

# CGIAR Systemwide Program on Participatory Research and Gender Analysis for Technology Development and Institutional Innovation

## 1: Assessing Poverty from a Gender Perspective: Implications for Agricultural R&D

### Introduction

Increasingly, there is growing demand on agricultural research and development to address the needs of those constituents who are highly vulnerable to the effects of poverty, land degradation, climate change and HIV/AIDS, particularly in the Sub Saharan African Region. The vulnerability of marginalized groups such as the poor and women also demands that research and development systems focus attention on the unequal social relations that may exist and subsequently, impact on, and many a times, compound the vulnerability of such groups, particularly women. However, much of the effectiveness of research and development systems to address the needs and demands of their constituency groups, particularly of small holders and women, is critically constrained by the following factors:

- Limitations in the dominant approaches to poverty analysis
- Deficiencies in data on gender and poverty
- Stereotypes which narrow the perspective through which poverty is conceptualized and addressed
- The organization and management of innovation systems

This paper will analyze the four constraining factors in the context of their implications to agricultural research and development. This will be followed by a discussion of the scenario for future direction.

### Limitations of dominant approaches to poverty analysis:

Despite the insights generated by feminist research on gender and poverty, the 3 dominant 'mainstream' approaches to poverty analysis remain 'gender blind' in a number of ways. These 3 approaches are characterized as follows:



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- a) the poverty line approach, which measures the economic means through which households and individuals meet their basic needs;
- b) the capabilities approach, whereby means other than earnings or transfer payments and the like such as endowments and entitlements are brought into the equation, along with the ends (functioning achievements); and
- c) participatory poverty assessments' which explore the causes and outcomes of poverty in more context specific ways.

### **Deficiencies in data on gender and poverty:**

leading on from this and recognizing that broader conceptualizations of poverty have not readily translated into the widespread development or application of tools which are sensitive to the gendered complexities of poverty, one of the biggest outstanding obstacles is the difficulty of incorporating qualitative and subjective criteria within macro level accounting. While gender indicators and poverty indicators are not one and the same, there are various statistical measures of gender inequality which pertain to poverty and, virtually without exception, these continue to rely on quantitative variables which do not go very far in enriching understanding of male-female inequalities.

Another set of problems pertaining to gender indicators in general is that the accuracy of data is in doubt. Most indicator systems are developed from national censuses, which, in themselves, are rarely a reliable source of information, prone, as they are, to sporadic collection, poor enumeration, and imprecise definition of key terms, not to mention gender bias.

### **The burden of stereotypes in advocacy and planning for gender-responsive poverty alleviation:**

Blindness to, or insufficient appreciation among women is pertinent to the situation whereby gendered poverty analysis has produce a range of rather monolithic stereotypes which do not hold for all women, nor all contexts. The most obvious, and increasingly widely critiqued, of these stereotypes relates first to the generic concept of the 'feminisation of poverty', and second, and more significantly, to its links with the progressive 'feminisation of household headship'. In different ways, these constructions have been shaped by the imperative of getting 'gender on the agenda' for development

resources. Yet, while largely successful in this regard, sensitivity to the diversity of gendered experiences of poverty has often been sacrificed in the process.

What is the feminisation of poverty??

Female headed household as the 'poorest of the poor?'

## **The Organization and management of innovation systems**

In the final analysis, an understanding of poverty and how it is addressed is related fundamentally to the way that innovation systems are organized and managed in organizations. A predominance of a supply driven innovation system is unlikely to conceptualise and address the gendered aspects of poverty. For instance, results of case studies carried out with CGIAR Centers highlight three interrelated problems that perpetuate the supply-driven, 'pipeline' system and hamper the mainstreaming of PR & GA approaches.

- Fragmented investment in and application of PR & GA approaches across the CG System<sup>1</sup> leads to repeated testing of proven approaches under different names and a slow learning curve in the use of PR&GA approaches so that collectively, IARCs do not evolve beyond a researcher-led type of participation.
- End-users, such as women, tend to be brought into the participatory research process at a relatively late stage, to evaluate technologies that have already been developed and are ready for dissemination. The likelihood of these technologies matching farmers' priorities is small.
- Methods' innovations resulting from farmers' feedback to projects are not being sustained beyond the life of the project, through their institutionalization in the research organizations implementing projects. Rather, PR&GA approaches remain isolated from, and often contradict, the dominant paradigm of innovation.

## **Conclusion: Future directions**

The conclusion will discuss three strategic areas for agricultural R&D to address poverty through a gender perspective. These are:

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<sup>1</sup> A total of US\$ 26 million that is devoted to PR&GA approaches is spread among 144 projects amongst 16 Centers which raises the question of whether the CGIAR is getting full value for its investment.

