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Opportunities for strengthening gender and social equity in Ethiopia's wheat sector



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Cover photo: CIMMYT/Gerardo Mejia Enciso.



Photo: CIMMYT/Peter Lowe.

Introduction

Agriculture makes up 35.8 percent of Ethiopia's GDP and employs 72.7 percent of its 102 million people,¹ yet agriculture is unmechanized and the country relies heavily on food imports. Gender inequality contributes to low agricultural productivity but remains under researched. The failure to recognize the roles, differences and inequities between men and women poses a serious threat to the effectiveness of Ethiopia's agricultural development agenda, according to the World Bank.²

Despite strong GDP growth of 8 to 11 percent annually, depending on drought, Ethiopia is still a poor country with a per capita income of \$783.³ Food insecurity is a defining characteristic of poverty, with up to 10 million people in the country dependent on humanitarian assistance.⁴ Food insecurity, low agricultural productivity and gender inequality are government priorities.

This report covers gender inequality in Ethiopia's agricultural sector and looks specifically at wheat. It outlines how an insufficient focus on the barriers women face continues to have a significant impact on the nation's agricultural productivity, economic growth and food security. Moreover, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) signed by the Government of Ethiopia (GoE) and other member states have a number of gender and food security indicators, such as "zero hunger." All of them aim to "leave no one behind" and deliver more equitable development outcomes. This analytic overview provides agricultural development partners with a synthesis of the research and policy environment necessary to improve agricultural productivity and address food insecurity for more of Ethiopia's citizens using a gender-sensitive and inclusive approach.



Photo: CIMMYT/Peter Lowe.

- 1 2017 data from World Bank and CIA World Factbook.
- 2 World Bank. (2008). *Agriculture and Rural Development: Gender in Agriculture Sourcebook*. Washington, D.C: World Bank.
- 3 The World Bank in Ethiopia (2017). "Ethiopia Overview." Washington, D.C: World Bank. Retrieved from <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/ethiopia/overview>.
- 4 African Development Bank Group (2011). *Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Country Strategy Paper 2011- 2015*. Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire: African Development Bank Group



Methodology

This analytic overview summarizes evidence collated from a research for development (R4D) project that ran in Ethiopia from 2014 to 2018. The project sought to improve the focus on gender and social equity in wheat-related research and development in Ethiopia. This overview collates evidence from:

- A literature review of 92 documents on women's role in agriculture from 1990 until 2016;
- A review of 19 major pieces of national legislation and policy documents for gender in the agriculture sector and a critical feminist analysis of seven key policies;
- A stakeholder analysis involving 45 interviews with government and non-government actors in the agriculture sector, specifically focused on wheat and gender;
- A meta-analysis of 26 project documents and an in-depth assessment of two key evaluation reports;⁶
- Qualitative research with 275 farmers (138 women and 137 men) from wheat-growing households⁵ across four sites in the regions of Amhara and Oromia;⁷
- A gender audit and capacity assessment of the Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research (EIAR);⁸
- Data mined two agriculture surveys.

Wheat in Ethiopia

ETHIOPIANS CONSUME

6.5 million tons
of wheat per year



Wheat is one of Ethiopia's four key food crops. Wheat and wheat products represent 14 percent of the total caloric intake and 20 percent of the total protein intake in Ethiopia.⁹

The World Bank found that increasing the productivity and production of cereals has contributed substantially to poverty alleviation and calorie intake.¹⁰ National wheat yields are steadily climbing but still average only 2.7 tons per hectare, which is well below global standards.

ETHIOPIAN FARMERS

Produce only
4.6 million tons
of wheat per year



Many Ethiopian farmers continue to use traditional farming practices to cultivate local wheat varieties that easily succumb to diseases. Ethiopia's natural resources have been depleted because of long-standing cultivation practices and other human activity. Changes in climate and frequent drought create additional challenges for farmers. Numerous improved wheat varieties have been released to combat these specific problems, but the limited availability and use of new agricultural technologies contribute to low wheat yields.

