



Engaging men and women to ensure vibrant communities

A focus area within the CGIAR Research Program on Water, Land and Ecosystems



THE CHALLENGE

The use and reuse of water, land and ecosystem services for agriculture is central to a communities' ability to be vibrant, sustainable and to feed itself.

The access and control of these resources, and the knowledge and ability to act upon the knowledge about these resources, can determine the success of using them sustainably.

Within communities, different members play different roles, and the challenge is to enable all community members to participate and contribute to the development of resilient and vibrant communities.

Three elements contributing to this, which are often underestimated and misunderstood, are **the role of men and women** in guaranteeing this, the implications of **poverty** to safeguard this, and the degree to which **institutions** can hinder or enable this.

Therefore, understanding how we can support communities to manage, use and reuse the resources more sustainably and equitable will be vital in the future.

OBJECTIVES

To improve the analysis, the interventions and policy making environment on water, land and ecosystems to ensure vibrant and sustainable communities through:

- Improving access to resources and decision making for women
- Enhancing capacities to understand and target poverty issues
- Supporting institution capabilities to provide sustainable and equitable development

DID YOU KNOW

- Investments that provide women with equal access to land, water, seeds, training, and funding in agriculture could increase farm yields by 20-30%
- Environmental degradation increases women's time for labor-intensive household tasks, such as having to walk longer distances for the collection of fuel wood and water.
- Countries where women's share of seats in political bodies is greater than 30% are more inclusive and egalitarian and democratic.



THE SOLUTIONS

In order to develop the appropriate solutions, a closer engagement and a better understanding is required to address the range of issues around equity and poverty. Understanding the dynamics of gender inequity and poverty traps as related to land and water is vital in the changing agricultural landscapes. Yet equally important is the need to identify tools and approaches to understand and integrate poverty questions when developing solutions and policy options, identifying investable options for women, and in developing a better understanding of institutional constraints and opportunities for communities to tap into.

Research focuses on (a) understanding and improving the access, control, interests and demands women and men place on land, water and ecosystem, (b) increasing the access and understanding of decision making on natural resources, (c) understanding and developing approaches to ensure solutions are targeted to deal with poverty, create prosperity and allow for (re)investments in natural resources, and (d) restraints and opportunities as related to institutions.

Along with providing data and improved approaches to analysis equity and poverty, through engagement with partners, we will co-develop options and identify investable solutions for women and communities to ensure that they can enhance their agriculture while maintaining their natural resources. This will build upon and develop synergies between opportunities already developed, but requiring more tailoring to specific agro-ecologies, and identifying gaps for future alternative approaches and solutions.

The work is done with and through the different themes within WLE, such as rainfed systems, irrigations and decision making. It is also situated within West (Volta), East (Nile) and Southern (Limpopo/Zambezi) Africa, and Central Asia. Based on this research we will develop investment plans for improved management of large-scale water resources variability in selected Asian and African river basins.

CURRENT & POTENTIAL PARTNERS

Ministries of Agriculture, Women, and Water, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), International Land Coalition (ILC), various universities, local and international NGOs and women's organizations.

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