

## No turning back: the inclusion of young people and women in ADEL Morazán.

Responding to the main changes achieved through to the cooperation with Trias, Alejandro Benítez returns to both the internal and the external aspects. At the internal level, he describes the elements of training, management and strategy that underpin the changes: *"Our gender policy has been deepened, there have been important opportunities for knowledge transfer and training for young ADEL technical staff. We have improved the reporting system through the Monitoring System. Today, for example, the Board tells us that they want to see comparative data from last year, or how many young people are of a certain age, etc. The information system is generating data that allows the Board to guide better decisions."*

In the business service providing for the members and direct target group of the program, complementary actions have been promoted: *"As ADEL we have strengthened our relationship with AMC (microfinance institute that forms part of the ADEL Group), to such an extent that we are working on two specific projects of solidarity groups for women and young entrepreneurs. Our goal is to facilitate access to finance mechanisms for these groups, who are traditionally excluded by the credit providers."*

*We have also worked with TRIAS allies such as YOUCA, MARKANT, CERA-BRS, the latter to improve membership services and organizational strengthening of ADEL."*

***"Before, we didn't have products for women and young people. We didn't get into the financing part, ... now there we are with the financial inclusion: the solidarity groups in AMC."***

YOUCA is a complementary support program to accelerate entrepreneurial initiatives of young people starting from the leadership qualities they already have. This has been the starting point for the technical team to be trained and encouraged to work with this population as a collective construction and joint learning.

MARKANT articulated the support to selected business initiatives lead by women, in which they received four months of mentoring by recognized national businesswomen and business training, process that finished with the election of the female entrepreneur of El Salvador (Women in Development Award).

The CERA-BRS alliance has focused on strengthening the governance of ADEL, with the aim of aligning and completing policies, regulations, documents, and even establishing the route to develop and implement an internal succession plan for the group, and within AMC.

### **Inclusion: the most significant change in ADEL Morazán.**

Inclusion was adopted in the creation of a financial service for young people and targeting the technical assistance criteria more towards the support of the cooperative associations and youth agricultural production. ADEL now has a pathway for inclusion and a commitment from the Board of Directors, whose members have participated in awareness-raising actions and adopted formal commitments.



Regarding the structure of ADEL Morazán, the criteria in favor of the inclusion of young people are visibly manifested in the configuration of the Board of Directors and are recognized as an element of social and organizational sustainability: *"There is a significant change in the young personnel staff, as well as in the leadership, like in case of Mérida, Marvin, Jenny, Digna, Magdalena (part of the Technical staff) it is notorious;*

*There are also significant changes in the composition of ADEL, four young people have been incorporated into the membership (Marvin, Everardo, Wilson and Magdalena) and one young person has already been included in the board of directors (Will) ... in this logic we are preparing conditions for the medium and long term, in terms of institutional life. It is interesting, let's say that we are generating conditions for how to meet another twenty-five years".*

Some processes have had an intentional implementation through the cascade effect, as for example in PADECOMS, member organization of ADEL MORAZAN. PADECOMS has implemented similar processes for their future governance and succession plan.



Alejandro Benítez, General Manager ADEL Morazán

With the above, ADEL is betting on the inclusion of women and young people, reinforcing their organizational sustainability. Alejandro Benítez describes it as a process in which ADEL is really convinced, and there is no point of return".

The TRIAS-ADEL relationship, initiated with the 2014-2016 programme, influenced the mainstreaming of the gender approach at the institutional level. With a second program starting in 2017, the inclusion of gender is deepened and the participation of both women and young people is broadened.

This history has the peculiarity that ADEL has comprehensively addressed the inclusion and participation of women and young people from the normative, the methodology, the sensitization of the personnel and the adaptation of the structures and services. Trias has contributed from advisory to the facilitation of the articulating process to nourish between local actors and partners, linked to strategic partners such as YOUCA, MARKANT and BRS CERA. In addition, Trias has advised in the collective construction through exchanges that resulted in the youth pathway, methodologies, clarity of approaches and the opportune orientation in the institutional processes.