

GENDER NORMS, AGENCY AND INNOVATION in wheat based systems and livelihoods:

Synthesis report of six
community case-studies
in Pakistan

By: Mulunesh Tsegaye,
Kristie Druzca and
Mahlet Hailemariam



Federal Ministry
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and Development

CIMMYT
MR
International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center

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Table of Contents

List of Tables	ii
List of Figures.....	ii
Executive Summary	iii
List of Acronyms	v
1. Introduction	1
2. Study design.....	2
3. Village case studies.....	5
4. Ladder of Life (LoL)	18
5. Ladder of Power and Freedom (LoPF).....	22
6. Gender norms, attitudes and division of roles	29
7. Agricultural innovations and gender	35
8. Overall conclusion	42

List of Tables

Table 1: Summary of sample size by sex.....	4
Table 2: Overview of GENNOVATE sample and data collection instruments	4
Table 3: Summary of social and demographic information.....	6
Table 4: Community Poverty Line (CPL) on the Ladder of Life (by village)	19
Table 5: Qualities of a “Good Wife” / “Good Husband”	30
Table 6: Qualities of a “Good Farmer”, poor male and female focus groups.....	31
Table 7: What innovations are most important for women?	36
Table 8: What innovations are most important for men?	38

List of Figures

Figure 1: MoP (in %) estimated by women’s and men’s LOL (2005-2015).....	20
Figure 2: Ladder of power and freedom mean step for majority of own sex by village	25
Figure 3: Perceptions of women’s agricultural innovation needs	36
Figure 4: Perceptions of men’s agricultural innovation needs	39
Figure 5: Factors that support innovation for women and men	39
Figure 6: Factors that hinder innovation for men and women	41

Executive Summary

This report summarizes the Pakistan findings from a global qualitative comparative research initiative called GENNOVATE. It covers perspectives and experiences of 351 respondents (174 female and 177 male) of different ages from wheat-growing households across six wheat-growing villages from two provinces (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Baluchistan) in Pakistan.¹ The research reveals that restrictive gender norms are one of the largest barriers facing effective innovation and engagement by women in the agricultural sector. However, women and men from different socioeconomic backgrounds and age groups can be affected by gender norms differently. Moreover, gender norms and expectations can be contradictory and difficult for community members to navigate.

The intra-household decision-making dynamics are complicated in joint-family settings. Men are generally the decision makers, but not all men feel they have a high degree of power and freedom. Elders and khans have the ultimate decision-making power. The general perception is that women do not make any decisions except on household-related chores. However, the findings reveal that women are involved in joint decisions regarding subsistence crops and some livestock products. This implies that there is a certain level of negotiation taking place within households before making decisions. This requires further investigation. Moreover, women gain status as they age. Gender norms and women's decision-making positions are determined by factors such as age and marital status.

Gender differences were observed about expectations of a “good wife” and “good female farmer” and “good husband” and “good male farmer.” The qualities of a “good wife” mainly relate to women's reproductive and household roles as well as socio-culturally “correct” and acceptable behavior. Men are reported to have no role in household chores which is commonly known as women's work. Men are considered the sole provider for the household. Women are widely considered to have little role in bringing the family out of poverty, despite women's involvement in several income-generating activities.

The gendered dimensions of factors shaping socioeconomic mobility and poverty trends were explored. In most cases women did not perceive that poverty in the community was reducing as quickly as men. Female-headed households (FHHs) are said to be among the worst off in their wellbeing status, which is mainly attributed to women's restricted mobility to search for a decent job and other economic opportunities. Men and women in all villages agreed that financial position is one of the major enabling factors for agricultural innovations and decision-making, but this is not true for women. Women from financially well-off families are less mobile, do not work for pay and feel powerless. Consequently, new infrastructure developments and the opportunities that result from them benefit women and men differently.

Women's and men's innovation preferences and opportunities are also different. Generally, men are said to have more opportunities to innovate than women because of their physical mobility,

¹ All village names are pseudonyms to protect participants.

which facilitates access to information, knowledge, skills and financial resources, essential elements for learning about and adopting technology. For men, class impacts a farmer's ability to innovate. Rich farmers with larger land holdings are mainly at the forefront of agricultural innovations. Poorer farmers showed a level of precaution before adopting new technologies and follow the experiences of earlier adopters before they are comfortable adopting for themselves.

Similarly, the factors hindering innovation and technology adoption reflect the gendered norms and expectations of women and men. Women from all villages insisted that the availability of women-only vocational training centers is crucial for them to try to innovate. Women felt they would be allowed to go to these places if they existed. Otherwise, for women, there is no way they can go into public places and learn in the presence of men apart from their relatives. The overall dynamics around enabling and constraining factors for innovation prove that gender norms inform opportunity structures for men and women.

If R4D programs continue to ignore gender norms in programming then men will benefit more than women from innovations and thus, gender inequality will increase. The findings have indicated the need for collaboration with diverse groups of stakeholders across social, economic and political sectors and with progressive opinion leaders to change women's positions in society. Future R4D programs should consider the following points:

- Women and men are not homogenous; therefore, gendered norms affect men and women from different contexts, class, marital status, and age differently. This signifies the need for additional gender analysis to understand contextually-embedded practices that determine women's and men's positions and opportunities in society.
- Effort to transform the strict and deeply-engrained gender norms require intensive male engagement strategies, including Imams. There is a long way to go before women are free to move around, engage in income-earning activities and decide on issues that matter to themselves and their family without men feeling "less."
- Female heads of households (widowed and divorced), mobile women and educated women who joined the professional work force are positive role models and should be promoted as such.

List of Acronyms

CGIAR	Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research
CRP	CGIAR Research Program
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FHH	Female-Headed Households
GENNOVATE	Enabling Gender Equality in Agricultural and Environmental Innovation
KPK	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
LoL	Ladder of Life
LoPF	Ladder of Power and Freedom
MoP	Movement out of Poverty
NRM	Natural Resource Management
PFTD	Power and Freedom to Decide

1. Introduction

Gender norms represent perspectives on what gender relations “should” be like and how individuals of particular genders “should” behave.² While gender norms can be restrictive and limit social interaction, they are constantly challenged and negotiated.

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

The norms surrounding agriculture provide women and men with different roles and opportunities in farming and often result in unequal access to and control over resources. This report presents the Pakistan findings of the global qualitative comparative research initiative GENNOVATE - Enabling Gender Equality in Agricultural and Environmental Innovation led by the CGIAR.³ With robust data about gender dynamics, agricultural development projects can better reach those who are meant to benefit from them and more effectively impact farming families.

The International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT) is a member of the CGIAR and implemented a BMZ funded research for development project (R4D), “Understanding gender in wheat-based livelihoods for enhanced WHEAT R4D impact in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Ethiopia.” The aim of this research project is to help take stock of the current situation regarding the integration of gender and social equity in WHEAT⁴ R4D in the three countries, and to identify and conceptualize opportunities for strengthening this integration. This report is an output from the BMZ funded project.

Wheat is Pakistan’s staple crop. Pakistan is among the top ten wheat-producing countries of the world with an average 25 million tons produced per year.⁵ 40% of Pakistan's agricultural land is dedicated to growing wheat and 80 percent of farmers grow wheat on over 9 million hectares.”⁶ Wheat is sown in the rainy seasons of October and December and harvested from March to May. Since the late 1950s, the government of Pakistan has regulated wheat-related import and export markets to ensure affordable access to the general public and ensure food security. Afghanistan has been the main destination for Pakistan’s exported wheat.

² 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.

³ CGIAR refers to Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research.

⁴ WHEAT is a CGIAR Research Program (CRP).

⁵ Asmat, R. (2017). USDA, Foreign Agricultural Service. Global Agricultural Information Network (GAIN). Retrieved from <https://gain.fas.usda.gov/Recent%20GAIN%20Publications/Grain%20and%20Feed%20Annual%20Islamabad%20Pakistan%204-3-2017.pdf>

⁶ “Spotlight on Pakistan’s Wheat Economy” (2015). Pakistan. Retrieved from <http://www.pakissan.com/english/allabout/crop/wheat/spotlight-on-akistan-wheat-economy.shtml> April 2015

The next section explains the study approach, background, scope and methodology. A case study on each of the six villages follows to help situate the immense amount of data in some context. After that there is an instrument-by-instrument presentation of findings before the conclusion that expanding the benefits of agricultural innovation as widely as possible requires a more gender-equitable environment. There is a need to change unequal gender norms that inhibit innovation and limit food security.

2. Study design

2.1 Study approach⁷

Innovation in agriculture and NRM is vital to reducing rural poverty. Innovation processes that ignore gender inequality, however, are limited in their impact and risk worsening the poverty, workload and well-being of poor rural women and their families. Deep-seated gender norms cause inequalities in the capacities of men and women to contribute to, benefit from and manage risks stemming from agricultural innovation. Other formal and informal institutions drive gender differences in agricultural outcomes and may even disadvantage women outright. How and why agricultural innovations improve women's lives in some settings, but not in others, is not yet well understood. This knowledge gap limits our ability to design and scale out agricultural and NRM innovations that reduce gender inequality on the ground and contribute more effectively to poverty reduction and improved food security, nutrition and environmentally-sustainable livelihoods.

GENNOVATE was designed to build greater knowledge of these fundamental connections between gender equality and agricultural development. Thirteen of the CGIAR research programs (CRPs) are collaborating in this global qualitative comparative research initiative. The research objectives include:

- Providing robust empirical evidence on the relationships among gender norms, capacities for agricultural innovation and other key constraining and enabling elements of local opportunity structures that affect the achievement of the CGIAR's development objectives.
- Informing the CRPs' theories of change and related research portfolios through identifying the gender-based constraints that need to be overcome in different contexts in order to achieve lasting and equitable improvements in agricultural outcomes.

The cross-CRP initiative is investing in strengthening CGIAR research capacities and knowledge sharing on gender and comparative qualitative field research.

⁷ Petesch, P. (2015). Gender Norms, Agency and Innovation in Agriculture and Natural Resource Management Update Report. CGIAR Global Qualitative Comparative Research Initiative.

The global study's research design is informed by a gendered agency-opportunity structure conceptual framework. The analytic approach gives primacy to local men's and women's own understandings, interpretations and experiences with innovating in agriculture and NRM. The notion of opportunity structure recognizes that men's and women's agency is differentially constrained by gender norms and other institutions that shape social status, access to opportunities and the distribution of resources and technologies in their local settings. These factors include family, marriage, religious beliefs, community and markets. Among other factors, the opportunity structure encompasses gender norms and institutional rules, the mix of resources available and the interactions between these dynamics. Resources include such things as plant diversity, agricultural land and irrigation systems inherited from earlier generations, technologies such as new seed varieties, soil fertility enhancement techniques and water management practices, health and education services, infrastructure and social connections.

While opportunity structures can act as powerful constraining elements on human action, these forces are not fixed. Both poor women and men can find ways to maneuver, negotiate and innovate around these constraints to access new opportunities. With a close focus on the gender dimensions, this study seeks to uncover similarities across diverse cultural and agro-ecological contexts regarding interactions among local opportunity structures, men's and women's agency and agricultural innovations.

This report is framed to address the following research questions:

- How do gender norms and agency advance or impede capacity to innovate and the adoption of technology in agriculture and NRM across different contexts?
- How are gender norms and women's and men's agency changing, and under what conditions do these changes catalyze innovation and lead to desired development outcomes? What contextual factors influence this relationship?