- Methodological capacity: Broader, multi dimensional concepts of poverty that go beyond household incomes need to be emphasized
- New directions in Policy: The need to recognize ‘secondary poverty’ within households by policy makers to ensure that income generating interventions will be enhanced
- Mainstreaming gender-sensitive R&D methods through organizational change: For the poor to benefit from public sector R&D and to access a wide range of agricultural and NRM technologies, a demand-driven, ‘interactive model’ of innovation using gender-sensitive participatory approaches is needed. The uptake in the use of gender –sensitive participatory research by IARCs and NARS has increased notably. However, broad and effective application is critically constrained<sup>2</sup> by the prevailing organizational structure in the supply-driven approach to innovation. The proposed solution is to mainstream gender-sensitive participatory approaches by affecting changes in organization procedures and policies to stimulate demand driven approaches to innovation. This will be achieved by developing innovative mechanisms for interaction with demand constituencies in the R&D system, capacity building for institutional change among existing projects that use GA and PR approaches, and scaling up such approaches as an input to institutional change.

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<sup>2</sup> This refers to the ‘quality’ or type of participation that is used. In general, participation can be categorized in the following ways: *contractual, consultative, collaborative, collegial, and farmer-led experimentation*. It is argued that an organizational structure predicated upon the ‘pipeline’ system of R&D limits participation in PR&G A approaches to ‘functional’ rather than ‘empowering’ types of participation by end users in technology development. This essential depiction of an organizational culture predicated upon a ‘pipeline’ approach to innovation does not preclude more collegial levels of farmer participation in technology development but generally, such experiences are confined to a project context and it is unlikely that the learning and change generated as a response to farmers’ feedback will extend to the research organization in the form of institutional change. Moreover, the incentive structures within a ‘pipeline’ predicated organization is unlikely to reward such behavior to sustain the scientists’ initiatives in the long term. See Biggs 1989; Chambers 1995; PRGA Program 2000 for discussion on ‘quality’ or types of participation.

## **2: Building Capacity for Gender Analysis and Gender Mainstreaming in the Eastern, Southern and Central African Region**

### **Summary**

ASARECA/ECAPAPA and the CGIAR System-wide Program on Participatory Research and Gender Analysis (PRGA Program) propose to strengthen, consolidate and mainstream gender analysis and participatory research in a high priority, high visibility program that recognizes and promotes gender equity and gender-sensitive participatory approaches as an important strategic process to enable R4D to become demand-driven<sup>3</sup>. The avenue for doing so will be through enhanced capacity development for gender-sensitive participatory approaches combined with capacity for organizational effectiveness that will sustain the use of such approaches beyond the project life through their institutionalization within the procedures, structures and cultures of the participating organizations.

### **1. Background/Rationale**

In the general context of Africa, there is increasing demand on agricultural research and development to address the needs of those constituents who are highly vulnerable to the effects of poverty, land degradation, climate change and HIV/AIDS. The vulnerability of marginalized groups such as the poor and women also demands that research and development systems focus their attention on the unequal social relations that may exist and subsequently, impact on, and many a times, compound the vulnerability of such groups, particularly women.

However, much of the effectiveness of Research and Development (R4D) systems to address the needs and demands of their constituency groups, particularly of small holders and women, is critically constrained by a limited capacity to conduct gender-sensitive research and the predominance of a 'supply-driven' agenda of

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<sup>3</sup> Mainstreaming is an umbrella concept that includes 5 separate but interrelated components: a) capacity development for PR&GA and organizational development; b) development of a cadre of change agents versed in PR&GA and organizational development skills; c) network of support and exchange between change agents; d) adaptation of organizational structures/practices to initiate demand driven agenda; e) 'mentoring' support from ASARECA and PRGA Program through organized on-site visits to participants

innovation that cannot effectively respond to the complex social and environmental realities of such vulnerable groups<sup>4</sup>.

Analysis of results from a recently concluded Gender Analysis Learning Workshop organized by ECAPAPA, and attended by participants from the eastern central and southern African region is consistent with the general conclusions stated above<sup>5</sup>. In particular, three areas were identified as critical to enabling a demand-driven process in agricultural research and development systems:

- Streamlining gender-sensitive participatory approaches for R4D to enable a common standard. At present, there is a wide range of understanding and practices of what constitutes gender analysis and participation and as a result, the standard of research results was highly variable, hence making research results questionable.
- Increased and sustained capacity development for applying gender-sensitive participatory research and development. The process of capacity development would begin with a series of training workshops for concepts and skills development, mentoring through on-site visits by PR and GA specialists, networking of researchers in a learning alliance.
- Strategic partnerships. This would include partnerships with institutions and organizations with experience in development and dissemination of materials related to gender-sensitive participatory research concepts and methods, particularly in the field of agricultural and NRM research and development.

## **2. Objectives**

The proposed program will be a pilot phase activity that will be conducted with 10 partner institutions/organizations in the eastern, central and southern African region. The scope and range of innovative organizational transformation will require an intensive period of learning within phase 1 and the lessons and experiences of phase 1 will inform strategies and lessons that can be applied in a broader scale during phase 2.