- 5 A "wheat-growing household" is defined as a household where more than 50 percent of the household's income comes from wheat.
- 6 For more information on the methodology see: What works for gender norm change? <https://repository.cimmyt.org/handle/10883/19617>
- 7 For more information on the methodology see: http://42q77i2rw7d03mfrd11pvzzwpengine.netdna-cdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/GENNOVATE-Methodology_Feb2018_FINAL.pdf
- 8 Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research: gender audit <https://repository.cimmyt.org/handle/10883/19679>
- 9 World Bank Group (2018). Cereal Market Performance in Ethiopia: Policy Implications for Improving Investments in Maize and Wheat Value Chains. Washington, D.C: World Bank.
- 10 World Bank Group (2014). Ethiopia: Poverty Assessment. Report No. AUS6744. Poverty Global Practice. Africa Region. Washington, D.C: World Bank Group. Republic of Ethiopia Proclamation. Addis Ababa, Democratic Republic of Ethiopia.



Photo: CIMMYT/Peter Lowe

4.2 Million households grow wheat



Annual imports to satisfy Ethiopia's demand for wheat cost more than \$600 million USD and are predicted to increase, exposing Ethiopia's food security to global price shifts. Wheat is an under-performing but important staple food in Ethiopia.

In September 2018 the GoE announced plans to become self-sufficient in wheat production and to stop importing wheat by 2022. This ambitious target will significantly contribute to Ethiopia's economy and national food security. It is an opportune time to develop the wheat sector.

Ethiopia's agricultural policies and gender

The GoE considers gender equality a national priority. The 2016 Global Gender Gap Report ranks Ethiopia 109th out of 144 countries in terms of the magnitude and scope of gender disparities, which is lower than neighboring Rwanda and Kenya.¹¹ All ministries are directed by proclamation (No. 916/2015) to address women's and youth affairs when preparing policies, laws, development programs and projects.¹² The national Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) II defines the need to consider women and youth as a key cross-cutting issue.



FEMALE FARMERS

57% of rural working women (aged 15 - 49) are farmers

GoE is supportive of gender equality in the agriculture sector. A historical overview of Ethiopia's agricultural policies from 1994 – 2018 reveals a progressive expansion of women's rights and gender equality. In 2016, the Gender Equality Strategy for Ethiopia's Agriculture Sector was developed via a national consultation process. The GoE approved the strategy in 2017 following work by the Women's Affairs Directorate of the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources (MoANR), the Agricultural Transformation Authority (ATA) and a gender taskforce composed of representatives from national and international development partners. This strategy represents the most comprehensive gender assessment of the agricultural sector to date and highlights the immense challenges and improvements required to achieve gender equality in the agricultural sector. As it currently stands, the agricultural policies are more progressive than national gender policies. However, implementation of these policies remains a challenge.

GoE has made some commendable decisions to increase the role of women in agriculture. The Wheat Sector Development Strategy (2013-2017) recognizes that gender-mainstreaming is important to achieving its goals. The strategy focuses on female headed-households (FHHs) and promotes women's participation in the GoE's extension and training programs. Nevertheless, the wheat strategy and other policies do not have sex-disaggregated indicators and targets. This is associated in part with the lack of technical gender support available and the lack of gender-focused policy evaluations. Women are seen as a homogeneous category in policy and this means that certain women (such as women in male-headed households, or MHHs) miss out on assistance.

11 World Economic Forum (2016). Global Gender Gap Report. Geneva Switzerland: World Economic Forum.

12 Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (2015). Definition of Powers and Duties of the Executive Organs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Proclamation. Addis Ababa, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia.



Gender inequality in the Ethiopian agriculture context

Photo: CIMMYT/Gerardo Mejia Enciso.

Women's roles in the agricultural sector are recorded inconsistently, with many studies contradicting each other.¹³ Women living in MHHs and FHHs face different constraints, and yet, very little data on women in MHH exists. Exploring



gender-equitable solutions could contribute to Ethiopia becoming self-sufficient in wheat production. However, there is not enough data on why certain approaches work better than others. This section provides an overview of the literature on women's role in Ethiopia's agriculture sector and synthesizes the available data.