2.2 Research methodology

The investigation builds on the "medium-*n*" comparative qualitative research design. The sample spans world regions and diverse agricultural systems as well as important cultural sub-regions (26 countries in total). Drawing on maximum diversity sampling principles, the individual village-level cases are selected purposively to ensure strong variance on two dimensions theorized to be important for outcomes: economic dynamism and gender gaps in assets and capacities. Case selection was informed by the presence of CRP activities in the research areas, and by the potential for joint CRP research and longitudinal research in the sites.

Field teams, trained by the lead consultant, applied a standardized package of seven qualitative data-collection instruments, which include a mix of focus groups, semi-structured individual interviews, key informant interviews and a literature review (see Table 2). This

allows for cross-country comparisons. In Pakistan, data collection began in December 2014 and concluded in February 2015. Local enumerators who spoke the local language were used for data collection to negate the need for translators.

This report covers perspectives and experiences of a total of 351 participants across ages from wheat-growing households in six wheat-growing villages from two provinces: KPK and Baluchistan. Table 1 provides a summary of the sample size disaggregated by sex, village, and data collection instrument.

Table 1: Summary of sample size by sex

Village District	Khanur KPK		Ismashal KPK		Naidura KPK		Duranhai KPK		Balostan Baluchistan		Nareed Baluchistan		Total (n=)	
	female	male	female	male	female	male	female	male	female	male	female	male	female	male
Activities*														
Activity B	2	1	2	2		2	2	2		3	5	2	11	12
Activity C	7	8	8	10	7	8	8	8	8	8	8	9	46	51
Activity D	10	8	7	9	7	8	7	8	8	8	8	8	47	49
Activity E	8	8	7		7	8	7	8	9	8	8	9	46	41
Activity F	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	12	12
Activity G	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	12	12
Total														351

*Activity A: Literature review (not included in this report)

Participants were engaged in discussions on different sets of questions that were used across seven data-collection instruments (Table 2).⁸

Table 2: Overview of GENNOVATE sample and data collection instruments

Tool	Purpose	Total Respondents
Activity A. Literature review	- To situate the case in a wider context by providing general background information about the case study area and relevant findings from recent studies, particularly about the innovations of interest and their gender dimensions	Principle Investigator
Activity B. Community profile	- To provide social, economic, agricultural and political background information about the community	12 male, 11 female key informants

⁸ Adopted from Petesch P., et.al. (2015). Innovation and Development through Transformation of Gender Norms in: Agriculture and Natural Resource Management, *Methodology Guide for Global Study*.

Activity C. Focus group: Ladder of Life (with poor adults)	To understand: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - gender norms and household and agricultural roles, labor market trends and gender dimensions - enabling and constraining factors for innovation, and their gender dimensions, the culture of inequality in the villages, factors shaping socio-economic mobility, poverty trends and their gender dimensions and intimate partner violence 	8 FGDs (46 adult females and 51 adult males aged 30 to 55)
Activity D. Focus group: Capacities for innovation (with middle-class adults)	To understand: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - agency, community trends, enabling and constraining factors for innovation, and their gender dimensions - gender norms surrounding household bargaining over livelihoods and assets, the local climate for agriculture and entrepreneurship, and their gender dimensions, social cohesion and social capital 	8 FGDs (47 adult females and 49 adult males aged 25 to 55)
Activity E. Focus group: Aspirations of youth (with older adolescents and young adults)	To explore: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - gender norms, practices, and aspirations surrounding education, enabling and constraining factors for innovation, and their gender dimensions - women’s physical mobility and gender norms shaping access to economic opportunities and household bargaining as well as family formation norms and practices 	8 FGDs (46 female youth and 41 male youth aged 16 to 24)
Activity F. Semi-structured interview: Innovation pathways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To explore in-depth the trajectory of individual experiences with new agricultural and NRM practices, and the role of gender norms and capacities for innovation in these processes 	A total of 24 interviews (with 2 male, 2 female innovators per site)
Activity G. Semi-structured interview: Individual life stories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To understand the life stories of different men and women in the community who have moved out of poverty, fallen into deeper poverty or remained trapped in poverty. - To understand how gender norms, assets and capacities for innovation in agriculture/NRM and other assets and capacities shaped these different poverty dynamics. 	A total of 24 interviews (2 males and 2 females per site)

3. Village case studies

This section present a case study on each community and highlights the heterogeneity of the country and the value in collecting qualitative data. Data that can show how the social, cultural, geographical, economic and historical aspects of a community can affect men’s and women’s opportunities to advance and their agriculture productivity and how this all interacts with other statuses (age, gender, religion, class etc) can help to highlight entry points for each community. More context-specific data on women’s role in agriculture crops is needed to ensure tailored programming.

As detailed in Table 3, the communities are ethnically diverse. Different languages including Siraiqi, Pashto, Kashmiri, Gujar and Hindko are spoken in the communities. The communities of Khanur and Naidura are close, due to same-cast and inter-cast marriages and are said to have less tension among the communities. The communities of Ismashal and Naidura are

said to be politically active and Duranhai and Khanur are reported to be relatively less active in politics.

Table 3: Summary of social and demographic information

Village	Khanur	Ismashal	Naidura	Duranhai	Balostan	Nareed
District	KPK	KPK	KPK	KPK	Baluchistan	Baluchistan
Distance from government office (in km)	11	40	6	6	1.5	7 to 8
Population	3,000	7,000	6,000	35,000	1,700	1,000
Social groups ⁹	Mareezi 50% Gujar 20% Utman Khel 15% Chichyan 10% Ayaz khel 5%	Khar 25% Thathal 35% Khawar 10% Qureshi (5%) Rawana (5%) Machi (5%) Kokar (5%) Mahani (5%) Nai (5%)	Awan 55% Tanoli 35% Saidan 6% Swati 3% Kashmiri 2% Sayyad 2%	Malakan 10% Peeran 10% Miangan 20% Badrakhel 25% Kakar 15% Qasimkhel 10% Qutminkhel 10%	Uthmankhail 50% Loni 9% Sulemankhail 11% Merani 5% Babozai 10% Kibzai 5% Shamalzai 10%	Lehri 50% Ambi 12.5% Machi 12.5% Aeri 10% Abro 5% Munjo 5% Sojra 5%
Language	Pashto and Gujar	Siraiki	Hindku, Pashto and Kashmiri	Pashto	Pashto	Birahwi, Sindhi, Siraiki

3.1 Khanur, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK)

Khanur is located in the northwestern part of Swat in KPK province. Its history dates back thousands of years. The current population is close to 3,000 people with fifty percent from the Mareezi social group. The other social groups include Gujar (20 percent), UtmanKhel (15 percent), Chichyan (10 percent) and AyazKhel (5 percent). Two major languages, Pashtu and Gujar, are spoken in the area. Recently, Khanur was under the stronghold of the Taliban and, therefore, suffered from continuous militant operations. The situation destroyed the residents' livelihood and many people were displaced to other parts of the country.

Wheat, maize, beans, vegetables (tomatoes and onions) and fruits are grown in the area. The market is located only 3 km away from the village. Farmers grow their crops throughout the year because of the availability of irrigation channels. Rich farmers with more land adopted improved wheat seeds and other recommended practices first. Other farmers then adopted gradually; however, farmers still complain about costs and access to good quality seed being the major inhibitor to adopting improved wheat varieties.

The gender gap in Khanur is extremely high. A "good wife" is the one who does household chores and who does not go out of the house, even if she follows the appropriate dress code.

⁹ For the purpose of this research, "social group" combines and represents ethnic background and religion.

She takes care of her family and in-laws and manages the household budget. Generally, women are entirely responsible for in-home unpaid activities. She is expected to unconditionally obey her husband. A male FGD participant explains a “good wife” can “never say no to anything I ask for.” As a farmer, a woman is responsible for the livestock and vegetables and is expected to raise income from the production. A “good husband” is the sole breadwinner of the household, and to fulfill this responsibility, he needs to be able to diversify his income sources. A “good husband,” who is also a “good male farmer,” needs to increase his productivity through keeping himself well informed and adopting new agricultural innovations.

Women do inherit land under Sharia Law. If a woman inherits cultivable land, she passes the land to her husband, father or brother for cultivation and decisions on the production because women cannot farm independently. Similar to the other villages in KPK and Baluchistan, the decision-making process is very hierarchical. Elders make decisions on marriage and everybody is expected to obey. Young men are consulted on the choice of bride, whereas women have little say.

The people of Khanur live in joint families where married male siblings live together with their parents. There is no polygamy in the village. A second marriage is allowed only when a wife dies. Six percent of the households are reported to be FHHs. Women become the heads of their households in cases of the death of the husband, divorce or male migration. Both widows and male-migrated households are often supported by close male relatives for farming, trading and anything that needs mobility and decision making. Divorcees are cast out and, therefore, suffer the most compared to other FHHs.

Adult male and female FGD participants shared different opinions when it comes to MoP. Women, for instance, feel poverty has increased by 9 percent compared to ten years ago. On the contrary, men feel the situation has remained the same as it was ten years ago. Women and men FGD participants agree that the village is recovering from the effect of the military occupation and it that it will take time for the situation to improve. Additionally, climate change combined with the lack of profit from agricultural products has increased the cost of living and increased labor-related expenses. These factors have collectively affected people’s capacity to move out of poverty. Based on women’s estimation of MoP, Khanur was second to Naidura in relation to poverty.

On the LoPF, the majority of adult women located themselves at steps 1 and 2. Their reflections include common reasons discussed in all six villages. For example, the need for male permission, lack of mobility, lack of education and lack of finances are among the reasons identified. Additionally, strict religious beliefs – a legacy of the Taliban – limit women’s mobility, and increased militancy in the area have worsened the situation for women. For example, women used to work for pay ten years ago; however, this is no longer possible. Young female FGD participants identified their position at step 1 and 2 for similar reasons as those identified by adult women. Young and adult men placed their power and freedom to decide at higher levels (steps 3 and 4). However, their discussion does not reflect

their rating. They argued that their position is still low because of increased vulnerability to poverty due to conflict, natural disasters (mainly climate change), the increased cost of living and lack of infrastructure to leave farm employment and raise adequate income. While they have decision making power within the household, they feel powerless about many extraneous factors that affect their income earning opportunities.

The gender dynamics in Khanur (like Naidura) seems the most conservative compared to other KPK villages (Duranhai and Ismashal) and when compared to Baluchistan (Balostan and Nareed). Indicators include women's inability to work for pay, lower enrollment for girls in schools and only working the land if the land is located out of public sight. Khanur recorded the lowest school enrollment for both boys and girls. Only young men are likely to attend secondary school. The absence of female-only schools is among the reasons for lower female school enrollment.

3.2 Ismashal Case Study, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK)

Ismashal is home to 7,000 people and is located 40 km from Khanur. It is inhabited by at least nine social groups. Among them, the Thathal social group constitutes the largest percentage (35 percent) of the population followed by Khar and Khawar (25 and 10 percent, respectively). Siraiki is the major language spoken in the area.

Similar to the other villages, people live in joint families. Living independently is not common and is not encouraged. Polygamy exists in the village, but it is not widely practiced. Similar to the other villages, male elders are the decision makers and their decisions are binding for all. Women insisted that their decision-making power improves as they age and if they lose their husband and have male children. However, as young women, they have little mobility or freedom and lack decision-making power. This includes regarding who they want to marry which is arranged by their parents. Young men are at least consulted on the issue of marriage and are free to move around or engage in income-generating activities by themselves.

