

Tools and training materials to help mainstream gender in Humidtropics innovation platforms: Access and control of assets module – Exercises

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Introduction to this series

Through this series of tools and training materials to help mainstream gender in Humidtropics activities, we will be learning about four important concepts regarding gender relations and equality that contribute to our community development endeavours. Before we name and discuss the gender related concepts in detail, we should briefly discuss why they are considered important. We believe these genders related concepts are important because of the positive impact they will have on your community. The way in which these concepts are important to your community has to do with your community's economic, social and political development.

When your community increases its economic, social and political output, your whole community gains more resources per year. To that end, when your community can produce a lot more resources, every person in your community will benefit. More resources will improve your community's overall health, education level, production level etc.

These are the four concepts we will be learning about and how they will improve the overall welfare of every member of your community:

- 1. Control of Assets (CoA)**
- 2. Power and Decision-Making (PDM)**
- 3. Needs, Priorities and Perceptions (NPP)**
- 4. Barriers to Participation (BtP)**

It is important that we do more than simply claim that these concepts will improve your community. Therefore, throughout the learning process, you will learn exactly how implementing changes related to the four gender concepts will improve the welfare of every member of your community and why they work so well.

Changing traditions and social standards can be challenging, but we will explore how traditions sometimes are not always the most productive and that identifying the inefficient traditions and changing them can result in more happiness for all.

Overall, we are going to learn about how increasing women's decision-making and control over assets can create more money for the whole community. We will also learn about how our current perceptions can create unnecessary, but very real barriers for women. These things result in less economic, social and political output, as well as money for the whole community. In essence, unlike men, women are commonly underutilized as an economic asset in their communities. It is our goal to impart the knowledge of four major concepts to you so that your community can take necessary steps that will allow the women to not only create much more money for the entire community but also give them their much-deserved voice in their communities. This, in, turn will benefit all of your children, men and women.

Introduction

The practical use of gender analysis frameworks must be based on the clear understanding of their central concepts. The terms below pertain to the concept: Control of Assets.

The following concepts and terms are to help you in your work but bear in mind that in reality all of the concepts and terms do not fit into neat categories.

Use these concepts as a way to start thinking about the work.

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When considering how resources are allocated between women and men (the 'gendered' allocation of resources), it is important to look at the difference between *access* to resources and *control* over them.

- **Access** represents the *right and/or opportunity to use* a resource or benefit.
- **Control** represents the *right and/or power to make decisions* about the use of a resource or benefit (asset), and who has access to it.

Other important terminology and Control of Assets concepts:

- **Asset:**¹ a useful or valuable thing, person or quality. Property owned by a person or company, regarded as having a value and available to meet debts, commitments, or legacies.
- **Gender Analysis:** the exploration and highlights of relationships between women and men in society, and the inequalities in these relationships. In order to explore these relationship patterns, various questions must be posed regarding the aspect of gender relations being explored.

¹ Source: Oxford Dictionaries

Access and Control of Assets (CoA):

What it is, how to identify CoA, and how to apply Gender Analysis to CoA

1. What is the distinction between access and control of assets?

Identify who has access to what? Who controls what? These are questions about gender access to control resources and benefits.

In general, the distinction between access and control is significant: **access** represents *the right to use a resource or benefit*, whilst **control** represents *the right to make decisions about the use of a resource or benefit*.

Thus a woman may have the right to use family labour to assist with weeding but her husband decides who will help her and when the labour is available.

Men and women do not have the same access or control over productive resources or benefits that accrue from them. This gender-based inequality can have implications for the design and implementation of development interventions.

2. How does gender analysis factor into control of assets? What does this mean for Innovative Platform (IP) planners?

In conducting gender analysis planners, therefore, need to obtain information about the gender-based patterns in regards to who has access to and control over resources and benefits in the given community. Considering assets as resources and benefits will help in identifying these gender-based patterns.

3. What questions should we ask when identifying gender-based patterns within control of assets?

- What assets (resources/benefits) do men and women have to work with?
- Who uses/owns/controls each of these assets (resources/benefits)?
- Who is excluded from use/ownership/control?
- Who has access to and control of knowledge/services?

4. What questions should we ask when conducting a gender analysis of a household/community's access and control?

- Who owns property and homes?
- Who has the ability to take on debt or gain a line of credit?
- Who controls household income?
- Do men and women have equal opportunities in education?
- Who has access to education and/or training do men and women have?
- Who is literate?
- What decisions do men and women make in the household and in the community?
- Who has control of labour?
- Who has control of livestock used for farm work?
- Who makes decisions about what crops to sow and where?
- Who has a mobile phone?

5. What impact questions about IP projects and/or plans on women's access and control might we ask?

When developing or revising an IP project and/or plan we should consider how women's access and control would be influenced. We might ask:

- How will each of the IP project components affect women's access to and control of the assets engaged in and derived from things like, 1) Production of goods and services?, 2) Reproduction and maintenance of human resources?, 3) Socio-political functions?
- What forces have been set into motion to induce further exploration of constraints and possible movements?
- How can the project's design be adjusted to increase women's access to and control of resources and benefits?

Access and Control of Assets (CoA):

Why is gender equality within CoA important and what do organizations have to say

6. Why is gender equality within control of assets important?

Projects lessen their chances of funding when they do not seek to improve the status of women as they pertain to CoA. In other words, donor organizations and most non-governmental organizations are unlikely to provide funding to projects that do not seek to improve the gender equity or where they may be a risk of harming women's interests.

- **What does FAO have to say about CoA?**

'Women's and men's participation in value chains is shaped by their access to and control over factors of production (e.g. land, labor and capital, technology, market information). Where women have less access to and control over such assets, it is harder for them to move from subsistence agriculture to higher value chains' (FAO, 2010 p.28).

