

Session 5: Project impacts on women

Facilitator: Hilary Feldstein

Creating learning cultures for gender mainstreaming: Strategic approaches for impact assessment

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This presentation addresses the need for the design and measurement of gender mainstreaming strategies in international assistance programs. The inclusion of gender mainstreaming frameworks, such as those developed by the Commonwealth Secretariat, is extremely helpful in understanding and measuring how development interventions impact women and men, girls and boys differentially. Gender mainstreaming addresses the need for strong leadership, transformational training, and political will at all levels of the development process. Strategies that are designed to create an inclusive culture of learning and development require holistic and systemic approaches to development.

Gender-based analysis can further serve as a critical tool for measuring empowerment differentials, assessing stakeholder assets and needs, and helping with the development of useful indicators for measuring project impacts on health (e.g. HIV/AIDS), poverty and recovery from disasters (e.g. the Southeast Asia tsunami disaster, food insecurity). From the perspective of complexity theory, HIV/AIDS for example, is recognized as more than a health problem. It is a complex interaction of human rights abuses with respect to equity and inequity, women's health and reproductive issues. Policies and programs which address the underlying gender determinants of social change can be targeted to key audiences and are more likely to be efficacious with respect to changing attitudes, values and ultimately behavior.

The design of gender strategy matrices, as developed by CARE Indonesia in Banda Aceh following the Asian tsunami, are able to integrate gender objectives into each of the key activity areas and expected outcomes such as relief and emergency, rehabilitation, reconstruction, recovery, livelihood development (e.g. aquaculture, animal husbandry), microenterprise/credit development, health, hygiene and education, reproductive health and violence against women. Monitoring and evaluation processes, which integrate gender indicators into policy and program plans, are thereby able to measure citizen involvement and participation, the impact (efficacy) of interventions, the extent to which women are empowered and have greater control over the means of production, profit sharing/distribution, and the ownership of land and property.

Assessing the impact of participatory research in rice breeding on poor rice-farming households with emphasis on women farmers: A case study in selected districts in eastern Uttar Pradesh, India

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The project "Participatory Research and Gender Analysis in Rice Breeding" was initiated by the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) in 1997, and ran until 2000 with funding support from

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IDRC. This project was conducted in eastern India in collaboration with six national agricultural institutions, including the Narendra Deva University of Agricultural Technology (NDUAT) under the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR). In 2001, IRRI—in collaboration with plant breeders and social scientist in NDUAT—began to refine the participatory varietal selection (PVS) methodology by adapting the mother-and-baby trial design and by involving more women farmers. In this design, many varieties are evaluated on farm, by farmers; farmers' opinions and knowledge are systematically collected and used in selection decisions; and more attention is paid to grain quality and other traits important to farmers. In 2004, IRRI—in collaboration with NDUAT—conducted a study on the impact of PVS in two districts in eastern Uttar Pradesh. This paper will present the results of this study. The objectives of this study are to: (a) assess farmer adoption of new genotypes introduced through PVS in Siddharthnagar and Faizabad districts; (b) identify the factors which support and constrain the adoption of these genotypes; (c) assess the social impact of this project on the adopters with emphasis on women farmers. Farmer adoption was measured through the areas cultivated with new varieties and number of farming households using the new varieties. In each sample village, all the farmers who received seeds from the PVS project and a sample of farmers who did not receive seeds from the project were interviewed. The results were compared with farmers in a nearby village who did not receive seeds from the project.

In India, which a patriarchal dominated society, the male head of household is considered the only decision-maker in the family. Decisions on rice production, including varietal choice, are often made by the male heads because they are the main income earners, have greater access to education and training programs than women, and are more mobile than women as a result of social and religious restrictions. In eastern Uttar Pradesh, poor women from low-caste farming households provide 60–80% of the total labor inputs in rice production and post-harvest activities as unpaid, exchange or hired workers. To assess the impact of PVS on women farmers (mostly Muslims in Siddharthnagar district), we developed an empowerment index based on questions on decision-making related to varietal adoption. We assigned the lowest value (=1) when, in the absence of the husband, the decision is taken by other family members such as parents, in-laws (rather than by the wife); 2 = by husband (when he is present) without consultation of the wife, 3 = by the wife, in the absence of the husband; 4 = jointly by husband and wife, and 5 = by wife, even when husband is present. Thus, the wife is “empowered” or “enabled” when she gets the highest score. We also assessed the factors which influenced women's empowerment and assessed whether there are gender differences in varietal choice and preferences for rice suitable for submergence and drought rice environments.

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Intra-household impact of improved cowpea varieties in the northern savannas of Nigeria

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The leguminous crop cowpea (*Vigna unguiculata* [L.] Walp.) is a popular crop in West Africa because of its multiple benefits in the farming systems, but productivity remains very low. To address this issue, IITA—in collaboration with farmers, partners in the national agricultural research system and other CG Centers—developed a basket of technological options. Ten years after its first dissemination in northern Nigeria, a study conducted in 2004 sought to look at the intra-household impact on farmer households particularly on women and children. Participatory tools were used that looked at what constituted resources, and what changes (if any) had occurred to 400 households since the introduction of improved cowpea technology.

Among the Hausa of northern Nigeria, gender is strongly molded by the existing patriarchal system. Wife-seclusion is a major determinant in the sexual division of labor, resulting in an economic imbalance between males and females. Men engage in contract labor, farming or trading. Women's economic activities consist mainly of trade between compounds, resulting in what has been called the "honeycomb trade" in Hausa land.

Within this context, disaggregating impact by gender yielded useful information on the visible/direct impact such as yield and income; however, further tools were used to elicit information on intra-household impact, particularly the hidden and often indirect impact on women and children. Impact occurred with the adoption of the full technology package rather than single components. Further information showed the intra-household impacts on women and the resultant effects on household food security, children's health and nutrition, decision-making within the household, and the subsequent effects on household welfare. Key among these is the access to membership within local micro-credit groups that had the most important impact in terms of enabling the empowerment of women.

Participatory methods of generating indicators of impact were important in supporting quantitative methods. In this case, the qualitative information on children's health and nutrition supported quantitative anthropometric and economic data.