Only widows and divorced women head their own households. Widows become household heads if they do not have close male relatives to make decisions and support them. Seven percent of the households in Ismashal are FHHs. This is the highest percentage of all the villages. Key informants pointed out that male migration has contributed to the increased number of FHHs in the village. Female divorcees are cast out and less respected than widows. Similar to the other villages, these FHHs are considered to be on the lowest steps of the LoL.

The people of Ismashal depend on farming and livestock rearing. The land is fertile, and with the availability of irrigation, farmers can produce throughout the year. The main crops grown include wheat, sugar cane, rice, vegetables and pulses. Dairy and poultry is a developing business in the area. Heavy floods in 2010 destroyed crops and severely affected the community's livelihood. As a result, many non-governmental organizations and Pakistan's agriculture department started supporting farmers.

The gender gap is wide but can be considered slightly more equal than Khanur's. Similar to Balostan and Nareed, women in Ismashal can work for pay, especially as farm laborers. Women are paid Rs400¹⁰ per day for hired farm work which is Rs100 per day less than men are paid. Women inherit land and other properties under the Sharia law; however, women often leave their share to their brother or husband as they cannot make decisions about the land nor farm it independently. This is a common practice in all the villages except Nareed. Women in Ismashal feel more mobile than women in Khanur. They can move in the village by themselves as long as they are covered, as people in the community are blood relatives. However, just as in the other five villages, they need male permission to engage in productive activities and to go out of the house. As in the other villages, women from economically better-off families do not engage in trading or work for pay.

With the recent growth in infrastructure, both women and men feel more positive in relation to their capacity to generate income and potential to change their lives for the better. The construction of sugar mill factories, and access to irrigation and tube wells in the area have provided alternative means of on- and off- farm employment. The construction of connecting roads has facilitated better access to markets, which contributes to people's livelihoods.

Women in Ismashal, unlike Khanur and Naidura, support their husbands in farming and can work for pay. Women participate in sowing, weeding and harvesting on wheat farms. They are responsible for livestock rearing and vegetable gardening, as well as the post-harvest handling of crops. Currently, women can sell the produce from their agricultural activities from home, work as tailors and in factories. These opportunities have contributed to the optimism they share with men concerning opportunities to move out of poverty. However, as in Naidura, the positive trends in economic performance do not deter men from leaving the area in search of income.

Men from Ismashal feel that their power and freedom to make decisions is increasing because of their improved financial positions. Women feel similarly due to their ability to earn a living. However, this feeling is not shared by young women who feel their power and freedom is at the lowest stage of the ladder of power and freedom because of age and financial positions. Young women insisted that prevailing gender norms restrict their opportunities.

Choices of new agricultural and NRM practices reflect existing gendered divisions of roles, responsibilities and expectations. Similar to the other villages, agricultural innovations and NRM practices are assumed to be important for men, not women. According to FGD participants, men are closer to innovation because of their mobility, access to education and information and financial positions. Women are assumed to have less knowledge about and need for innovation. When combined with other gender norms such as a lack of mobility, needing male permission for decisions and travel, lack of financial power and lack of access

¹⁰ 1 Rupee = 0.014USD

to female-specific agricultural services and training centers, women have less opportunities to innovate than men.

3.3 Naidura Case Study, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK)

Naidura is home to 6,000 people, and 55 percent of them are from the Awan social group. Hindku, Pashtu and Kashmiri is spoken in the village. Farming is a source of livelihood for the majority of residents. The farming of maize and wheat depends mainly on seasonal rain. Rain-fed agriculture, together with the lack of irrigation facilities, non-functioning tube wells (as a result of lower water levels in the canals) and small plots of land, are discouraging people from farming. Improved wheat varieties and recommended practices are adopted very gradually in the village. One of the reasons for this includes the dependence on rain-fed agriculture and the high cost of improved seed varieties and recommended practices. Therefore, the inhabitants are trying to move away from farming and look for off-farm employment alternatives.

Two types of households dominate the area. The first type is common to all the villages: the joint family, or parents living with their married male child in the same house. The second type is independent households, where married couples live independent of the rest of the family. Independent households are not encouraged, as it is assumed that men in independent families are influenced by their wife in making decisions.

In Naidura, 2.5 percent of the households are reported to be FHHs. Widowed women with adult sons enjoy higher levels of decision-making power and freedom compared to other women in FHHs. Divorced women are cast out and suffer the most. FHHs with access to male labor¹¹ engage in farming, and market their products through their male relatives. Without male labor, women suffer because of community norms that restrict women's mobility, attitudes around women working for pay and women's limited presence in market places and as traders. Women from FHHs with no male labor are less respected compared to FHHs supported by a male relative and are located at the lowest level of the ladder of life.

Khans own most of the land in this community, are educated and considered knowledgeable. This highly-respected group comprises the ultimate decision makers in the village. *Khans* make decisions in their households and for their tenants. The people of Naidura are considered relatives due to the same cast and inter-cast marriages; therefore, there is less tension among them. However, since 2012, the heavy influx of displaced people from the earthquake has led to increased crime in the village. Displaced people are not controlled by the *khans*.

Some adult male FGD participants discussed the declining role of *khans*. Consequently, adult female and male participants indicated an increase in power and freedom to make decisions. Increased access to education together with more opportunities to move away from farming as the main source of subsistence led to a situation where people are making their own

¹¹ Male labor includes relatives (husband's brother, own brother, father or son) who support FHH.

decisions. On the other hand, both young men and young women reported having less power and freedom to make decisions, as decisions are made by parents and elders. However, compared to young women, young men are better informed and consulted in some decisions, such as choice of marriage partners. Young men mentioned that their level of independence improves once they get married. Unmarried young men who happen to become heads of their households due to the death of their fathers make decisions for their households and continue to hold this position after marriage. Young men indicated that social status matters when it comes to decisions, as landlords often decide for their tenants.

Similar to the other villages, Sharia law allows women to inherit property including land and leave their share to close male relatives. However, the difference is that the distribution of inherited land is reported by women to be unfair as women are given invaluable or non-cultivable land. Women cannot farm independently nor as hired farm laborers. They only support their husbands on the farm if the farm is located out of public sight. Women require permission from men to do anything productive and their mobility is limited. Women cannot be in the same place as men other than close relatives. These factors indicate a wide gender gap similar to the other villages.

Naidura reported a better level of school enrollment for girls compared to Khanur in KPK due to the availability of single sex schools, both private and public, primary and secondary. Despite this, the findings revealed that the prevailing negative perception toward women working for pay limits women's involvement in paid jobs. For example, 10 percent of adult women take jobs as farm laborers currently, compared to 30 percent ten years ago. With regards to the gender dynamics, Naidura is the only village that reported declining numbers of women working for pay, despite increasing access to girls' education.

Similar to Khanur, adult male and female participants share different opinions on opportunities to move out of poverty. Men feel poverty has remained the same. For them, the high level of dependence on farming and male migration in search of income combined with the ever-increasing costs of living have contributed to the lack of improvement.

Women feel more people are under the CPL, meaning poverty has worsened by 33 percent. This is the highest percentage of poverty compared to women's estimates from the other villages. The main reasons, according to the women, include their inability to make meaningful incomes through working independently. For example, women used to work ten years ago, but are no longer working because of negative attitudes toward working women. Likewise, women's estimates show increasing numbers of households sliding under the CPL, up to 20 percent from 15 percent ten years ago. This is the highest estimate of an increase in the proportions of the poor compared to all villages.

The findings revealed contradictory remarks about the division of labor. Though men are the breadwinners, women are expected to generate income from home-based informal enterprises such as dairy production and embroidery. In addition, one of the qualities of a "good female farmer" is "having knowledge and being able to take full responsibilities in

each farming activity with her husband.” Yet the discussions revealed that women are not generally considered to have any role in farming in most of the villages, including Naidura. In addition, the man makes all the decisions on production and trading, leaving women superfluous. This situation creates a paradox for women.

3.4 Duranhai Case Study, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK)

Duranhai is located 6 km from the region’s capital. The history of the village can be traced back thousands of years. A quarter of the social groups are from the Badrakehl social groups and Pashtu is predominantly spoken in the area. Thirty-five thousand people live in the area of Duranhai – the largest population of the six villages both in KPK and Baluchistan. In 2010, a heavy flood hit the village. The inhabitants’ livelihoods were disrupted, and many migrated out of the village. Following the flood, children suffered from hepatitis, cholera and diarrhea outbreaks.

Farm land holdings are becoming increasingly smaller as a result of continued inheritances. Smallholders dominate the farming system and grow wheat, maize, rice, sugarcane, vegetables and fruits. Farmers depend on a sufficient irrigation infrastructure used entirely by men. However, the small size of the land holdings affects agriculture productivity; as a result, residents are trying to move away from farming. Many are moving toward off-farm employment alternatives. Poultry farms are becoming a source of employment for many.

The divisions of labor and the qualities describing a “good husband/wife” and “good female/male farmer” reflect strict expectations and responsibilities between men and women. For example, women are almost entirely engaged in unpaid in-home activities, including chores, livestock rearing, vegetable gardening and the post-harvest handling of crops. Women in the area often do not go to school or, even if they do, they cannot go beyond elementary school. Women are not allowed or encouraged to work for pay except in teaching in private female-only schools and as health workers. No women work as farm laborers. All these factors imply a wide gender gap informed by strict gender norms.

Sharia law allows women to inherit land and other properties. However, key informants reported that women do not inherit equal to men. A male sibling is given twice the size of land that a female sibling would get, and still women are expected to leave their share to their brothers. Traditionally, women eat last, after the men and children are done eating. In addition, no women are allowed to sell or buy from the market by themselves. They must be accompanied by a man. Women often trade from home. However, the price is reported to be less when they do sell from home than what is expected in the market. Women are responsible for post-harvest handling such as cleaning and storing subsistence crops. They do not work on the farm and are not consulted about farming now, nor were they ten years ago. Key informants estimated that only 8 percent of women are employed in off-farm activities.

Joint family systems dominate the household types. Few live independently from the rest of the family. FHHs comprise 2.5 percent of households. FHHs face difficulties in fully attending

to their family's needs without a man's help. As a result, young widows are often taken care of by their close male relatives or in-laws. Older widows with adult sons are often supported by their children but assume a decision-making role within the household.

Decisions are made by elders, and everyone obeys. Decisions are made on a woman's behalf concerning subsistence crops, marriage, schooling and more. Joint decisions are only made when it concerns livestock. Adult men indicated higher levels of power and freedom to decide, compared to women. Young girls placed themselves at the lowest level of the ladder of power and freedom. Men felt their decision-making power is increasing because of more education. Women feel that their decision-making power has increased with age, as they are consulted about some limited matters. On the other hand, young male participants from Duranhai feel less empowered to make decisions than in other villages. They stressed that as long as the man has no means of income, he cannot make his own decisions.

Focus group discussion participants felt they have better chances of moving out of poverty compared to those from Khanur or Naidura. Duranhai is the only village among the six villages where women's movement out of poverty (MoP) estimate exceeds men's. Women estimated a 20 percent MoP and men estimated no MoP. Men in Duranhai felt MoP remained the same compared to ten years ago. Both men and women participants agreed that access to education is an enabling factor that has helped many women and men acquire skills and find off-farm employment opportunities. Farmers are no longer depending on smallholder farms for their income because they have more off-farm employment opportunities and, where possible, seek to diversify their income sources. In addition, men migrate to Arab countries in search of employment. The positive economic outlook has not contributed to retaining male labor in the local economy.

