

Who feeds the world 2010 and beyond? Gender equity in agricultural research and development

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With inputs from Ruth Meinzen-Dick and team at
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Presentation Overview

- **Why** pay attention to gender in agriculture?
- **Who** – role of women researchers
- **What** might a gender-equitable agricultural R&D system look like?
- **How** to mainstream gender in a development organization?
Experience from the World Bank

Why pay attention to gender in agriculture?

A. To improve agricultural productivity & profitability

- Women are essential to planting, weeding, harvesting, processing, marketing, food preparation etc.
 - *SE Asia: women are up to 90 percent of the labor involved in rice cultivation (FAO 2007)*
 - *SS Africa: women produce up to 80 percent of basic foodstuffs for household consumption and sale (FAO 2007).*



- However, tremendous uncovered potential and talent for productivity due to lack of assets, inputs and services





Women are disadvantaged with respect to:

- **LAND**

→ Limited access and user rights in both customary & statutory land tenure systems (Kevane 2004)

- **HUMAN CAPITAL**

→ Women in S. Asia and SS Africa routinely have less access to extension than males (WB & IFPRI 2010)

→ In Malawi, 81% of men and 19% of women have contact with an ag. extension officer (Gilbert et al. 2002)

→ In Ghana, 11-2% of male headed HH and <2% of female headed HH have contact with an ag. Extension officer (WB & IFPRI 2010).

→ Pervasive misconception 'women don't farm'

→ False assumption, that extension will 'trickle down' from husband to wife

Women are disadvantaged with respect to

Inputs and technologies

→ less access to inputs (fertilizer, improved seed, pesticides etc.) (Peterman et al. 2010) and appropriate tools and machinery (Carr, 2008)

Social Capital

→ Studies from Ghana, Ethiopia, India and Kenya find gender differences in participation and membership in community and producer organizations (WB & IFPRI 2010, Davis & Negash 2007).

In Ghana, only 2-5% of female spouses and 3-7% of women in female headed HH report membership.



Reducing inequality in human capital, physical capital and inputs between male and female farmers in SS Africa has the potential to increase agricultural productivity up to 20% (Alderman, Haddad and Udry 1996)

Why pay attention to gender in agriculture?

B. To increase agricultural sustainability

- Women are often the guardians of local knowledge on biodiversity, and low cost climate change coping strategies
- *Examples:* In Peru, women maintain potato diversity in Kenya, targeting female farmers & improved soil fertility



Why pay attention to gender in agriculture?

C. To improve food security & nutrition



- Women control household food distribution & are the guardians of household food security.
- Increasing the resources women control has been shown to improve child health and nutrition (Quisumbing 2003).

Why pay attention to gender in agriculture?