- **What does the World Bank have to say about CoA?**

- *Progress must continue:*

'Things have changed for the better, but not for all women and not in all domains of gender equality. Progress has been slow and limited for women in very poor countries...women remain severely disadvantaged in their control over resources and assets in the household.'

- *Women continue to have less control over resources:*

Many women have no say over household finances, even their own earnings. The Demographic and Health Surveys show that women in some developing countries, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia, are not involved in household decisions about spending their personal earned income.

- *The disparity between men and women over who have control of assets is too large:*

As many as 34 percent of married women in Malawi and 28 percent of women in the Democratic Republic of Congo are not involved in decisions about spending their earnings. And 18 percent of married women in India and 14 percent in Nepal are largely silent on how their earned money is spent. Husbands have more control over their wives' earnings at lower incomes.

- **What does the BMGF have to say about CoA?**

- *Households with women decision makers are more profitable and women invest in the health of children:*

'When women farmers are meaningfully included in agricultural development opportunities, not only do farms become more productive but adoption of new technologies increases and overall family health improves.'

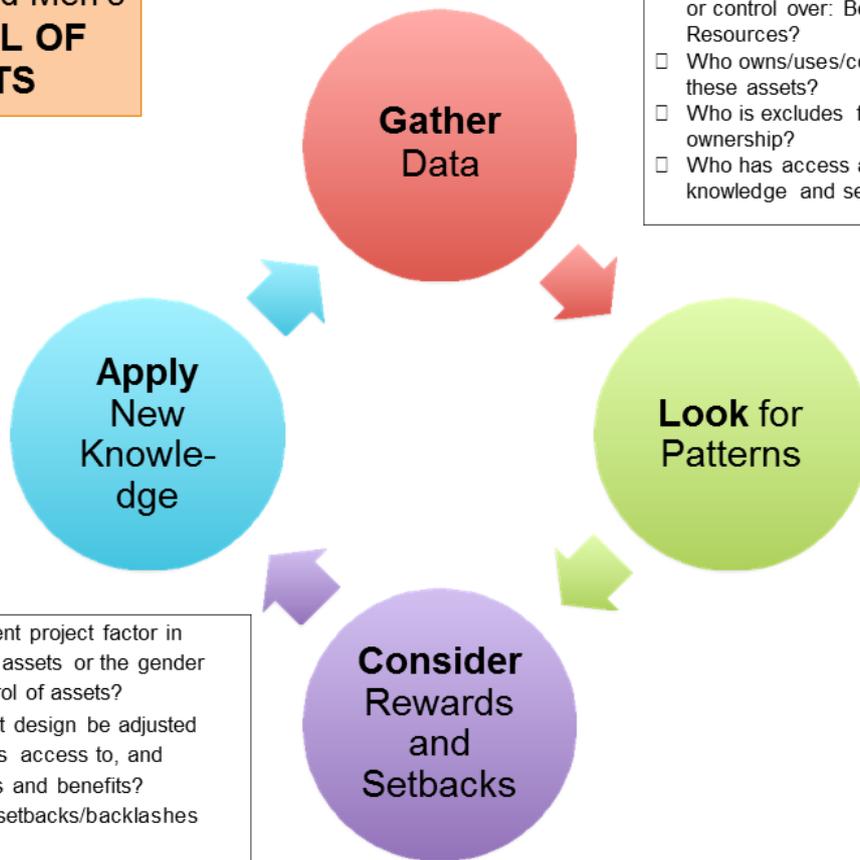
- *Economic gains are positive when women have more control over assets:*

'Evidence shows that if women farmers across the developing world had the same access as men do to resources such as land, improved seed varieties, new technologies, and better farming practices, yields could increase by as much as 30 percent per household and countries could see an increase of 2.5 to 4 percent in agricultural output' (BMGF 3).

- *Women make better choices with assets when they have control:*

'Women have also been shown to be more likely than men to reinvest income in the health of children and other family members and in a more varied and nutritious family diet' (BMGF 3).

Analyzing Gender Relations in Women's and Men's **CONTROL OF ASSETS**



- Who (Women or Men) has access to, or control over: Benefits or Resources?
- Who owns/uses/controls each of these assets?
- Who is excluded from use or ownership?
- Who has access and control of knowledge and services?

- How does the current project factor in women's control of assets or the gender inequalities of control of assets?
- How can the project design be adjusted to increase women's access to, and control of resources and benefits?
- What are the risks/setbacks/backlashes to be anticipated?

Designing for Gender Equity in Access and Control of Assets:

An Overview of Why and How Gender Analysis is Important

Why is this Important?

Consider the Facts

WBO: CoA Inequality Persists



What Should We Do?

Look for CoA Gender Patterns

Questions We Might Ask:

What assets do women and men have to work with?

Who uses/owns/controls each of these assets?

Who is excluded from use/ownership/control?

Who has access to and control of knowledge/services?

Who owns property/homes?

Who controls household income/debt/credit?

Who controls agricultural decisions?

Who has a mobile phone?



Designing for Gender Equity in Access and Control of Assets:

An Overview of Why and How Gender Analysis is Important



What's Next?

Apply New Data Knowledge to Design for CoA Gender Equality



Consider Plan Revisions and Setbacks



How can the IP's project design be adjusted to increase women's access to, and control of resources and benefits?

How does the current project factor in women's control of assets or the gender inequalities of control of assets?



How will the project affect women's control of assets engaged in production of goods and services?



What project plans have been set into motion to anticipate risks/setbacks/backlashes?



Anticipate Rewards

When women are included in more asset control:

Farms are More Productive...



New Technology is Adopted



Family Health Improves