Household surveys generally ignore married women and focus only on the head of the household. This means there are problems in understanding the lives of women at different ages (and before they become widowed/divorced) and

of those living in polygamous households.¹⁴ The main reason cited for this is that top managers and researchers lack the capacity to adequately capture the complexity of gender dimensions in agricultural research and aren't convinced they need to allocate resources toward collecting sex-disaggregated data and investing in women.¹⁵

Women who head their own households (either through death or divorce) experience many constraints in access to land, labor, oxen and other resources. They can join the Peasant Association (PA) but will never occupy a position of power.¹⁶ On the other hand, women in MHHs have limited access to community power structures and face restricted chances to get involved in extension services and technical programs.¹⁷

UNPAID LABOR

50% of rural women are unpaid workers & 65% work for family



- 13 Belay, F. and Oljira, A. (2016). Gender Role in Agricultural Activities in Ethiopia: Country Review. *Journal of Culture, Society and Development*, 22.
- 14 Warner, J., Kieran, C. and McMullan, S. (2015). A Review of Selected Topics of Gender and Agricultural Research in Ethiopia Over the Last Decade: Identifying Themes and Research Gaps for Further Action.
- 15 Ethiopia Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resource (2016). Gender Equality Strategy for Ethiopia's Agriculture Sector: Final Draft. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia: Women Affairs Directorate of the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resource.
- 16 Frank, E. (1999). Gender, Agricultural Development and Food Security in Amhara, Ethiopia: The Contested Identity of Women Farmers in Ethiopia. Ethiopia: USAID.
- 17 Ibid.



Photo: CIMMYT/Gerardo Mejia Enciso.

Education enables women to turn agriculture extension into increased yields and plays a key role in the overall involvement of women in agriculture. Ethiopia has seen a 40 percent increase in primary school enrollment from 1991 to 2014 and is near gender parity nationally.¹⁸ Gender parity at secondary school increased from 0.67 in 2007 to 0.82 in 2014.¹⁹ The improvements show that Ethiopia is on the way to creating a more favorable environment for women's increased agricultural production.

NO EDUCATION

60% of rural women
22% of urban women



NUTRITION

25% of women aged
15-49 are anemic



The poorer nutritional status of women compared to men is related to food insecurity and poverty, but agriculture can contribute to improving their nutritional status.²⁰ Interventions that increase women's economic empowerment in the agricultural sector will contribute to improved child and female nutrition and better health outcomes.²¹ Moreover, those who are well nourished are more productive than those who are not.

Women's participation in the agricultural sector resembles their participation in the general labor market. In both cases, it is characterized by low or no wages and insecurity. Access to credit is another area where women are disproportionately disadvantaged compared to men.²² GoE understands the need for financial inclusion and has helped 5 million women join savings and credit groups between 2010-15.²³ Nevertheless, women's ability to access formal banks and take out larger loans is very limited, along with their access to land and other assets.

AVERAGE PAYMENT PER MONTH

Farm laborers
F: USD 20
M: USD 26



18 African Development Bank Group (2016).

19 Ibid.

20 Bitew, F. and Telake, D. (2010). Undernutrition Among Women in Ethiopia: Rural-Urban Disparity. DHS Working Papers No. 77. Calverton, MD: ICF Macro, Inc.

21 Ibid.

22 Warner, Kieran and McMullan (2015).

23 African Development Bank Group (2016). Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Country Strategy Paper 2016-2020., Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire: African Development Bank Group.



Photo: CIMMYT/Gerardo Mejia Enciso.

DRUDGERY

Rural women work
13-17 hours per day;
Rural men work
6-9 hours per day



Rural women, however, work more than twice as many hours per day as men. Most of this time is spent on unpaid household activities such as fetching firewood, collecting water or preparing food.²⁴ The disproportionate unpaid labor burden on women hinders their involvement in agriculture and reduces their ability to participate in extension services. Moreover, the gendered division of labor and cultural taboos, such as the taboo preventing women from ploughing their land, has negative effects on household food security and widowed women.²⁵

Empirical work suggests that increasing resources controlled by women, including land, and increasing access to extension services will promote increased agricultural productivity.²⁶ Women's empowerment (including access to agriculture knowledge) is positively correlated with the adoption of improved crop varieties²⁷ that bring higher yields.



LAND TITLE

3:1 ratio in favor
of men solely
owning land

However, other researchers argue that women are greatly constrained by cultural and gender norms that cannot be solved by merely increasing women's access to inputs and extension services.²⁸ A study from 2017 confirms that women may access but not control new technologies and the benefits generated.²⁹ Other studies find land-policy reforms alone are not enough to ensure gender equality in land tenure because the underlying power relations within the communities also need to be addressed.³⁰

Traditional behavioral norms underlie gender inequality and contribute toward low agricultural productivity. Female farm managers produce 23.4 percent less per hectare than male farm managers. Forty-three percent of this gap is explained by differences in the amount of productive inputs used by men and women known as endowments while 57 percent is attributed to disadvantages such as unequal access to extension services, longer distances to fields from houses, smaller land size, lack of product diversification and fewer years of schooling.³¹ Gender inequalities compound to make it difficult for women to increase agriculture productivity.

