

Social Dynamics and Sustainable Intensification in Ethiopia

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1. Introduction

Africa RISING aimed to provide pathways out of poverty for smallholder farmer households through sustainably intensified farming systems. Gender was integrated in research and development activities. The primary purpose of this research was to understand gender in innovation and gendered impacts.

2. Objectives

A contextual analysis was undertaken to describe characteristics of the sites, including gender roles and practices, that play an integral role in innovation processes in communities and households. An analysis of social dimensions of technological innovation processes was performed. Findings inform recommendations about how to design socially inclusive innovation and technology scaling.

5. Recommendations

- Participatory decision-making processes must be socially inclusive. Invite and engage with household members, husbands and wives.
- Ensure that women's priorities are heard and incorporated in innovation processes to avoid technology tradeoffs that incur harm for either women or men.
- Recognize how gender contexts limit women's participation in meetings and access to information. Restrictions upon women's mobility require accommodative scheduling and holding meetings in easy to access locations.

3. Methods

This study was conducted in 2022 in rural communities in North Shewa zone, Amhara regional state, and Hadiya zone in the Southern Nations, Nationalities and People's (SNNP). Qualitative methods were used and a total of 9 key informant interviews and 16 sex disaggregated focus group discussions in Africa RISING and scaling sites were conducted. Thematic analysis was conducted in Nvivo qualitative software.

4. Findings

- Community level participatory decision-making processes, such as those surrounding technology selection were primarily with married men while decisions concerning adoption in the household were often made jointly.
- Women's and men's preferred technologies often included those promoted by the project.
- Technologies generate trade-offs in income, labor and productivity.
- Avocadoes increase women's income, however, incur labor increases associated with watering requirements.
- Technology impacts can benefit both women and men. Livestock fodder and feeds reduced men's labor while women reported benefits related to feeding such as increased productivity and income from milk sales.

6. Acknowledgement

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