D. To reduce poverty through empowerment

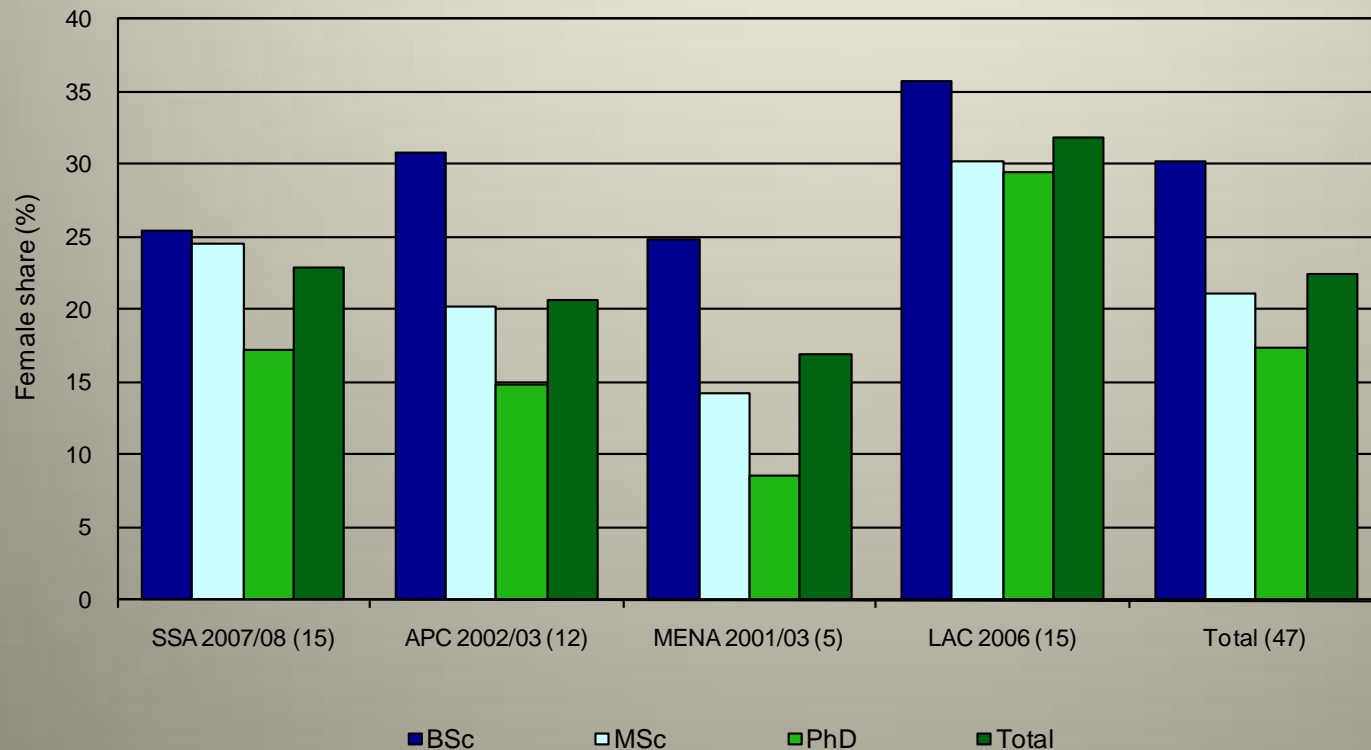
- Empowerment as “the expansion in people’s ability to make strategic life choices in context previously denied to them” (Kabeer 2000).
- Link between high levels of hunger and gender inequality (GHI 2009)
- Empowerment and better incomes through targeted interventions.

Example: 5-fold income increase by high quality greenhouse vegetable growing in Shaanxi, China by women farmers. Now expanding marketing to supermarkets and organic production.



Who conducts agricultural research?

→ Only 1 in 4 researchers in Sub-Saharan Africa is female
(Beintema and Di Marcanonio 2010)



→ Average female shares in professional staff by degree in 47 developing countries, 2001–08 (ASTI data published in Beintema 2006)

Why does it matter who conducts research?



- Women researchers provide role models, combat stereotypes
- Women's voice adds to the diversity of views.
- New study from ICRW shows, that increase in women's leadership enhances child development, fast-tracks political change, and encourages economic growth (Gill et al. 2009)

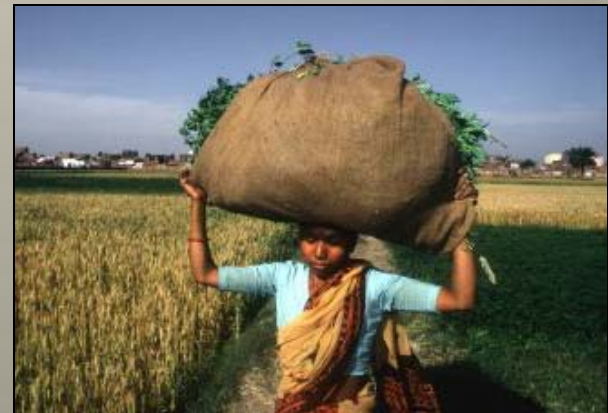
How might agricultural R&D look through a “gender lens”?

1. Involving women in agricultural research and development
2. Asking questions relevant to both women and men farmers



Basic Questions for Gender Integration

1. What different roles/stakes do women and men have in this activity?
2. How might the program affect them differently?
3. Will both men and women realistically be able to participate and to benefit? (time, assets etc.)
4. How could the program contribute to gender equity?



Beyond production technology...

Gender roles in natural resource management

- Multiple uses of water
- Non timber forest products
- Energy includes cooking uses



Beyond production technology...

- An expanded concept of the food sector including gardens, fish, livestock, and water.



NEW RESEARCH INITIATIVES: LINKING AGRICULTURE WITH HUMAN HEALTH AND NUTRITION



COMBATING VITAMIN A DEFICIENCY

An estimated 100 million Africans are at risk of blindness due to deficiencies in this micronutrient, especially young children.