24 Hill and Tsehaye (2014).

25 Kumar, N. and Quisumbing, A.R. (2015). Policy Reform Toward Gender Equality in Ethiopia: Little by Little the Egg Begins to Walk. *World Development*, 67, 406-423.

26 Hallward-Driemeier, M. and Gajigo, O. (2015). Strengthening Economic Rights and Women's Occupational Choice: The Impact of Reforming Ethiopia's Family Law. *World Development*, 70, 260-273.

27 Seymour, G, Doss, C., Marennya, P., Meinzen-Dick, R., Suseela, S. and Passarelli, S. (2016, July). Women's empowerment and the adoption of improved maize varieties: Evidence from Ethiopia, Kenya, and Tanzania. Paper presented at the Agricultural and Applied Economics Association's Annual Meeting, Boston, MA. .

28 Warner, Kieran and McMullan (2015).

29 Theis, S., Lefore, N., Meinzen-Dick, R., and Bryan, E. (2017). What happens after technology adoption? Gendered aspects of small-scale irrigation technologies in Ethiopia, Ghana, and Tanzania. IFPRI Discussion Paper 1672. Washington, D.C: International Food Policy Research Institute.

30 Lavers, T. (2017). Land registration and gender equality in Ethiopia: How state-society relations influence the enforcement of institutional change. *Journal of Agrarian Change*, 17 (1), 188-207.

31 Aguilar, A., Carranza, E., Goldstein, M., Kilic, T., and Oseni, G. (2014). Decomposition of gender differentials in agricultural productivity in Ethiopia: Policy Research Working Paper Series 6764. Washington, D.C: The World Bank Group.

Gender norms, innovation and agency

Gender norms represent perspectives on what gender relations “should” be like and how individuals of particular genders “should” behave.³⁰

Agency is the capacity to make choices and act upon them.

While GoE has made tremendous improvements in the lives of women and progress toward gender equality, more effort is required. Seven qualitative data collection instruments, including single-sex focus group discussions, participatory instruments and semi-structured individual interviews, were used to understand gender norms relating to behavior, innovation, technology and agency.³¹ The study illuminates how gender norms and farmer agency work together to shape access to, adoption of and benefits from agricultural innovation at the local level.³²

The majority of male and female participants across age and villages from both regions said there is too much of an expectation on women to be “good wives.” For example, a good wife is meant

to stay within the house, which prevents her from attending extension activities, and yet help earn an income for the family. A good wife is not innovative as she must defer to her husband for decisions. As one female focus group participant explained, “the norms are too many to the extent it is hard to understand what is expected.” A male participant said men and women criticize women for their “ability to do something or lack of ability, or for her behavior or appearance.” Moreover, women are critical of each other even if they themselves are unable to meet the normative expectations of a good wife. This finding shows that women are criticized regardless of their level of compliance to the prevailing norms.



Photo: CIMMYT/Peter Lowe

- 32 Marcus, R. (2014). Changing Discriminatory Norms Affecting Adolescent Girls through Communications Activities: Insights for Policy and Practice from an Evidence Review. London, United Kingdom: Overseas Development Institute).
- 33 For more information on the methodology, see: http://42q77i2rw7d03mfrd11pvzz.wpengine.netdna-cdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/GENNOVATE-Methodology_Feb2018_FINAL.pdf
- 34 Druzca, K. and Tsegaye, M (2018). Policy brief: Gender norms and agency in Ethiopia’s agriculture sector. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia: CIMMYT. Retrieved from <https://repository.cimmyt.org/handle/10883/19560>

This public criticism of women has an impact on women's ability to take risks and innovate. Women are considered weaker innovators and are watched more sharply and judged more harshly than men. Female heads of household reported that men do not encourage them but rather discourage them and plant doubt in their minds over their ability. The reason reported for this was associated with men wanting to rent land from women for overly cheap prices.

In addition, women as spouses and FHHs are given less support and access to extension services. Women, specifically those who are married, were widely reported to have the least opportunity to learn and benefit directly from agricultural extension services. Husbands confirmed they do not have the habit of sharing their learning with their wives except in a rush during farming activities. Moreover, some husbands do not allow their wives to participate in extension events, even if women are purposefully invited.