Agricultural innovation, adoption and NRM practices are considered important for men. Women are not counted as farmers, despite their role in vegetable gardening and livestock rearing. New seed varieties and farm machinery are chosen as the most important agricultural and NRM practices for men, while new vegetable varieties and training on livestock are chosen for women. These choices reflect the prevailing division of labor and expectations surrounding a "good male/female farmer." The findings showed agricultural innovations such as improved seeds and recommended practices are adopted fairly quickly by men. Those who managed to adopt early and hold more land benefit the most from early adopting. Improved seeds are available at agriculture extension offices or from the market. However, the lack of availability of good seeds is the biggest challenge to early adoption.

With the diversity in location and wealth status, it is difficult to compare this highly populated village with the other villages in relation to wealth status. However, Duranhai shares similar gender dynamics with the other villages, both in KPK and Baluchistan.

3.5 Balostan Case Study, Baluchistan

Balostan is located 3 km from the nearest town. The village was established more than 200 years ago during the British occupation. The people of the village mainly are from the Kakar

Uthmankhail sub-tribe of the Pashtun tribe and 50 percent of the population belongs to this rich and politically-strong tribe. A considerable number of refugees from Afghanistan also live in the area.

Joint families dominate the family setting in the village. Polygamy exists; however, it is reported that it is not common. Men and young boys above the age of ten are served meals together before women and younger children eat. Unlike Khanur, Naidura or Ismashal, divorced women live with their parents or relatives. Only widows become female heads of households. It is reported that 3.5 percent of the households are FHHs in Balostan. Female heads of households cannot adequately lead their own family without a male relative's help. A woman cannot go to market by herself; therefore, a female head of a family needs a close male relative to do most of her activities outside of the house. Therefore, mostly FHHs depend on charity (*zakat*) from rich families.

Inheritance is allowed for women under the Sharia law. However, unlike the other villages, sons of a deceased father inherit big assets, such as land. The wife and daughters are often ignored during inheritance; in some cases, they can be given small proportions of the share in cash or in kind. Such practices put land under the full control of men.

Recently, education has received special attention. People send their sons to quality education in cities, but young girls are not given such opportunities. Girls' enrollment in schools is reported to be improving with the establishment of a girl's only middle school.¹² Currently, it is estimated that 70 percent of male and 60 percent of female children are attending schools. The presence of a *Madrasa* (religious education institution) contributed to the growing number of male and female children to be enrolled in schools.

Agriculture is the mainstay of the village. Vegetables such as cauliflower and tomatoes, fruits and nuts like almonds, apricots and apples and wheat are grown for both subsistence and commercial purposes. Women are engaged in livestock production and poultry. Women are responsible for grain storage and seed cleaning. As in the other villages, women cannot engage in farming independently. However, women (especially from economically-poor families and from FHHs) are hired as day laborers during harvesting. Participants said that the introduction of combined harvesters is replacing women's paid labor. The widespread perception indicates that agricultural innovations and knowledge concerning farming is more important for the men than for the women, as the man is considered to be the farmer.

The findings revealed that gendered norms affect women from different backgrounds (such as socioeconomic status and age) differently. For example, women from rich families are not as mobile as those from poor backgrounds. Rich women are said to leave their houses only to visit a doctor. Poor women who work outside of the house for pay are not respected and are considered "untamed." Decisions are made for women, married or not. They are never consulted in decisions that matter to their lives and are expected to obey. On the other hand, older women with adult sons can influence decisions. An in-depth gender analysis is required

¹² In 2007, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO) established the middle school for girls.

in agriculture communities before projects are designed to understand which norms affect who and in what ways.

Development programs such as UNDP Pakistan (the Refugee Affected and Hosted Areas program) built several types of infrastructure to support agriculture from 2010 to 2013 and expanded education facilities. Despite efforts to improve agricultural and NRM practices, adaptations of improved wheat varieties were not as successful due to a lack of quality seeds. The low level of education, the lack of appropriate knowledge with regards to improved seeds and recommended practices, the lack of value adding to farm products, the irregularity of electricity and the lack of quality farm inputs (such as seeds, fertilizer and chemicals including herbicides) remain major challenges for farmers to improve their livelihoods.

Male and female participants shared positive opinions¹³ when it comes to the ability to move out of poverty. Infrastructure expansion, including education facilities, roads and dams, improved connectivity and mobility, which in turn resulted in better employment and income-generation opportunities. Population growth in the area is contributing to booming private businesses for men. Increased off-farm employment opportunities together with improved farming practices contributed to the ability to diversify income sources and the improvement in people's livelihood. This means people who are engaged in farming while also earning monthly salaries or who generate income through private businesses and employment in government institutions are able to positively change their lives.

Adult and young women's opinions show major differences when it comes to decision making. For example, young women felt they have no decision-making power and women only have the power to influence decisions on issues concerning household chores and their dress. However, adult women insisted that men consult them in some farming and income decisions, which shows increased decision-making power.¹⁴

Unlike the other villages, young men noted the highest levels of decision-making freedom and power, even compared to older men from the same village. Their discussion has not revealed why the boys from Balostan feel this way. On the contrary, 35.7 percent of the adult male participants indicated they were on step 2 of the ladder of power and freedom and 25 percent of them indicated step 1. This is a lower score than women from the same village and the lowest compared to men's votes from the other five villages. Men indicated that, although they are decision makers, practical life circumstances, such as levels of education and financial challenges, make it difficult for them to be decisive. Others added that the higher cost of inputs discourages smallholders from investing in their farms. Men's opinions showed anomalies compared to the general optimism about recent improvements in

¹³ Out of 20 households, women estimated nine (compared to 11 households ten years ago) and men estimated five (compared to ten households ten years ago), are under the community poverty line, showing increasing trends of movement out of poverty, compared to Naidura and Khanur.

¹⁴ Four out of eight adult female Activity D participants indicated step 3 (out of a five-step ladder of power and freedom to decide) and three participants indicated step 4. This indicates the highest step, compared to Khanur, Naidura, Ismashal and Duranhai, where the majority of the participants indicated step 2).

infrastructure and opportunities to move out of poverty and when it came to male decision-making.

Women in Balostan do not yet benefit directly from the growing positive trends in their village. Prevailing gender norms and societal pressures on women limit some of them (for example, women from rich families and young women) from engaging in productive activities irrespective of location or dress code. However, recent changes such as increasing girls' school enrollment, is likely to have a positive effect on gender norms in the future.

3.6 Nareed Case Study, Baluchistan

Nareed is located 7 km from the main town of Baluchistan. It was established in 1978 following the construction of the canal that irrigates most of the Nassirabad divisions. Nareed is home to 1,000 people and is the least populated village compared to all the villages. Half the residents are from Brahvi-Baloch sub-tribes, who are the major land owners. The rest of the inhabitants (Ambi, Machi, Aeri, Abro, Munjo and Sojra sub-tribes of Sindi and Saraiki tribes) are said to be tenants who work on the lands owned by the Brahvi-Baloch sub-tribe. The population depends on agriculture and grows wheat, vegetables and chickpeas. Fish farming, poultry and livestock rearing are common agricultural activities in the village.

As with the other five villages, joint family settings are common in the area. Women and small children eat last, but there is no discrimination on the type of food the family members eat. Only one female-headed household is reported to exist in the area. Similar to Khanur, polygamy is not allowed in Nareed, except in cases of childless marriages.

Livelihoods have been affected by man-made and natural disasters over the past ten years. For example, since 2005, the area has suffered from political unrest. Heavy rain resulted in flash floods in 2010 and 2012, damaging 70 percent of the land in the area. Additionally, waterborne diseases and hepatitis have affected the majority of the population. Despite these challenges, the availability of irrigation systems encourages engagement in farming.

Improved wellbeing is reported compared to 10 years ago, despite the challenges discussed above. Nareed is among the four villages¹⁵ that reported improved wellbeing. Men's estimate (63 percent MoP) is almost double women's estimate (33 percent MoP). The men's estimation is the highest out of the three other villages (Ismashal, Duranhai and Balostan) that reported MoP. Young and adult men identified their power and freedom to make decisions at step 2 because decisions for tenants are made by landlords. Although infrastructure development is creating income opportunities, men find it difficult to fulfill their families' needs.

Population growth, construction of roads which increased connectivity to larger livestock and crop markets, availability of farm machines, including combine harvesters and reapers,

¹⁵ Nareed, Ismashal, Duranhai and Balostan reported improved wellbeing in their villages.

access to the internet and mobile phones and increased access to education are some of the reasons that contribute to better opportunities to move out of poverty in Nareed. Compared to women, men benefited the most from these new developments because they are more mobile, have more diverse networks and are involved in trading.

Similar to Balostan and Naidura, single-sex schools are available in Nareed, facilitating better access to education for both boys and girls. Educated women acquire off-farm employment opportunities as factory workers, tailors, health workers and teachers. Unlike in other villages, no information on the village's perception of women engaged in off-farm activities was gathered; therefore, this is an area for further investigation.¹⁶ In addition, many participants argued that those who generate their own income have better decision-making positions. Yet, women have fewer decision-making abilities and opportunities. Thus, there is a need to further explore how such off-farm employment and ability to earn their own income has changed the household decision-making dynamics for women and men.

Similar to the other villages, gender norms in Nareed are strict but show complexity in how they manifest in people's daily lives. For example, women are involved in the production and post-harvest processing which adds value to crops and livestock products, but they do not participate in making decisions about or trading the products. The wage gap is high between male and female workers. Women are paid Rs150 a day compared to Rs300-350 a day for men for on-farm activities. Women in Nareed, tenants or not, need male permission to engage in any activity.

Though Sharia law allows women's inheritance, women do not inherit in Nareed, unlike in other villages. According to a key informant, "...women do not ask for their share as cousin marriages are very common and also because they are taken good care of and their needs are fulfilled." This is a different practice from the other villages, where women inherit but leave their inheritance to their brother or husband.

Norms and expectations around a "good wife" in Nareed show some differences from the other villages based on the socioeconomic backgrounds of women. For example, women from tenant families are expected to support their husbands in the field, even if she is pregnant or has a small child. Everyone in tenant families work with the man, unless they are too old or sick. In the other villages, such as Khanur, Naidura and Duranhai, young girls do not work outside of the house.

Women from rich households do not assist in farm work. They have to remain in the house doing household chores. Therefore, a "good wife" in a rich family is confined to the house and is less mobile than female tenants. The only two women who indicated they have reached step 5 on the ladder of power and freedom were from Nareed. These women indicated that the loss of their husbands, age and having adult sons gave them more power and freedom to make decisions. Others insisted access to education and off-farm employment contributes to women's visibility in decision making. Women from the village

¹⁶ Women employed on farms are disrespected and are perceived as "untamed."

argued that female tenants have more decision-making power and freedom than women from rich families because of their ability to generate their own income and their mobility. These responses indicate that gender norms and discriminatory practices compound with socio-economic status to affect women's opportunity structures.

Farmers with more land benefited the most from improved seed varieties and the recommended practices, compared to smallholders. Rich farmers tried out new wheat varieties as they can afford the seeds and the associated risks. Adoption is slower among smallholders because of the cost and availability of good quality seeds.

