

Tools and training materials to help mainstream gender in Humidtropics activities: Barriers to participation module – Background information

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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: Barriers to Participation (BTP).

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 of the work.

When considering how BTP is balanced between women and men (the 'gendered' distribution of leadership roles), it is important to view the key terminology for this module as ideas that aid in supporting our understanding of concepts.

- **Barrier:** a circumstance or obstacle that keeps people or things apart or prevents communication or progress.
- **Participation:** this is defined as women's equal participation with men at all levels of decision-making, policy development, planning and administration. It relates particularly to development projects where participation at all stages of the project cycle is essential.

Barriers to Participation (BTP): What it is, how to identify it and how to apply gender analysis to BTP

1. Barriers to Participation: what it is and how does it influence homes, societies etc.?

Barriers to participation are in general, and can be in a society, constraints on a person's ability to participate in economics or politics as a full member of the group. The legal, social, economic or political constraints that create barriers to participation are sometimes intentional and sometimes not intentional. The overall influence that barriers to participation have on communities is manifested in long-term low rates of economic growth and needless suffering or injustice for those whom the barriers prevent from participating.

2. How can the barriers to participations be removed?

- It will be necessary to hold meetings in places and at times that are appropriate for women.
- Use different mechanisms to encourage women to speak about their problems and needs.
- Informal discussions with women at their workplace and assisting them while performing their tasks are ways of encouraging women's participation.

3. What questions should we ask when identifying gender-based patterns within barriers to participation?

An example of a level-sensitive indicator would be:

- 60% of women in country X are literate, as compared to 82% of men and compared to 30% and 52% five years ago.
- How many women and men, people from different ethnic groups, members of different castes and different economic classes are participating among the stakeholders?
- What is the level of input of women and men at different levels (government, NGOs, local stakeholders) at different stages of the project?
- What is the level of participation of local stakeholders, women and men, with a voice in key activities? (E.g., number of men and women attending project workshops, number of men and women participating in training events, number of male and female farmers participating in crop assessment trials.)

4. How do we strengthen women's participation role in the household, farmer groups, local associations etc.?

Set specific targets for women participants in different activities and relevant decision-making bodies by percentage.

- **Example 1** (50% Crop Trainees): target for women's participation: 50% of trainees in crop marketing will be women.
- **Example 2** (30% Female Field Day Attendees): 30% attendees at field day will be women.
- **Example 3** (40% Female Membership in Marketing Groups): target for women's representation in marketing groups: women will account for at least 40% of membership and 30% of leadership positions, and will hold at least one office-bearing position.

5. **How do we prevent women from being barred from participation?**

Abstract to questions: these analyses will indicate where and how we target women in the project intervention, if and where the objectives and methods proposed for the project should be modified to improve the chances that the project will succeed in increasing women's participation and to minimize the likelihood that women will be disadvantaged as a result of it. Some questions that may need to be considered in the analysis are:

- **Participation**
 - Were women consulted and did they take part in setting the project's objectives?
 - Were women involved in the planning and design of the project?
 - If women are not involved in local decision-making, could they be involved through advocacy measures within the project, such as a community development component?
 - Is there scope for NGO involvement if such a component is feasible?
 - Can women's NGOs be contracted to mobilize women to participate in the project?
 - If mobility problems hamper women's participation, could the project be organized to overcome these problems?
 - Does the project require motivational components to encourage women to participate?

6. **What will removal of barriers to participation for women look like?**

Gender impacts at individual level for women

- **Economic**

Women's increased participation in key activities and decisions in household businesses/male-owned businesses.
- **Political**

Increased participation in other levels of organizations and making decisions affecting their lives.

**7. After IP (Innovative Platforms) project revisions and implementations, we might ask:
abstract for indicators checklist**

The following basket of gender checklists and indicators are prepared to guide the process of integration of gender in project/program design, analysis, monitoring and evaluation.

○ **Project/program level checklist**

- Are women and men, including youth and other marginalized groups, involved in the consultative process and all fieldwork interventions?
- Are priorities set based on the identification of men's and women's and other marginalized groups' needs for improved and gender responsive technologies?
- Are women involved in participatory variety selections, on-farm trials, evaluation, validation and adoption of new technologies?
- What is the participation level of women in production, marketing or processing and evaluating? (Also: include the involvement of adult youth and other marginalized farmer groups in the question and monitor if it has increased [or decreased] as a result of the program.)
- Are women represented equally as beneficiaries in proportion to their representation in the community?
- *Factors responsible for gender disparities in adoption, impact of agricultural technologies or interventions need to be identified and used in the design of the program!*

○ **Gender-responsive monitoring and evaluation system in place**

- Capture gender disaggregated/analytical data to explain change and show impact in gender relations.
- Performance Measurement Indicators and adequate accountability mechanisms need to be developed to monitor and evaluate gender activities, outputs and outcomes of the project research.
- Adequate staff, budget and time allocation given to gender mainstreaming and research, including operational budget.

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

World Bank: Legal Barriers to Economic Equality for Women Still Exist

(Oct. 17, 2013) A report issued by the World Bank and the International Finance Corporation (IFC) on September 24, 2013, found that in most of the countries of the world there are still legal barriers that block women's economic success.

The report, which is based on a survey of 143 economies, states that in about 90% of them there was at least one legal disparity in the treatment of women. Of those economies studied, Saudi Arabia had the most legal barriers, with over 25 in place. These differences varied from country to country, but included barriers to travel, conclusion of contracts, financial management, and employment. According to Jim Yong Kim, the President of the World Bank Group, equal opportunity is "smart economic policy" and women can contribute to a "more cohesive society and a more resilient economy." (Sung Un Kim, *supra*.)

(Johnson, Constance. World Bank. Web. 2013. <http://www.loc.gov/law/foreign-news/article/world-bank-legal-barriers-to-economic-equality-for-women-still-exist/>)