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<sup>4</sup> One of the key lessons that emerge from impact case studies conducted globally by the PRGA Program is that involving stakeholders (such as women) in the early stages of the research process leads to better targeting, greater sense of ownership, and higher impact (PRGA Annual Report. 2003).

<sup>5</sup> The Learning Workshop was jointly organized by ECAPAPA and the CGIAR system-wide Program on Participatory Research and Gender Analysis (PRGA Program) to share the results of the ECAPAPA initiative on gender analysis and to assess the lessons for incorporating gender issues in agricultural research and development.

## **The objectives for Phase 1 of the project are:**

1. To generate a viable set of 'best practices' for mainstreaming gender-sensitive participatory approaches (PR & GA) within core programs of selected organizations in the region using a Learning and Change approach;
2. To develop human resources through building capacity in participating organizations and their partners to replicate framework for mainstreaming PR & GA approaches for Phase 2;
3. To establish a network of innovators in the eastern, central and southern African region for mainstreaming gender-sensitive participatory approaches in Agricultural R4D.

## **3. Process**

Building on the experience of the PRGA Program, the focus of the training approach is on on-going training, discussion and mentoring combined with practical implementation in the field – a “learning by doing” approach with guidance and support.

The identified training team, the co-ordinating institution (ECAPAPA), and the PRGA Program have developed a curriculum that focuses on concepts, methods and skills for gender analysis and mainstreaming.

Researchers from different institutions in the region will come together for a preliminary training conducted by a resource team, then return to their “home” projects and attempt to implement some of these learnings and approaches in the field, through small research activities that build on the current work of their project. After a period of time, they return together as a group with the resource persons for a second training, and return again to the field and so on. This gives the researchers opportunities to ‘put into practice’ the learnings and to return with questions, challenges and success stories. These can be discussed with the group and lessons learned shared. Also, during the time that the researchers are at their ‘home projects’, mechanisms to promote dialogue and support between the researchers and the resource persons are put in place.

Considerable attention is also given to social/gender analysis which lead to transformative strategies to improve participation, decision-making power, and livelihoods of disadvantaged groups, including women and landless poor.

#### 4. Actors (Who will Participate?)

**Participants** will include 2 members from each participating institution in the Eastern, Southern and Central African Region in a total of 20 members.

**The Training Team** will consist of 4 members with specializations in concepts, methods, and skills for Gender Analysis; Participatory Research; Organizational Development; and Impact Assessment. .

**The Coordinating Institution** is ECAPAPA

#### 5. Course Content

*First workshop:*

- Defining Gender
- Gender and Agriculture
- Gender and Participatory Research
- Gender and Stakeholder Analysis
- Gender Analysis Methods
- Gender Analysis and Gender in the workplace
- Gender Analysis and Assessing Impact

*Second Workshop:*

- Gender Analysis, Gender in the workplace and Organization Development
- Organization development concepts and processes
- Basic Gender Sensitive OD intervention skills
- Organisational Design
- Managing People
- The role of the OD facilitator (Change Agent)
- Basic OD Techniques; Team Building, Appreciative Enquiry, Arbitration, Negotiation and Conflict Resolution
- Counselling

*Third Workshop:*

- *Introduction to Training of Trainers (ToT)*
- Concept of OD Training
- ToT in OD

## **6. Roles and Responsibilities**

### *1) Training Team/Mentors*

The team of four trainers are responsible for developing the training materials and implementing the training courses. The team will provide on-going technical (and moral) support to the participants. Each trainer will work with 3-4 participants and visit each participant in the field to give 'on-the-spot' technical training. The trainers/mentors will also support the participants in the analysis and writing of results.

### *2) Co-ordinating Organization (ECAPAPA)*

The Co-ordinating Organization will be responsible for compiling the regional literature, case studies and contact information of people working on gender analysis in agriculture and NRM in the region, and make this information available through a documentation centre and outreach to the participants. ECAPAPA will participate in the review and selection process, and co-ordinate interaction among the participants. This will be done in part through email, and other media including phone/fax. ECAPAPA will also be responsible for administering the small grants.

## **7. Expected Outcomes**

- Participants will have enhanced capacity to design and practically implement gender research and analysis in their projects;
- Documentation of institutional opportunities and constraints for mainstreaming gender analysis and gender issues in their organizations;
- Results from specific field projects will help inform the broader activities in which the researchers are involved;
- Research results/papers will be published and disseminated in various media;
- A peer-support network in the region of researchers integrating SA/GA will be established; and
- A selected group of trainers in gender analysis and mainstreaming methods established in the region
- Experience of the process will be documented for other researchers and organizations to use and consider in the development of training and capacity building programs
- A training manual will be developed.