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Santoso, Marianne

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Predictors of Program Participation in a Nutrition-Sensitive Agroecological Intervention in Singida, Tanzania

Marianne Santoso¹, Rachel Bezner-Kerr², Neema Kassim³, Elias Mtinda⁴, Haikael Martin³, John Hoddinott⁵, and Sera Young¹

¹Northwestern University; ²Department of Global Development;

³The Nelson Mandela African Institution of Science and Technology (NM-AIST); ⁴ActionAid Tanzania; and ⁵Cornell University

Objectives: Nutrition-sensitive agricultural interventions are theorized to improve child's diet through asset provision and program participation. Although some programs measure participation, predictors of participation are understudied. We therefore investigated predictors of men's and women's program participation in Singida Nutrition and Agroecology Project (SNAP-Tz; NCT02761876).

Methods: In SNAP-Tz, 'mentor farmers' led their peers (smallholder farmers with children < 1 year at baseline) in learning about agroecology, nutrition, and gender equity through meetings and household visits. At baseline, we collected data on demographics, Household Food Insecurity Access Scale (0–27), men's involvement in 7 household tasks (0–7), and Abbreviated Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (AWEAI). Participating men ($n = 262$) and women ($n = 283$) were asked to recall their program participation biannually. Predictors of

high participation, defined as attendance in $\geq 60\%$ participant meetings and household visits, were identified using multiple logistic regressions, controlling for clustering at the village level.

Results: Only 59% and 37% of women and men, respectively, had high participation. Women's high participation was associated with their spouse's participation (OR = 4.23, $P < 0.01$), greater food insecurity (OR = 1.03, $P = 0.03$), years of education (OR = 1.13, $P = 0.02$), and being empowered (OR = 5.88, $P < 0.01$). Men's high participation was associated with their spouse's participation (OR = 4.22, $P < 0.01$), greater food insecurity (OR = 2.23, $P = 0.01$), involvement in household tasks (OR = 1.25, $P = 0.04$), and age (OR = 1.03, $P < 0.01$).

Conclusions: Associations between an individual's and their spouse's participation indicate the importance of spousal dynamics. The association between participation and baseline gender equity (i.e., women's empowerment, men's involvement in household tasks) highlights the challenges of gender programming in nutrition-sensitive interventions. Analysis of program participation was simple and revealed valuable lessons for program implementation and design; more programs should therefore analyze participation.

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