



FR2.1: TOWARD A FEMINIST AGROECOLOGY

By Haley Zaremba, Marlène Elias, Anne Rietveld, and Nadia Bergamini

CGIAR GENDER Science Exchange, Nairobi, 12-14 October 2022

Research Questions and Purpose

Purpose

To move toward a feminist agroecological model that embeds gender equality considerations from the bottom up and recognizes the deep interconnection of social and ecological issues.

- How do gender relations and inequalities impact agroecology?
- How are gender relations impacted by agroecology?
- What does a feminist agroecology look like?

Objectives

Using HLPE's 13 principles of agroecology (2019) as a framework, we *aimed to identify relevant gender considerations for agroecology as a science, movement, and set of practices to advance a feminist agroecology.*

General Findings

- Issues related to gender and other intersectional inequalities have commanded relatively little attention in agroecology.
- Lack of emphasis on gender and other political dimensions risks diluting the movement and reducing agroecology to a set of technocratic practices.
- Gender is relevant to *all* 13 HLPE principles of agroecology, not just patently social principles.

Agroecological principles through a feminist lens

Improve resource efficiency

1. *Recycling*

2. *Input reduction*

- Women stand to benefit from a **circular economy**.
- In a treadmill system, women and marginalized people face market exclusions due to barriers to entry and lack of access to credit.
- Closing the loop (e.g. by recycling inputs/outputs) can increase drudgery for marginalized workers whose labor is often invisible.

Agroecological principles through a feminist lens

Strengthen resilience

3. Soil health

4. Animal health

5. Biodiversity

6. Synergy

7. Economic diversification

- Women's knowledge is sidelined.
 - Socio-ecological win-wins can be achieved by tapping into a broader knowledge base.
 - Non-feminist agroecology could increase inequalities
- Feminized labor is frequently unpaid and invisibilized
 - Economic opportunities and labor need to be equitably distributed

Agroecological principles through a feminist lens

Secure social equity/responsibility

8. Co-creation of knowledge

Decolonization of agricultural knowledge

9. Social values and diets

Women and marginalized groups must be the protagonists of the agroecological movement and be able to define the agenda, including what 'fairness' means to them

10. Fairness

11. Connectivity

Collective action (e.g. through women's groups) has proven to be a powerful tool to counteract top-down, patriarchal governance

12. Land and natural resource governance

Rural women often lack secure land tenure, locking them out of land governance and decision-making spaces.

13. Participation

Equitable participation requires much more than inviting all stakeholders; the playing field must be leveled so that all voices are given equal weight.

Conclusions

- Agroecology is inherently grounded in feminism
- Agroecology policy must recognize and center intertwined socio-ecological outcomes
- Agroecology which is not feminist threatens to worsen inequalities and social marginalization
- Feminist agroecology which includes all stakeholders will be more diverse and more resilient overall