CGIAR researchers are helping combat vitamin A deficiency in Africa by developing and promoting orange-fleshed sweet potato varieties, high in beta-carotene, the precursor to vitamin A. So far, more than 6 million people in Africa have benefited from improved sweet potato varieties.

A revitalized agricultural research system

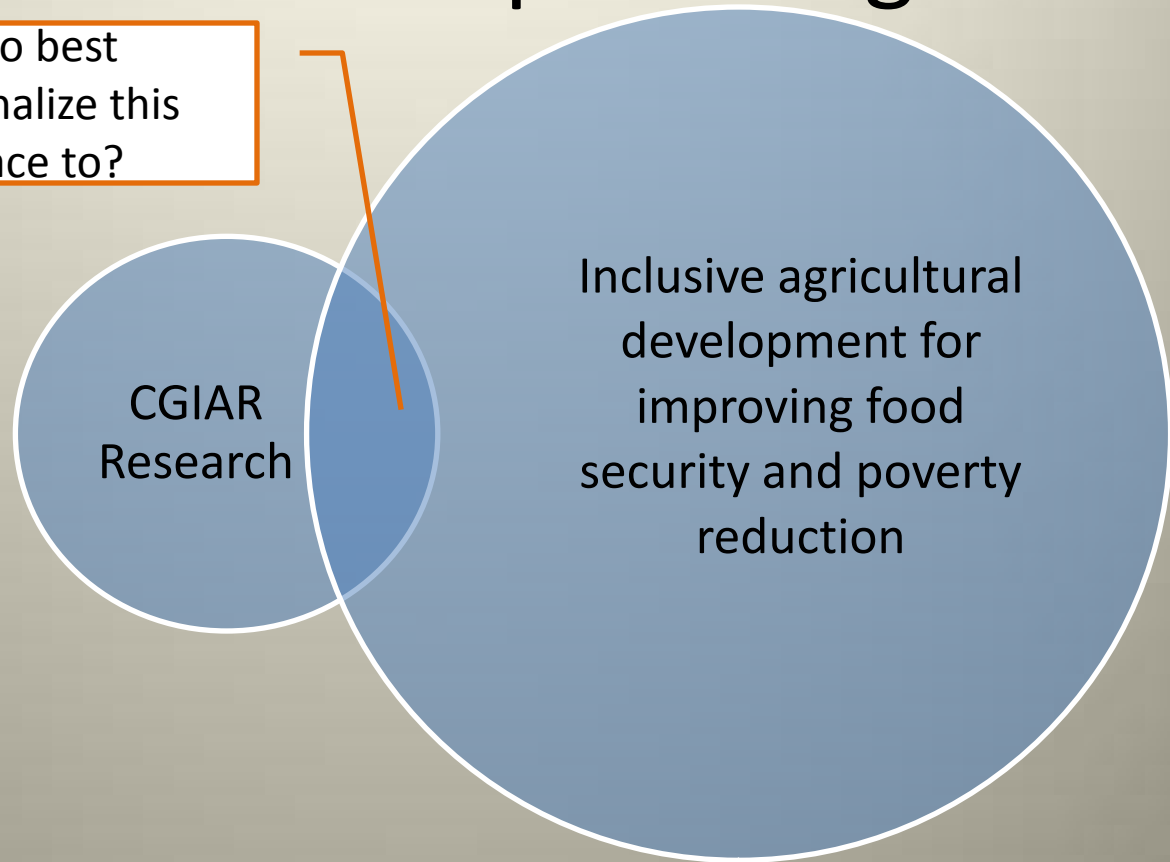
- **Identifies** strategic priorities for gender-equitable research
- Fully **integrates** gender into the research process
- **Transforms** the enabling conditions for gender-equitable research
- **Builds** necessary partnerships
- **Contributes** to empowerment



The R – D Interface and the CGIAR

- role of the development agencies

How to best operationalize this interface to?



Mainstreaming Gender in Agriculture, Experience from the World Bank

What does it take?

- Not a thermodynamic process, needs **managing**
- **Leadership** commitment
- **Accountability**
 - Targets: gender responsive actions and M&E indicators in 75% of agriculture projects by 2013
- **Resources**
 - Gender Action Plan
- **Technical advise**
 - Gender in Agriculture Sourcebook

WB President Zoellick



**“Be humble and keep fighting”
From noise to voice through
inclusive innovation**