FEMALE FARM MANAGERS

produce 23.4% less
per hectare than men



Photo: CIMMYT/Peter Lowe.

AGRICULTURAL TRAINING COLLEGES

9.3% female graduates (2007)
17.3% female graduates (2011)



The data indicate that differences in innovation capacity have much to do with the gendered contexts rural men and women live and work within. The majority of agriculture officers and model farmers are men. Participants explained that if a man is seen with a woman who is not his wife, an extra-marital affair is suspected. Consequently, male extension officers and male model farmers only reluctantly and occasionally reach out to single female farmers.

Nevertheless, some respondents insisted that there are women who, despite the odds, are farming better than men. Moreover, a female farming by herself is often considered a role model for other single women. The number of FHHs is increasing, along with their contribution to overall poverty reduction.³⁵ This highlights the need to provide more support to female farmers.

When men and women were asked about what enables or bars innovation, they gave different answers.³⁶ Women's barriers were gendered, as married women cited limited physical mobility, household chores and related responsibilities as impediments to innovation. Single women cited the high cost of improved seeds and fertilizer, a lack of labor and the increased costs of hiring labor, ownership of smaller plot sizes and ownership of severely degraded plots. Both discussed the importance of self-confidence, knowledge and skill. Men cited money, access to extension services, incentives and role models as being necessary for innovation.

35 Milazzo and van de Walle (2015).

36 Druza, K. and Tsegaye, M. (2018). Gender norms and agency in Ethiopia's agriculture sector. CIMMYT. Retrieved from <https://repository.cimmyt.org/handle/10883/19560>

In Ethiopia, norms governing household relations are changing to become more cooperative; however, social pressure still discourages men from helping with household chores. Sixty percent of male and 42 percent of female participants from Amhara and 57 percent of male and 36 percent of female participants in Oromiya “confirmed” during validation that men are criticized when involved in household chores. Typical responses heard during focus group discussions included that people will ask a man who does chores why he needs a woman in the house. Publicly, housework is seen as “women’s work,” although during individual interviews, men said they help their wives with chores if she is busy.



Women have benefitted from increased decision-making power in the past ten years, but there is still a long way to go before women living in MHHs have the freedom to choose the timing and quantity of crop sales and make financial decisions about the profits. Data found the majority of women in MHHs reported that their husbands made income-generating decisions without consulting the wife. A few of these women reported that they secretly take grains to manage household food security. During validation, 80 percent of adult male and 71 percent of adult female participants as well as 82 percent young male and 67 percent young female participants “confirmed” the presence of the practice and commonly said women “steal” from the harvest to provide for the family. It is perhaps because of inequitable intra-household resource allocation that women perceive that poverty is not decreasing as quickly as men (Fig 1).

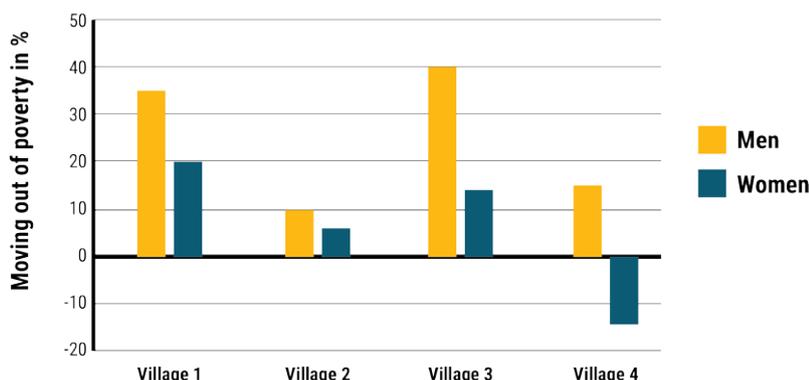


Figure 1. Perceptions about moving out of poverty (2004-2014)

Figure 1 shows that across all four research sites, women perceive that poverty is not decreasing on par with men. This is particularly evident in village four where women feel that poverty is getting worse. This village has overall lower well-being status than the other three villages. While further research is needed to understand why men and women scored so differently on this instrument, it could suggest that women feel poverty more acutely than men.

Given that women are responsible for managing the children’s and household nutrition, gender equality will benefit both the nation’s human capital, and will increase agriculture productivity. While data exists revealing emasculation and other challenges facing men, the research above confirms the literature review that underlying power relations and gender norms have to be addressed for women’s productivity to increase and equitable development to progress.

