



Developing capacities for gender-responsive agricultural programs in Ethiopia

To get a deeper understanding of the local context surrounding mixed farming systems, intensification, gender gaps, norms and agency, it is important to have trained researchers and local personnel who are able to collect, analyze and interpret sex/gender-disaggregated data and understand the local culture and sensitivity of the topic.

The gender capacity development project within Africa RISING in Ethiopia aims to enhance the capacity of project implementing partners and local staff to collect, analyze and interpret sex/gender disaggregated data; conduct a gender analysis and use the data to address gender-based constraints in agriculture.

Gender capacity development also exposes partners to the gendered approach of analyzing agricultural value chains and applying appropriate strategies when interacting with men and women. This will contribute to the design and implementation of interventions and technologies that directly respond to the needs of men and women.

A gender capacity development workshop was conducted in August 2014 in Addis Ababa. A team of facilitators was assembled from ILRI, IWMI and University of Florida, using workshop materials previously tested in countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America, and developed under the USAID funded Modernizing Extension and Advisory Services (MEAS) program.

The workshop had 43 registered participants with 23 men and 19 women. Participants included partners supporting the Africa RISING project as well as the CGIAR Research Program on Livestock and Fish. Institutions represented included agricultural research institutes at national and regional levels, offices of agriculture (woreda level), universities and colleges, the Ministry of Agriculture, NGOs, ILRI staff and other agricultural agencies.

A study was also undertaken with local partners to ascertain the constraints they might face when integrating gender into agricultural programming.

A pre-workshop evaluation revealed that most male and female participants lacked knowledge and skills to use the gendered value chain approach, lacked tools to collect sex/gender disaggregated data and skills to practically engage men and women.

The post workshop evaluation revealed that various participants in the workshop had much greater familiarity and experience with gender, especially among the female participants. However, both male and female participants needed further support, training, and assistance to translate gender into practical changes in their work. Analysis of the pre and post workshop evaluations indicated a larger percentage change among both male and female participants on aspects related to applying gender analysis tools, gender mainstreaming, how to engage mixed and single gender groups and using a gendered value chain approach.



Figure 1. Workshop participants demonstrating approaches to introduce new gender responsive technologies



Figure 2. Group discussions on approaches to engage men and women in agricultural programs

The percentage change seemed to be higher among male compared to female participants. Female participants made greater progress applying the gendered value chain approach. At least two gender champions (male and female) were selected to lead to gender agenda in each action site.

Africa RISING aims to identify and address constraints that create inequalities between men and women. With the acquired gender analysis skills and application of the gendered value chain approach, CGIAR staff and local partners will be able to evaluate gendered constraints and identify opportunities available to women and men to improve their livelihoods.

Participants expressed interest in furthering their capacity in project planning and measurement of gender impact, how to integrate gender analysis into their project cycles, and training facilitators to work with bio-physical scientists using participatory approaches. Assessment of participants' changes in knowledge, attitude, skills and practices will be important in order to gauge the relevance of the training, evaluate the assessment methodology and identify challenges and areas that need to be further developed.

The Feed the Future Initiative places great emphasis on empowering women to achieve gender equity, the third Millennium Development Goal (MDG) by promoting interventions that enhance women's decision making power about agricultural production; access to and control over productive resources; control over use of income; leadership in the community and efficient time use. Proper collection and analysis of gender disaggregated data will aid understanding of gender relations (roles,

responsibilities, access to and control over resources and benefits), which is of significant importance for Africa RISING to contribute to the gender equality goal.

Through gender capacity development, staff and partners in the project will be in a better position to understand the local context, design and implement interventions that benefit both men and women, and also create an environment that fosters the participation of women in agricultural research.



Figure 3. Africa RISING Gender Capacity Development Workshop at the ILRI Campus in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. From 18th – 20th August 2014



The Africa Research In Sustainable Intensification for the Next Generation (Africa RISING) program comprises three research-for-development projects supported by the United States Agency for International Development as part of the U.S. government's Feed the Future initiative.

Through action research and development partnerships, Africa RISING will create opportunities for smallholder farm households to move out of hunger and poverty through sustainably intensified farming systems that improve food, nutrition, and income security, particularly for women and children, and conserve or enhance the natural resource base.

The three projects are led by the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (in West Africa and East and Southern Africa) and the International Livestock Research Institute (in the Ethiopian Highlands). The International Food Policy Research Institute leads an associated project on monitoring, evaluation and impact assessment.

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