The gender dynamics prove to be highly complex and, therefore, difficult to draw conclusions about. For instance, the gender gap is wide but can still be considered better than the gap in Naidura and Khanur, when considering a young girl's access to education and women's on- and off-farm employment. However, further investigation on women's employment for pay reveals that only women from economically less prosperous families work for pay. Additionally, Nareed is an exception when it comes to women's inheritance. Such complexity necessitate in-depth and context-specific gender analysis.

This section has served to contextualize the differences between the six villages. The following section begins an instrument-by-instrument comparison of the results to further examine differences and similarities and to help the reader understand the methodology better.

4. Ladder of Life (LoL)

The Ladder of Life exercise (Activity C) involved focus group discussions with poor adults. It aimed to understand the following issues: the culture of inequality in the village, factors shaping socio-economic mobility, poverty trends and their gender dimensions, intimate partner violence and gender norms around household and agricultural roles. It also aimed to understand the labor market trends and gender dimensions and identify the enabling and constraining factors for innovation by gender.

Participants were given 20 seeds to place on the ladder, representing the percentage of households on each step. This exercise is repeated to ascertain how many people lived below the poverty line ten years ago. Following this, the respondents are guided into a discussion about the assets and capacities of people on each step, and the experiences of women and men in moving up, getting stuck or falling down the ladder.¹⁷

All FGD participants in the six villages indicated that households on top of the ladder are the very well-to-do families, or the "rich" locally known as *moorhh* (in Balostan) and

¹⁷ The numerical findings provide the basis for generating a summary statistic [Moving out of Poverty = (Share of poor 10 years ago – share of poor now) ÷ (share of poor 10 years ago)] for comparing perceptions of local poverty dynamics across the focus groups and case studies. While it is not possible to compare the ladders directly because they differ, it is possible to compare views about change on the Ladders of Life.

landlords/*bhota* (in Nareed). These villagers mostly own big businesses, many livestock, and are financially stable and thus they tend to have no stress about money. They live in extended family settings and own well-constructed big houses, own cars, tractors, big businesses, modern farming machinery, and big farms.

Male and female community members placed at this step are among the well-educated groups of the society. Their wives do not generally work because they have servants. Unlike other groups, the women in this group participate in politics. These people are highly-influential, respected and people tend to seek advice from them.

On the contrary, at the lowest step of the ladder are people who are considered the most destitute, or *Baddhaal*.¹⁸ These people are said to have no property such as land or proper housing. They tend to live with the charity of the rich [a practice locally known as *zakaat*¹⁹] because none of their family members actually earn any money. Even if they do, it is too small to cover the household needs. They do not participate in farming as they do not have their own land or in some cases they work as laborers on other farms. They often have too many dependents for their income. The women often “try to make ends meet working as laborers or as servants and are not respected.” Widowed and divorced women (FHHs) with no male relatives to take care of them and orphans are identified among this group.

4.1 Community Poverty Line (CPL)

After participants identified the different households that belong at each ladder step, they determined the Community Poverty Line (CPL). The CPL represents the ladder step where households in the village are no longer considered poor. Next, they identify the reasons why people move up and down the steps of the ladder.

The question asked in this exercise was: What is the step or category of the ladder where people in this village are no longer considered poor? [Please note this on the ladder by drawing a line and labeling it as the "community poverty line.”]

Table 4: Community Poverty Line (CPL) on the Ladder of Life (by village)

	Khanur	Ismashal	Naidura	Duranhai	Balostan	Nareed
Men	Step 2	Step 2	Step 2	Step 2	Step 2	Step 2
Women	Step 3	Step 2	Step 3	Step 2	Step 2	Step 2

The Community poverty line was designated to step 2 on the ladder by all villages except for Khanur and Naidura where the women indicated it was at step 3. Respondents were then asked to estimate the percentage of households in their respective villages that have moved from below to above the poverty line in the last ten years (2005 to 2015). Figure 1 shows the

¹⁸ The worst off (in the local language from Nareed)

¹⁹ Zakaat is charity in the Muslim religion.

movement out of poverty (MoP) estimates over the past ten years with Khanur and Naidura reporting no change.

Figure 1: MoP (in %) estimated by women’s and men’s LOL (2005-2015)

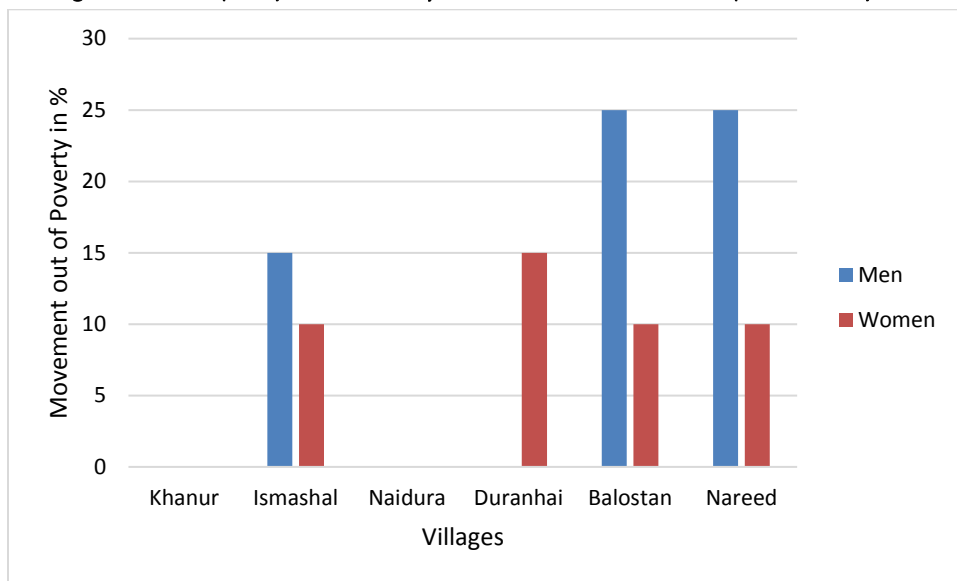


Fig. 1 shows the range of responses in ratings by male and female respondents with regards to MoP of their respective villages. Male and female respondents in Khanur and Naidura and male respondents in Duranhai reported no change in poverty over the past ten years. Some of the reasons women gave for their reported decrease in poverty include access to women-only education facilities which increased women’s employment opportunities in off-farm activities. According to a female FGD participant in Duranhai “women are working as health workers, teachers and the like because they have been educated.” Discussions show that women see the poverty status of Duranhai over the past 10 years through the lens of their own status change.

Male and female respondents from Khanur and Naidura stressed that continued civil unrest, restricted mobility of women and natural disasters (drought and earthquakes) contributed to continuing poverty in their respective villages. Male respondents also added that lack of adequate off-farm job opportunities and other income-generating activities (as the village is just emerging out of conflict and natural disasters) make it very difficult to move out of poverty.

Meanwhile, in Balostan and Nareed, men reported a 25 percent increase in movement out of poverty and female respondents reported a 10 percent increase. In Ismashal, male respondents also reported a higher (15 percent) rate of movement out of poverty than their female counterparts (10 percent).

4.2 Factors that cause movement up, down or stagnation on the CPL

Participants discussed various factors contributing to the socioeconomic mobility of a household, particularly its ability to move out of poverty. According to participants, the ability to diversify income sources or livelihoods is the main strategy to move up the ladder. In addition, it is generally indicated that people who use innovations increase productivity, which in turn contributes to the improvement of their livelihoods.

For those men and women who have ranked more households moving out of poverty, for example in Balostan and Nareed, infrastructural development and resulting opportunities contributed a great deal toward people's ability to move out of poverty. They attributed these changes to factors including improved farming techniques, including chemical fertilizers, improved seeds and the increased availability of farm machinery, all of which contributed to increased productivity. Some participants mentioned that the ability to diversify income sources or livelihoods helps people move up the ladder, such as people who are engaged in farming and also earn a monthly salary or generate income through engagement in private businesses and employment in government institutions. Therefore, infrastructure development and income diversification can lead to better progress regarding MoP. However, women benefit indirectly from infrastructure due to gender norms around mobility and working outside the house. Future development programs should facilitate ways for both women and men farmers to benefit directly from development interventions to ensure inequality does not increase.

Both women and men asserted that women make little contribution to moving their family up the ladder or to rise above the CPL on the ladder. One female FGD participant from Khanur said that "only the man can improve the household's situation through creating better income opportunities. How can a woman bring any change?" This highlights the perception that it is a man's role to provide for the family and bring the family out of poverty.

The findings reveal that women are considered to have neither the responsibility nor the capacity to bring their family out of poverty. As a male participant from Duranhai observed, "women are not educated and have no skills that would enable them to bring large incomes to their families." Male FGD participants felt it was their duty to lift their families out of poverty. Women's perceived lack of a role in poverty reduction relates to the prevailing gender norms, which confine women to the house and prohibit them from paid work. Women do work on farms and within the house in unpaid care roles and in small enterprises. They also tend to livestock and home gardens, but gender norms combined with misperceptions undervalue their contributions.

FGD participants raised a number of reasons that do not necessarily conform to the norms and assumptions governing women's work for pay in the process of movement on the ladder. For example, one male participant from Naidura said that "Those whose wives are also engaged in generating income through dairy production and embroidery and contributing to household necessities manage to change their lives" and move up the ladder. Though both male and female FGD participants from all villages stressed women do not have a significant

role in MoP, some mentioned that “wives should use household resources including crops economically [avoid wastage] in order to contribute to the household’s success in coming out of poverty.” FGD participants identified that illness in the family, lack of employment, natural disasters such as floods and earthquakes and civil war contribute to a fall below the CPL .

4.3 Conclusion to LoL

Looking across the case studies, men and women rate poverty differently. Yet all villages link moving out of poverty to innovating (adopting new farm technologies, use of infrastructure and machines) and mobility (being able to move around for information, training, markets and migration). Women generally stressed access to schools/education as an important step toward women’s increased ability to work outside the house. Educated women in villages such as Ismashal and Balostan are hired as health workers and teachers.

There is an overall sense of wellbeing in at least four villages: Ismashal, Duranhai, Balostan and Nareed. However, men in Ismashal and Balostan are migrating to Arab countries in search of better opportunities for work. This makes it very important to understand the push factors for migration. Additionally, deep-seated gender norms contribute to the prevailing perceptions about whose labor is valued and what is valued the most in the community. For example, women’s home-based economic ventures are not seen as important to the household’s economy.

The poverty-ranking process under Activity C revealed that men and women view poverty differently but share the idea that movement out of and into poverty is highly connected to one’s ability to earn a living. Both men and women respondents repeatedly mentioned diversification of income sources as an opportunity to improve livelihoods and a family’s well-being. The prevailing community perception is that working outside the house for pay is important for both men and women in terms of moving their households out of poverty. However, women who work outside the house for pay (mostly women from poor families, widows and divorced) are less respected by their respective communities, and this creates a paradox for these women.