Can gender norms change?

While gender norms can be restrictive and limit social interaction, they are constantly challenged and negotiated. Gender norms can be an opportunity for change if capitalized on. According to stakeholder interviews, seven transformative methods are used in Ethiopia to address and change gender norms.³⁷ These combine participatory research methods in different ways to enable community members to reflect on their lives and the inequalities that surround them. Although these methodologies are used in agricultural programs, they could be used more in agricultural research and evaluations.

A meta-analysis of agriculture program evaluations demonstrates that when gender norms are factored into program designs, programs reach their goals more quickly and reach women and men more evenly.³⁸ However, certain design aspects are needed to change gender norms. Collecting data on women and gender relations is crucial for learning and mixed methods are important, with qualitative research offering key insights into the contextualized aspects that characterize women's lives, relationships, and communities. However, much agriculture data is quantitative. Programs should engage a variety of community stakeholders, including traditional leaders, men and boys and have multi-component designs which directly target gender transformation or women within their communities to achieve the best results. Gender results should be visible in outcome and impact indicators and projects should be between five and ten years to ensure normative changes.



Photo: CIMMYT/Peter Lowe.

37 Drucza, K. and Abebe, W. (2017). Gender transformative methodologies in Ethiopia's agricultural sector: A review. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia: CIMMYT. Retrieved from <http://repository.cimmyt.org/xmlui/bitstream/handle/10883/19065/58910.pdf>

38 Springer, E. and Drucza, K. (2018). What works for gender-norm change?: Enhancing gender-inclusive agricultural development programming. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia: CIMMYT. Retrieved from <https://repository.cimmyt.org/handle/10883/19617>



A program design that delivers equitable impact for women requires technical gender expertise. There is a lack of technical gender capacity and a shortage of gender researchers in Ethiopia. Gender and agriculture is not a specialization at national universities, which limits the pool of future gender researchers who could fulfil the demand for technical gender inputs.

A key learning from the meta-analysis is the value of organizational or project-wide gender learning and reflection events. These seemed to generate more changes in attitudes than research or evaluation alone. Organizational or project learning events enable implementers and researchers to reflect on ineffective strategies, what causes them and possible solutions to ensure women benefit equally to men.

The new Director General of the Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research (EIAR), Dr. Mandefro Nigussie, champions gender reform. Since CIMMYT's gender audit results³⁹ were shared with EIAR, in early 2018, Dr. Mandefro has requested training for managers, a train the trainer for gender focal people and the development of gender guidelines. He drafted a strategy for gender mainstreaming and has recruited 100 new female scientists. He has taken the organization's percentage of female researchers from 10 percent to 21 percent - the highest in the organization's history. Dr. Mandefro has also committed to recruit three female managers to the senior leadership team and increase the ratio of female scientists to one third. The changes show the GoE's national agriculture research system also recognizes the importance of gender.

³⁹ Drucza, K., Tsegaye, M., Abebe, W., Giref, D., Abebe, L. 2017. Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research Gender Audit. CIMMYT, Ethiopia: Addis Ababa.

Social Equity

Social inclusion (aiming for equal outcomes for different ethnicities, ages, marital status, religions, abilities, along with minority or marginalized groups) is not as common in Ethiopia as gender considerations. Very few studies on social inclusion in Ethiopia's agricultural sector exist, and yet "leaving no one behind" is a part of the SDGs. Granted, the changing political context in Ethiopia and the rise in inter-ethnic conflict create an environment where strengthening ethnic inclusion in agricultural research is a politically-charged topic. Research on youth and disabilities is possible, though, and necessary.

Studies on young people are increasing, but the mainstreaming of youth issues is not common in agriculture. A nationally-representative survey in Ethiopia showed that the youth⁴⁰ and adolescent populations accounted for 41 percent of the total population in 2011.⁴¹ Aside from being a GoE cross-cutting area in GTP II, many young people do a lot of agricultural labor, but not as household heads.

Moreover, data on the aspirations of young, rural dwellers in Ethiopia show that many do not want to remain working on farms.⁴² This will have an impact on risk taking, and agricultural productivity. Consequently, it may be necessary for agriculture surveys to specifically focus on targeting a certain percentage of youth farmers by breaking from the tradition of interviewing only household heads. This will generate important data on young agricultural workers and their aspirations.

