. There were no structures in Casuna. In Huyonhuyon, the only tourism structure was four small cottages owned by a private resort.

Oring and Daraga were the closest to the Manlawi sandbar, one of the most beautiful attractions of the Lahuy Group of Islands and the whole province as well. As it is, tourists made sure that it was part of their itinerary. one of their destinations for their island hopping activities.

Most entrepreneurs in Caramoan lived there for 30-39 years, while most of those in Tigaon lived there 20-59 years. It may be assumed that the engagement of women in tourism-related enterprise was a manifestation of their sense of ownership of their community, themselves being born and growing up there. They had a sense of pride for their place, especially in receiving outsiders whom they regarded as visitors. They were like household heads welcoming visitors to their home. This inference was supported by data under the section "Sociocultural Authenticity in Host Communities." Some respondents articulated that their enterprise helped promote their way of life, place, resources and products. They were honored that

tourists found them hospitable and kind. They were able to show visitors the beauty of their place.

The start-up cost reflected the relative size and scope of an enterprise. In Tigaon, 30% of 44 entrepreneurs started operations with a minimal capital of P1000 and below. These were mainly those engaged in abaca weaving or selling of cooked agricultural products like banana and sweet potato. In Caramoan, 34% of 32 respondents started with P2001-3000, and 28% with P10000. Data revealed that the livelihood activities of women were very small. Consequently, the enterprises had insignificant, in fact almost negligible, generation of employment. Moreover, there were 11 enterprises in Tigaon and 12 in Lahuy which did not require any additional worker because the owner operated the business on her own.

Although there were more respondents from Tigaon, more entrepreneurs from Caramoan came across tourists from other regions and abroad. There were 22 enterprises in Lahuy as against 18 in Tigaon which served tourists from other regions, and 21 as against 17 which served tourists from abroad. This may connect with the observation that the livelihoods in Caramoan were relatively better off because the level of tourism development in the area have provided a positive boost.

Nonetheless, based on data, this study asserts that the women's livelihoods were clearly isolated from the mainstream of the tourism industry. The women's businesses were struggling amidst the strong and stable competition from big capitalists who own the resorts, hotels and food businesses.

Economic empowerment was analyzed by looking into the issues and concerns faced by the entrepreneurs. The respondents from both communities replied that lack of capital was top in their list. This may seem to be a gender neutral problem in the sense that both

female and male entrepreneurs are confronted by it but the difficulty may be relatively worse for women. This is affirmed by a study which concluded that financial constraint is more pronounced among female-owned enterprises because of gender-based stereotypes [6] i.e. women should take care of the home while men should take care of earning income for family needs. This is further supported by another study which claimed that there is a pay premium for primary breadwinners yet a pay penalty for secondary breadwinner employees only for women, suggesting an asymmetric relationship among breadwinner role, gender and pay [7]. Women entrepreneurs do not readily get financial assistance maybe because they are regarded as secondary income-earners.

The common issues faced by women entrepreneurs were those that relate to their reproductive or parenting work such as household chores, home concerns, low household budget, sickness in the family and too much work. These issues surfaced mostly from the interviews with women from Tigaon. This is explained by a study which concluded that although women have entered into previously male-dominated domains such as the labor force, men have not embraced female-typed activities such as child care and housework [8]. Parenthood is a realm in which men and women continue to experience unequal responsibilities [9] – [12].

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

The local government units, both municipal and barangay, have to intervene more aggressively to ensure that small entrepreneurs and locales will benefit from the booming tourism industry. Owners and operators of small enterprises, particularly women, may organize themselves to enhance their social capital. As part of an organization, they can advance the interests of small women entrepreneurs, they can lobby for government policies and programs

that will respond to their livelihood issues, and they can share good practices and business techniques, among others. The organization may set up advocacy and awareness-raising programs on gender equality so that collectively, the female entrepreneurs may influence policies and programs of local governments to be more gender-sensitive and gender-responsive.

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