5. Ladder of Power and Freedom (LoPF)

In each village, data collection was conducted in two focus groups. One constituted a group of eight to ten adult men (aged 25 to 55) and the other was a group of eight to ten adult women (aged 25 to 55) in the middle socioeconomic group of their respective villages. Additionally, data was generated from Activity F (semi-structured individual interviews and innovation pathways) and Activity G (semi-structured interviews: Individual life stories). FGD participants and semi-structured individual interview participants were asked to construct a five-step ladder and rank their degree of power and freedom to make decisions on a scale of one to five steps:

- Step 1: Almost no power or freedom to make decisions

- Step 2: Only a small amount of power and freedom
- Step 3: Power and freedom to make some major life decisions
- Step 4: Power and freedom to make many major life decisions
- Step 5: Power and freedom to make most major life decisions

Questions asked under this activity include:

- On which step of this ladder would you position the majority of (sex of FGD) in the village today? Why?
- On which step of this ladder would you position the majority of (sex of FGD) ten years ago? Why?
- What has (or has not) changed for FGD participants in this community?
- How do families here make decisions about how much wheat to sell and how much to keep for use in the home for food?
- How are females usually involved in these decisions? And males?
- What factors influence this decision for females? And for males?
- What local norms shape household decision-making about female's earnings from agriculture/NRM and their marketing activities?

5.1 Intra-household decision-making

An overwhelming number of women from all villages placed their power and freedom to decide at step 1 or 2 on the ladder, indicating the lowest levels. According to women who are on the lowest steps, the reason behind the low ratings is the need for women to get male permission to do anything meaningful in their lives.

Although women placed their power and freedom to make decisions at the lower steps of the ladder, women from all villages except Khanur feel that their power and freedom to make decisions has increased compared to ten years ago. They argued changes in social circumstances led to such increases. Especially in Ismashal, Balostan and Nareed, increased access to single-sex schools enabled women to work in positions such as nurses, health workers, teachers and factory workers that were not available to them ten years ago. Women from Khanur stressed that their decision-making power has declined because of strict gender norms that limit women's ability to work for pay, which is the legacy of the Taliban occupation.

FGD participants linked the ability to work and earn a living with power and freedom to make decisions. For example, female participants from Nareed who said they are at step 2 argued that women from middle-class and rich families have less power and freedom to make decisions compared to tenants (poor women). This quotation from one female participant summarizes the sentiment: "if we compare our family's women (the non-tenants) to the tenants, they are better than us, because they [tenants] can go to the farm and work."

As the heads of their households, men are responsible for decisions. However, decisions by male elders take precedence over others and males and females of all ages obey. Everything the family owns, or the woman owns through inheritance is controlled by the man. As one key informant from Duranhai described, “Women’s assets are under the control of their men and they decide how to use it. Women do not interfere in this matter.” All farm produce is also under the control and decision-making power of the man; however, women are consulted on subsistence crop issues.

Women of all ages agree that they do not make decisions beyond household chores. Women’s power and freedom to make decisions increases when widowed, divorced and with age. For example, a female participant from Balostan commented that a woman’s decision-making position can be influenced by several factors including “marital status, husband’s position in the family, age and, importantly, another woman’s power...” She explained that in polygamous households, being the first/eldest wife is beneficial to gain acceptance by the in-laws and her husband. This implies that unpacking the intra-household decision-making dynamics is important given the overall perceptions on who has the power to decide.

Some women tenants from Balostan and Nareed said that their current position has slightly improved because of their ability to go out and work. Hence earning an income and contributing to the household’s wealth can give women enhanced decision-making roles (e.g. more agency). FGD participants indicated that older women heading their own households have more power and freedom to decide and face limited restrictions with regards to their physical mobility that enables them to work for pay and trade in markets without the need for male permission. However, they are less respected in the community. Further research on how this disrespect translates into action in villages is required. How much adversity and community backlash/sanctions do poor mobile women encounter? If such backlash is unacceptable (e.g. violent), then interventions at the community level are needed to change these attitudes so that women can provide for their families more easily.

Figure 2: Ladder of power and freedom mean step for majority of own sex by village²⁰

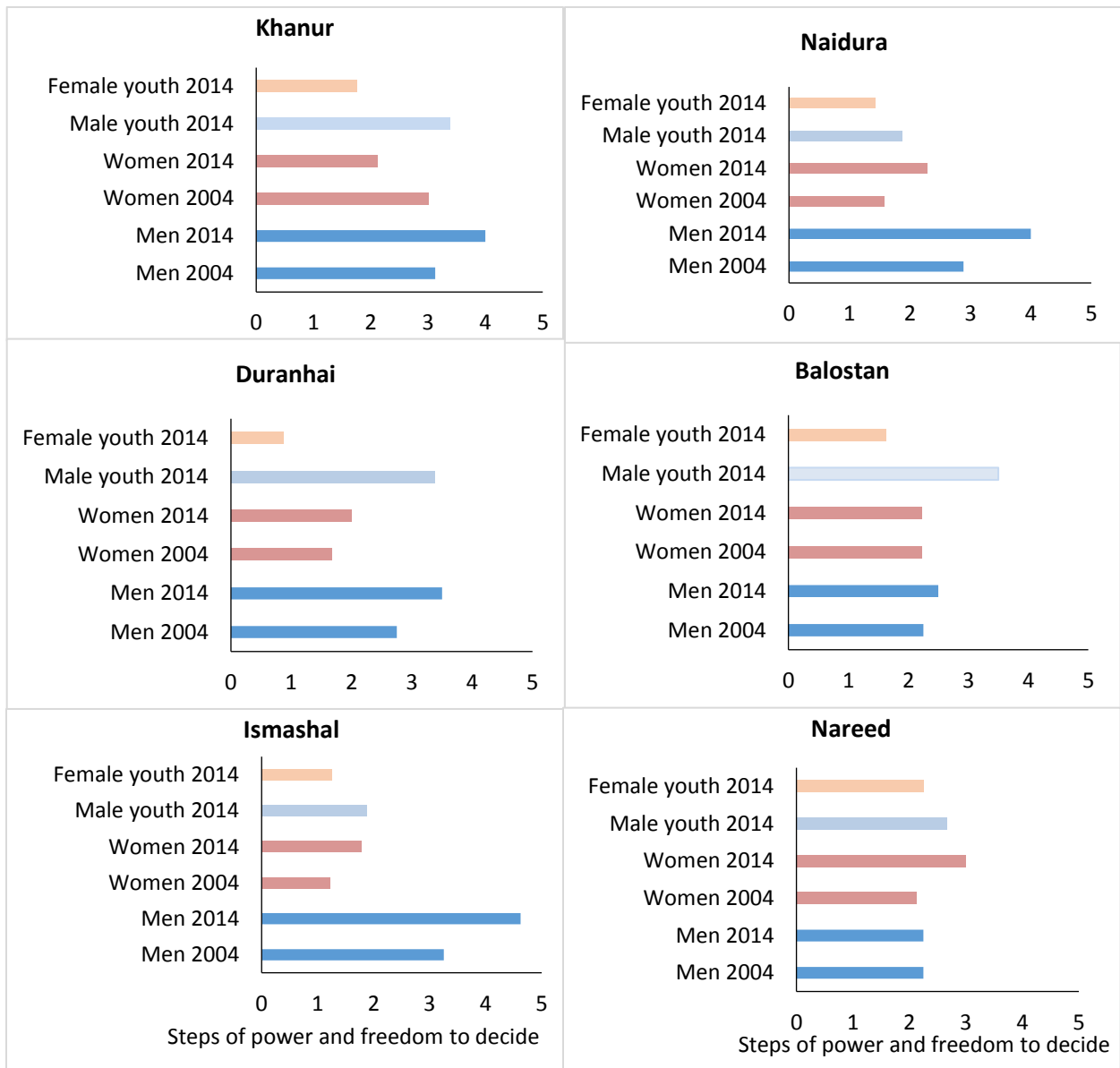


Fig 2 shows rankings by male and female participants on the ladder positions under Activity D and Activity E. As shown in the figure, the majority of women ranked their decision making at a level lower than men. If men make most of the decisions, then intra household resource sharing may not be egalitarian despite the ‘good husband’ normative association of being a good provider. Nareed is the exception where cousin marriages create more harmonious and equitable relationships (according to respondents). Moreover, Nareed is the only

²⁰ Key: 1: Almost no power or freedom to make decisions; 2: only a small amount of power and freedom; 3: power and freedom to make some major life decisions; 4: power and freedom to make many major life decisions; 5: power and freedom to make all major life decisions.

community that did not express a negative association with women's mobility and disrespect.

Men and women participants generally associated the power and freedom to decide with money and status. Hence, some men indicated that their power and freedom to make decisions has declined due to changes in life circumstances as a result of conflict and natural disasters. Such problems have created a situation where men are unable to work and make money. For instance, unlike any other community, the majority of the male participants from Nareed placed themselves at step 1 and 2 of the ladder which is the same to where they were ten years ago. They said that they have debt and the poor economic condition as well as poor productivity is posing challenges to their ability and freedom to make decisions. Men from other villages who put themselves on lower steps of the ladder share this idea. According to one man from Khanur, his rating has decreased as he was jobless at the time and his "economic conditions are also unstable."

The youth agreed that financial positions determine decision-making positions. Young males from all villages argued that, as long as the man has no means of income, he cannot make his own decisions. This reiterates the idea that masculinity is connected to being able to earn enough money to support oneself and one's family.

Boys are better informed than girls and consulted on some decisions. Their discussion did not reveal why boys in Balostan felt high levels of freedom and power to make decisions and why young men from Naidura and Duranhai showed the lowest level of freedom to decide. Young men said that they increase their levels of independence once they get married but until then, their parents decide most things for them. Unmarried young men who happen to become heads of their households due to the death of their father also make decisions for their households and continue in this position after marriage. Young men explained a respected hierarchy within households and communities about how decisions are made.

Young women (Activity E participants) also placed themselves at the lowest step of the LoPF for decision making because every decision is made for them by men. This includes husbands, brothers, fathers or elders, and in-laws (including the mother-in-law) if they are married. Young women also stressed that they cannot even leave the house without male permission and must be accompanied by a man. The reason for such limited freedom and power for young women, according to a young female participant from Ismashal, is the perception that "a girl with autonomy deviates from the right path." Hence, girls are seen to need protecting from non-kin men.

Female participants from Balostan (Baluchistan) said women only have freedom inside their homes on household chores and their dresses. Women from all the other villages shared this idea and said that the decision-making status of women, young or old, has declined over the years. According to them, women's position has not recovered even after the end of the conflict that introduced stricter gender norms. For example, a woman from Khanur commented that after the "army operation and war, our condition never improved."

Another female participant from Khanur insisted “women used to work for pay prior to the occupation. Now even after it ends, we are still not allowed to go out.”

Participants of all ages reported that women have no say on farming and the produce because men own the land. Men have “full authority and control over what to plant and they may consult with agriculture experts, friends or fellow farmers,” according to a young male participant from Balostan. Another young male participant from the same village said, “There is no need to discuss or inform women about farming ... because it is simply not their area.” This idea is confirmed by the following response from a man in Naidura: “In our community, land belongs to a male only. And he decides what to grow and when to grow it. It is decided by the head of the family or male household members.” Therefore, the prevailing assumption behind who owns the land informs control over and who benefits from the farm. This suggests that inequitable land policy and property rights are a major hinderance to women’s decision making, agency and participation in farming activities.

The majority of men indicated that they are at step 2 and 3 of the LoPF because decisions are made by elders, *khans*²¹ or landlords. *Khans* own most of the land, are educated and considered knowledgeable. This highly-respected group comprises the ultimate decision makers in the village. One man at step 3 from Khanur said: “Although we are married, still the freedom to make decisions is in the hands of our elders. We respect them and follow their decisions because they are elders and they have more experience.” One elder explained “I have all the authority to decide” but usually “consult” other members of the household for suggestions. Another elder said, “I am the head. Nobody can ever say anything whatever I decide.”