GoE's National Plan of Action of Persons with Disabilities (2012-2021) highlights the urgent need to provide equal opportunities for education, skills training and work to people living with a disability. There are approximately 15 million people, or 17.6 percent of the population, living with disabilities in Ethiopia.⁴³ Many of these people reside in rural areas and live in poverty.⁴⁴ Disability is a cross-cutting issue in a number of GoE policies, including the GTP II. Nevertheless, agricultural programs and research centers do not mainstream disability issues and have not done any research on people living with a disability who work in the agriculture sector.

Photo: CIMMYT/Gerardo Mejia Enciso.

40 The UN defines youth as persons in the age group 15-24; The African Youth Charter defines youth as persons in the age group 15-35; Ethiopia's 2012 national land use survey defines youth as people who are 18-29 years old.

41 Central Statistical Agency of Ethiopia. (2012). Household income, consumption and expenditure (HICE) survey 2010/11: Analytical report. Statistical Bulletin. Ethiopia: Central Statistical Agency of Ethiopia.

42 Bezu, S. and Holden, S. (2014). Are Rural Youth in Ethiopia Abandoning Agriculture? *World Development*, 64, 259–272.

43 World Health Organization (2011). *World Report on Disability*. Malta: World Health Organization.

44 International Labor Organization (n.d) Inclusion of People with Disabilities in Ethiopia, Fact Sheet. Ethiopia: International Labor Organization and Irish Aid Partnership Program PROPEL Project.

Conclusion

Technologies change fast, innovation is constant, and markets are volatile. Keeping up requires the effort of whole families, which is why the gendered division of labor is more porous. Women's roles in agricultural development need to be recognized and enhanced in a global economy where migration and sickness means the head of the household cannot always be a man.

The moment is right for the learnings from the agricultural sector to impact other ministries. However, the evidence collected throughout this project suggests that many government and project partners do not know how to assist with the social and gender norm changes necessary to ensure women can benefit from development equitably. Using the existing reform-minded agriculture policies, evaluating their impact on women and taking these results to other government ministries such as the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs and the National Planning Commission should be done to influence the next national development plan and gender policy.



Photo: CIMMYT/Gerardo Mejia Enciso

Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed recently signaled his commitment to strengthening Ethiopia's approach to gender equality through a series of significant changes. He appointed women to 50 percent of his cabinet and appointed the first female president and chief justice. A national agenda on gender change has started from the top and Dr. Mandefro's leadership in EIAR will lead the roll-out in the agricultural research sector. Given the gender-focused Millennium Development Goals that preceded the SDGs were not met, scaling up gender efforts is required.

Stakeholder interviews revealed confusion about gender mainstreaming. More internal reflection on gender and learning throughout organizations

is required. Additionally, wheat scientists need to allocate more funds toward gender research, build linkages with stakeholders who are transforming gender norms, align with GoE's gender mainstreaming approach (e.g., "support gender integration in research



Photo: CIMMYT/Peter Lowe

and development" and "incorporate evidence of the gender analysis in a specific context into research design and implementation")⁴⁵ and network more with gender experts. Enough stakeholder voices point to consistent frustrations and systemic bottlenecks to warrant a focus on institutionalizing gender mainstreaming and strengthening gender capacity.

The SDGs also focus on social inclusion. Continually targeting the "mainstream" in agriculture surveys overlooks the rich diversity of the country's people, climate and crops. Improving gender-sensitive data collection and including other intersectional criteria (age, sex, religion, location, ability, etc.) within national statistics and data collection mechanisms is essential. Moving beyond surveying household heads is needed to deeply understand systems within farming households.

Intra-household research could identify issues pertinent to women and explain the gender difference of ratings of wealth reported in their respective villages, as well as illuminate youth issues. A better understanding of these issues could help identify opportunities for scaling up the benefits of wheat-related innovations to many more women, youth and poor households, which will ultimately increase national agricultural yields.

45 From Agricultural Transformation Agency (ATA) and Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research (EIAR) transformation agenda.

Working with EIAR has revealed the need for in-country technical support that is responsive to EIAR's needs. This requires more flexible program designs and bigger capacity-building budgets. The GoE's priorities have changed dramatically during the lifecycle of this project. More adaptive R4D projects are needed where donors, implementers and local partners work together to co-create the project's approach. Program designs have to allow for shifting resources between activities while maintaining a minimum spend on gender. Too many projects steal from gender budgets to meet other priorities.

