

Exploring questions of justice in climate adaptation: A cautionary case study on participatory parity from a smallholder village of Zimbabwe

Patti Petesch, Eleanor Fisher, Jon Hellin & Mary Ng'endo Kanui



15 data collection activities conducted in Mikita*

For GENNOVATE in 2014

6 sex-specific FGDs
(3 instruments)



Low-income women & men



Middle-income women & men



Young women & men

8 Semi-structured interviews
(2 instruments)



Innovation pathways



Individual life story

1 Community Profile



*A pseudonym

Mikita's uneven terrain for ***participatory parity***

- Women express **empowerment***
- **Recognition** of women as successful leaders & farmers in village & with conservation agriculture (CA)
- **Redistribution** displayed in women's increased resource access / control; improved food & nutrition security; local poverty declines
- **Representation** of women in diverse local political, civic and productive networks — CA's "Groups of 10"
- Men express **disempowerment**
- Many signs of **stress in gender relations**
 - High levels of physical **violence against women**
 - **Sticky norms** still provide for men to control major decisions & large agri transactions, but women often negotiate/flout these rules
 - **Men withdrawing** from provider obligations & leadership/participation in productive & civic networks; less visible in CA unless can hire labor

Two takeaways for nurturing transformative adaption

1. Empowerment interventions vital but benefit from broadly inclusive & participatory community-based strategies
2. A contextualized social justice lens rooted in participatory parity—both in theory & methods—contributes a strategic R&D approach



These takeaways address:

- *Extensive evidence that targeting may exclude most vulnerable, be perceived as unjust, fuel resistance*
- *The diverse and fluid norms & institutional arrangements shaping the three “Rs” and their interactions in a context*
- *Lessons from gender-transformative & adaptive collaborative management approaches*