Some parents in Khanur, Naidura, Balostan and Nareed who have fallen below the poverty line (Activity C) reported that it is difficult to pay a dowry and maintain their financial status. Weddings and dowry arrangements are seen to curb respondent’s freedom. Thereby their choice of husband for their daughter becomes compromised if they cannot afford the dowry. This is another indicator that traditional gender norms are stressed in times of poverty, or perhaps modern-day Pakistan is resulting in cultural changes, including changes to gender norms.

Men in the study villages of Naidura, Balostan and Nareed feel that their power and freedom to make decisions has increased over the last ten years. According to this group of people, previously, the general perception was that *khans* are more educated and knowledgeable and, therefore, *khans* make most of the decisions. However, men also have indicated that the *khan*’s influence is decreasing over the years because of access to education and because more men are moving from farming into other professions. The following observation from a Nareed man may explain the declining influence of *khans*:

²¹ A title given to rulers and officials in central Asia, Afghanistan, and certain other Muslim countries.
<https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/khan>

...our financial status was very weak. We were suppressed under the influence of the khans, a big hurdle for us. Whatever decision they made, we had to accept it. Now the time has come that we are equal in making decisions and the community trusts us.

Therefore, men from these villages felt increased levels of power and freedom, despite their lower level ranking on LoPF.

5.2 LoPF Conclusion

The intra-household decision-making dynamics show a level of complexity in the context of joint family settings. Men are generally the decision makers, but this does not mean that all men feel they have a high degree of power and freedom. Elders and *khans* have the ultimate decision-making power. The general perception is that women do not make any decisions except on household-related chores. However, the findings revealed that women are involved in joint decisions on subsistence crops and some livestock products. This implies that there is a certain level of negotiation taking place before arriving at mutual understandings. In the context where women are said to have a limited say in decisions, the nature of negotiation in joint decision-making is important to understand and requires further investigation, given the central role of intra-household decision making in household food security.

Norms affect women from different socio-economic backgrounds and ages differently. Women from rich families are mostly confined to their houses, compared to widows or women heads of households with no male support. Older women have more mobility than young and unmarried women. Women from economically well-to-do families feel that women from tenant families have higher levels of decision-making power and freedom. However, women from tenant families feel that deep-seated norms limit their power and freedom to make decisions. Female tenants and female household heads, although they do work on the farm, insist that they are not consulted in agricultural innovations, since they are not farming by themselves. A deeper understanding of existing gender dynamics across the social classes is needed along with tailored interventions that consider how these intersectional categories compound and create opportunities for certain types of women while limiting the opportunity of other women.

Other discussions further emphasized that women from poorer backgrounds can take part in farming-related decisions and can participate with their men in their work, but women in well-to-do families are rarely involved in decisions outside the home. This shows that besides age and gender, wealth status determines power and freedom to make decisions. Women are not a homogenous group but rather have different life experiences based on factors that need to be studied closely, for they can affect agency and innovation opportunities.

6. Gender norms, attitudes and division of roles

In this section, gender norms around household and agricultural roles were explored to understand the expectations and divisions. The issue was explored in Activity C, which asked participants about a “good” wife and husband and “good” female and male farmer. The findings are summarized and presented below.

Working outside of the house for women is a matter of honor for the man; therefore, it is often unthinkable in households that are economically better off. In Ismashal, Nareed and Balostan, more women work outside of the house in on- and off-farm activities compared to the other villages. Widowed and divorced women often are the ones who work outside of their houses in all the villages. Additionally, tenants in Balostan and Nareed work as laborers on farms and in other off-farm activities. Women who work for pay are considered poor and are not respected.

Despite their supporting roles on the farm, women are considered to have no role in farming. Yet, women play key roles in managing harvest and post-harvest activities of different crops. They also take care of vegetable gardens and livestock and are responsible for dairy processing. Still, women cannot farm independently, which is mainly due to socio-cultural sanctions. For this reason, they are not considered “farmers.” Even in villages such as Khanur and Duranhai, women support their husbands in farming, provided that the farm is located away from public eyes. They can go to markets only accompanied by their husbands or a male relative.

A man takes care of every responsibility that does not concern household chores. A man supporting household chores, according to a male respondent from Duranhai, is not “considered a good person because he is doing ‘women’s work.’” Some stressed that a man would be disrespected for engaging in ‘women’s work.’ This opinion about men doing household chores is shared in all villages.

Despite the growing trend of male migration increasing the number of FHHs, the communities are not in favor of women working outside the house. This could have devastating effects on agriculture productivity and food security of migrant households and the nation in the near future. The following discussion concerning “good wife/husband” further emphasizes the strict gender division of roles and responsibilities.

6.1 Qualities of a “Good Wife” and “Good Husband”

Male and female respondents from all six villages described a “good wife” wearing a veil, knowing the Quran, praying often, welcoming her husband with a happy face, respecting and obeying her husband, taking care of household chores and respecting her in-laws (Table 5). Here, it is important to note that the qualities of a “good wife” mainly relate to women’s reproductive and household roles as well as socio-culturally “correct” and acceptable behavior. This long list of societal expectations for women restricts women’s mobility, income earning potential and access to agricultural information.

Yet, contradictions for women are found on this list. Women are meant to be respectful of their husband and this means not travel or work outside and bring dishonor. Yet, the third from the bottom point in the first column shows that a number of men think women should be educated and have a job. How women negotiate these competing expectations about their gender roles is unclear from this research.

Men and women respondents were also asked what qualities make a “good husband” (Table 5). The qualities of a “good husband” identified by women in each village are consistent with a man’s ability to provide for his family. Being a role model and respectful are other qualities identified by both male and female participants for a “good husband.” Male participants in all villages repeatedly mention a “good husband” can raise “income through fair means”.

Table 5: Qualities of a “Good Wife” / “Good Husband”

What makes a good wife?	What makes a good husband?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is cool, respectful, loyal, honorable and patient. (Female FGDs, Khanur and Balostan) • Obeys her husband and lives according to his wishes. (Female FGDs, in all villages) • Has good morals and takes care of her husband and children. (Male and female FGDs in Khanur, Ismashal and Duranhai) • Takes care of all household chores. (All male and female FGDs) • Remembers Quran by heart, prays and teaches her children to pray. (Male and Female FGDs in Balostan, Duranhai, Naidura and Khanur) • Covers herself while outside the house/ wears a veil. (Male FGD in Naidura and Female FGD Balostan) • Is educated and has a job. (Male FGDs in Ismashal, Naidura, Duranhai and Female FGD in Balostan) • Never shouts or uses bad language. (Female FGDs in Khanur, Duranhai and Balostan) • Is supportive of co-wife. (Male FGDs, in Balostan and Nareed) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is patient, cool minded, and soft. (Female FGDs in Balostan, Duranhai, Khanur and Naidura) • Takes care of family members and fulfills family needs. (Male and Female FGDs, in all villages) • Has good moral character; is loving and respectful to wife. (Female FGDs in Naidura, Balostan and Nareed) • Is hard working and responsible for his family. (Male and Female FGDs in all villages) • Brings dry fruits and nut to share with his wife in the evening. (Male FGDs, Khanur) • Is well mannered and respected by community members. (Male and female FGDs in Ismashal, Naidura and Duranhai) • Earns livelihood through fair means and does not engage in negative activities. (Male FGDs in Ismashal, Naidura and Duranhai) • Treats co-wives equally and spends time with wives equally. (Female FGDs in Naidura, Balostan and Nareed; Male FGDs Balostan) • Is educated and religious. (Male FGDs in Duranhai, and Naidura; Female FGD in Balostan)

6.2 What makes a “Good Farmer”?

The male and female focus groups were also asked what makes a “good farmer,” exploring the expectations for male and female farmers. Generally, the findings revealed that gender segregation and strictly-fixed gender roles exist in the agriculture sector. As the sole

breadwinner of his house, a “good male farmer” should improve productivity through giving all his attention and time to his farming. FGD participants stressed a “good male farmer” should know about new agricultural innovations and be knowledgeable about farming. He is responsible for deploying appropriate resources on his farm.

Women’s role in farming differs from village to village and by social class. However, the list of expectations does not reflect the general perception that women have no role in farming. Rather, the list reflects women’s pre- and post-harvest roles, including storing and preserving seeds and agricultural inputs.

Table 6: Qualities of a “Good Farmer”, poor male and female focus groups

A woman who is a good farmer	A man who is a good farmer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes good care of her house and compound • Has knowledge and takes full farming responsibility with her husband • Prepares food when husband is in field • Processes dairy products • Takes care of livestock • Helps her husband in the field • Knows how to preserve seeds • Stores grains properly • Keeps fertilizer and other chemicals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improves production and uses modern machines • Grows vegetables • Has information, knowledge and resources • Works hard and uses modern farming methods • Takes care of his farm by applying natural fertilizer • Consults family members on all matters • Reserves money for difficult times • Keeps regular communication with the agriculture office • Takes good care of tenants and recognizes their hard work

When comparing expectations of a “good wife,” and a “good female farmer” contradictions arise. One of the qualities of a “good female farmer” indicates that women should “have knowledge and should take full responsibilities in each farming activity with her husband.” Yet, women are responsible for the house and compound and should not travel (even to get agriculture extension information). How women navigate the paradoxes associated with gender norms that prescribe their status and identity as a good wife and farmer requires more scholarship.

6.3 Attitudes toward gender equality

In all six villages, many female and male participants of all ages defined gender equality as equal opportunity, equal rights and equal participation. According to a female participant from Khanur, it means “being treated with respect.” Others from Balostan expressed protection of women’s/wife’s and children’s rights. Women and men from Ismashal, Duranhai and Nareed also said both husband and wife deciding on daily expenses and being consulted on daily roles, as well as having equal inheritance opportunities. A man from Nareed said, “I think that gender equality means that both women and men have equal liberty to do work and move around freely...” Additional definitions given include equal

treatment of boys and girls, equal educational and employment opportunities and no mobility restriction on girls.

A different understanding of the concept was also discussed by participants of all ages and villages that reflect men's "Allah-given" superior position. For example, one female participant from Balostan commented that

Man is created better by nature (Allah). He is independent in all ways. For a woman, it always depends on her chance or destiny. If she is not lucky, she will suffer her whole life. In our family, men are given more importance than women...

Generally, men are seen to have more responsibilities than a woman and are thus allowed to have the equivalent set of rights which equates to more than a woman. However, it was mainly men who connected the concept of gender equality to Islamic teachings. Their argument is that Islam favors equality but gives distinctive roles to women and men. People, though, may not apply what is written in the Quran to their lives. A male participant from Khanur said, "both have rights streamlined by Islamic injunctions." Explaining this, another man from the same village continued, saying,

I think that both men and women shall have equal rights, and by equality, I mean the equality chalked out by our religion (Islam). Islam tells us that men and women both are equal; however, it also gives some responsibilities to men while others to women only. The man has rights over his wife and the woman has right over her husband. If this is practiced the way we are guided by our religion, then it is extremely good.

Another woman from Naidura concluded that, "a man has more responsibilities on his shoulders and therefore he has more power than women;" "a man is not only the *khassbati* (essential member) of a family but also head of a household." Women from Ismashal explained that "man is the king" and while respondents acknowledge that "a woman is also important" they had a caveat, "but she is nothing without man." The following quotation from a young female from Khanur explains the rationale: "...Men are superior and should be considered so. If women are considered and kept superior, then women would not listen to men."