Once the capacity and commitment of agricultural research institutes has improved, they should focus on helping state-owned enterprises and the private sector improve their outreach to women by developing gender-friendly products and services. Couple training, mobilizing women into groups, improving their confidence and offering basic financial literacy skills are examples of gender-friendly services that the private sector could offer while a mechanized wheat grinder would be a gender-friendly product. Development partners should also collaborate with seed companies and other private stakeholders to enhance equitable access to improved seeds and related inputs at affordable prices. Women are disadvantaged by the market more than men and the SDGs include working with businesses to fight poverty.⁴⁴ Much work is needed to improve women's market access to wheat innovations and wheat products, including gendered institutional reform.

This analytic overview summarizes the collated evidence from a range of data sources and research outputs from an R4D project that sought to improve the gender and equity focus of wheat-related research and development. It examines Ethiopia's overall agriculture context with a specific focus on wheat and outlines how an insufficient focus on the barriers women face hampers agriculture productivity, economic growth and food security. A number of recommendations are made below for researchers and donors to assist GoE in reaching its own development goals, particularly those associated with gender equality and social equity.

46 "SDGs: an opportunity for business." (2017). London, United Kingdom: RELX Group. Retrieved from <https://sdgresources.relx.com/news-features/sdgs-opportunity-business>



Photo: CIMMYT/Gerardo Mejia Enciso.

Recommendations for strengthening gender and social equity integration in wheat R4D

Achieving gender equality in Ethiopia's agriculture sector will require more effort and investment; yet the return on this investment is clear. 25.4% of rural households are headed by women and women farm managers produce 23.4% less per hectare than men. If Ethiopia wants to become self-sufficient in wheat and meet the SDGs, it can not afford to ignore women's needs and gender inequality. The following is a list of recommendations for researchers and for donors that fund agriculture research for development to strengthen women's role in the agriculture sector.

1. For GoE Researchers

- 1.1. Purposively sample hard-to-reach, agro-ecologically diverse and under-served areas and population groups to help increase the evidence base to most effectively meet the needs of excluded groups and to increase national agricultural productivity.
- 1.2. Offer more gender-sensitive support tailored to female farmers to address their unique barriers.
- 1.3. Complete rich case studies on individuals willing and able to "break" gender norms through their actions.
- 1.4. Conduct research on the needs of male and female farmers as consumers and identify the way products can fill gaps in the existing market and can create demand for new markets. This will help the private sector invest in new technologies to address women's and men's needs.

2. For CGIAR centers

- 2.1. Develop minimum standards for agriculture research that specify the need for inclusive survey designs that purposively sample excluded population groups. Audit and link these standards to incentive funds for good performers.
- 2.2. All wheat R4D design documents should be multi-component designs and aim to increase women's empowerment and access to inputs and extension services while reducing women's unpaid workload and delivering behavior change interventions.
- 2.3. Develop more R4D adaptive programs, where donors, implementers and local partners work together to co-create the research agenda and approach.
- 2.4. Support EIAR to collect data on intra-household relations and the differential impact of wheat technology on men's and women's welfare and gendered identity (e.g. masculinity and femininity). Identify the special barriers different types of women face as farmers over their lifetime.

3. For donors

- 3.1. Give women opportunities to engage in off-farm and higher-value work (e.g. wheat mills and processing) and increase their business acumen.
- 3.2. Support longitudinal studies in agricultural communities to understand how agricultural science travels and how agriculture development affects the social lives of male and female farmers.
- 3.3. Invest in feminist research that takes the viewpoint of a female farmer and collects data about local views on food, notions of healthy eating, dietary needs, and cultural/agricultural change and gender-related behavior change.
- 3.4. Conduct gender and equity-focused policy evaluations of national and agricultural development policies.
- 3.5. Consider funding a strategic, "gender-focused research for development lab". This lab can offer institutional strengthening support for gender mainstreaming for organizations that impact the agriculture sector, assist in the development of a gender and agriculture specialization for national universities to ensure a potential pool of future gender researchers exist and support gender-related PhDs, while filling the gendered data gap.
- 3.6. Invest in the private sector to reach more women as workers, consumers, distributors and producers.

Photo: CIMMYT/Gerardo Mejia Enciso.



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