Many other respondents explained the way accepting the socially-constructed gender roles was the basis for gender equality. They said accepting these differences will contribute to their peaceful co-existence. For example, an adult male from Ismashal said that "women are naturally weak and that is why they do not go out of the house or engage in laborious work." Another young female FGD participant from Naidura stressed, "the husband shall do the man stuff and the wife shall do the women stuff. Then things will be fine."

In a changing context of increased migration and exposure to television, radio and education, these traditional gender norms are expected to change, or citizens will suffer increased food

security. But at what pace and sequence and what triggers such changes is worthy of considerable scholarship.

6.4 Intimate partner violence

Another topic that was explored under Activity C was intimate partner violence. One of the domestic violence questions addressed in this report is: “Taking into account the experiences of this community, to what extent have local women been hit or beaten in their households over the past year?”

Generally, the majority of male and female FGD participants from all villages stressed that domestic violence (intimate partner violence) almost never happens in their community or only happens occasionally. Diverse ranges of reasons were given with regards to the reports of less violence in their village from participants. For example, many respondents attributed the reduced rate of domestic violence in the community to the inter-family marriages where everybody knows everybody. The reasons given for less violence include fear of reciprocal acts from the father or the brother to the daughters or sisters in inter-family marriages and women’s total loyalty and obedience to men due to fear of divorce. For example, women from Ismashal said that women are careful not to make their husbands unhappy. As one woman said, “Men are independent. They can leave us or send us back to our parents’ homes, so we just take care of their will.” Women fear divorce because they can be cast out by their community.

Men from Naidura insisted that a man “who beats his wife will face social consequences and he will be cast out.” Men said they cannot afford to beat their wives because “...a woman is not a worthless thing and they are expected to pay back the dowry²² if the woman leaves the man because of beating.” This shows that multiple factors, including fear of behavior norms such as revenge by family members and having to pay back the dowry, are sanctioning domestic violence prevalence. This is an example of a gender norm giving women more wellbeing and protection.

Some participants discussed poverty as the main cause for violence. A male participant from Duranhai commented: “The higher the poverty, the more likelihood of violence against women.” In addition, in polygamous households, preference of one wife over the other may cause violence between wives that results in the husband intervening.

Still others explained that access to education is among the reasons for domestic violence. According to those respondents, educated women voice their opinions and argue with their families. They contest the man’s superior position, resulting in beatings. For some groups of women, wife beating is normal and acceptable. Those subscribing to this idea expressed sentiments like “... it is not a big deal if a husband gives some minor beating to his wife.” The responses reveal that violence against women is normalized or seen as women’s fault. This

²² His wife’s parents pay him a dowry at their wedding.

suggests the need for development programs to create interventions that address the association of women deserving violence.

Intimate partner violence is an area that needs further investigation. The type of violence explored in this section relates to women being hit or beaten in their house, which limits the information gathered on physical violence. Domestic violence includes more than physical violence. Therefore, exploring the different aspects of domestic violence is important to understand its nature and existence. Nevertheless, the data shows that gender norms and discriminatory practices can translate to violence in order to restrict women's behavior. Thus, gender focused interventions need to be designed carefully to avoid increasing violence against women.

6.5 Conclusion: Gender norms, attitudes and division of roles

Respondents' understanding of gender equality brought diverse perspectives. Generally, there is inequality between the sexes, but it is not interpreted that way by local residents. Men are seen to have a "God-given" superior position compared to women. They are biologically/physically considered stronger and have more responsibility for supporting the family financially and thus are considered entitled to more rights. The implications of these opinions direct the preliminary conclusions toward interventions aiming to improve women's benefits and access to resources by considering male engagement as a primary entry point.

The qualities of a "good husband/wife" and a "good female/male farmer" reflect strict divisions of roles between women and men. Men repeatedly expressed the ability to take care of household chores as the main quality of a "good wife." The division of roles underlines women's care and reproductive responsibilities. For men, a man's ability to take care of his household is considered the quality of a "good husband" and "good male farmer." It reflects the man's role as the provider who is entirely responsible for generating income. This shows the inter-relationship between husband and wife and why masculinity may be threatened by wives working and becoming educated.

Women's access to education is considered one of the many reasons for the existence of domestic violence, because educated women speak out against men's authority, threatening their masculinity. Working proactively with educated women and women from FHHs may help set examples and create opportunities for other women. However, such efforts need the support of progressive men and opinion leaders too and should take care not to increase violence against women.

Women face a paradox when it comes to being a good wife and farmer. How women negotiate this fractured (and fragile) identity/status needs further study. For women's agency exists in these negotiations.

7. Agricultural innovations and gender

Activity D and E also aimed to understand new agricultural and NRM practices in each village. Activity F (semi-structured individual interviews held with adult male and female innovators) aims to explore in-depth the trajectory of individual experiences with new agricultural and NRM practices and, hence, information from activity F is also included in the analysis in this section. The following questions were asked to FGD participants in activity D and E:

- What new cropping or livestock practices or ways of managing local natural resources or organizing agricultural activities have people here tried out or experimented with?
- Which of these new agricultural practices have been the most important for the [sex of FGD] in the community? Why important? And which have been most important for the [opposite sex of FGD]? Why?

Male and female participants consider innovators as risk takers, hard workers, knowledgeable, skillful, financially-capable, and have good intra-personal relationships (sociable). Mainly rich farmers with larger land holdings are at the forefront of adoption of agricultural innovations, including improved wheat varieties. Farmers showed a level of precaution before adopting and followed the experiences of earlier adopters before they were comfortable adopting for themselves. Hence, improved wheat varieties are adopted gradually in all communities.

In terms of electric innovations, participants from Balostan insist that it is difficult to depend on electrically-operated irrigation that require tube wells. A male participant from Balostan said, "Irregular electric supply, including unscheduled breakdowns and low voltage, delay farming activities." Farmers who can afford it are turning to generators and solar panels to deal with this electrification challenge.

According to all participants, lack of rain, scarcity of water, access to quality-improved seeds and climate changes increase the risk of failure for smallholders. Both female and male FGD participants from Khanur and Balostan spoke about climate change affecting the time of planting and harvesting, which affects the quality and productivity of the crop, especially in Naidura where farmers depend on seasonal rain. This often causes shortage of food and affects the farmer's income, which generally has a direct bearing on household food security and their ability to take risks and innovate.

The next sections explore perceptions of innovations for men and women and what helps and hinders innovation. Bearing in mind the previous findings about gender norms, differences between women and men are expected to continue through to innovation preferences.

7.1 The top two most important innovations for women

Data for this section comes from the 36 different focus groups: poor adults completing the Ladder of Life activity (12), middle-class adults describing capacities for innovation activity (12) and youth completing the aspiration of youth activity (12). Each focus group was asked to name the top two innovations for men and the top two innovations for women, resulting in a list of 72 possible mentions of an innovation. When only male or female focus groups are discussed, the maximum number of mentions is 36.

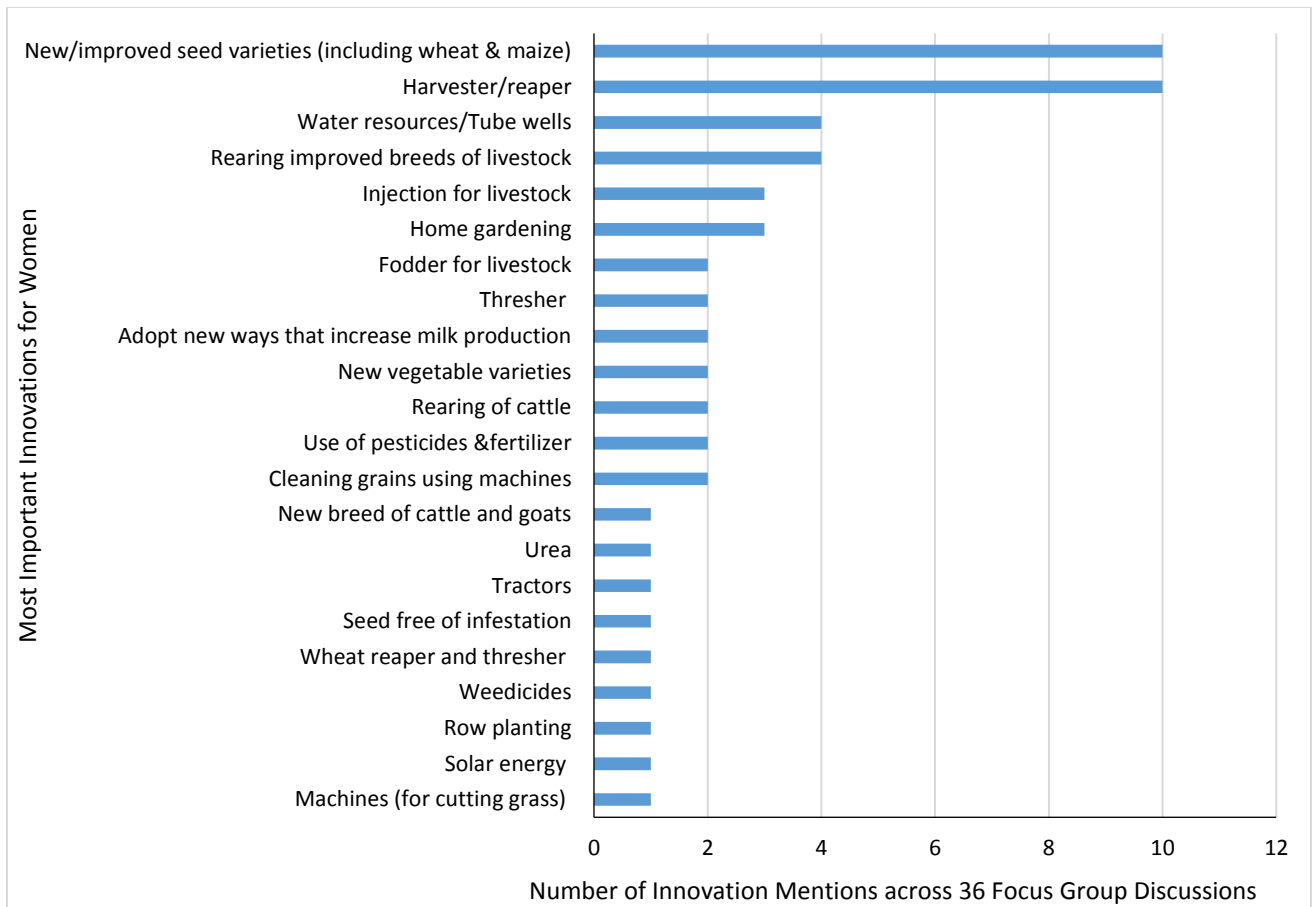
Table 7: What innovations are most important for women?

Table 7 shows that both female and male respondents have a shared interest in women

What men believe women need			What women believe women need
<i>Men only reported</i>	<i>Shared Interest in Innovations (number of mentions)</i>		<i>Women only reported</i>
Pesticides and fertilizers (2)	New/improved seed varieties (including wheat, maize and vegetable seeds) (5)	New/improved seed varieties (including wheat, maize and vegetable seeds) (7)	Water resources/tube wells (4)
Solar energy (1)	Combine harvester/reaper (5)	Combine harvester/reaper (5)	Thresher (2)
Good breeds of livestock (1)	New way of storing seeds (1)	New ways of storing seed (2)	Fodder for livestock (2)
Cultivation in line (1)	Adopt new ways to increase milk production (1)	Adopt new ways to increase milk production (1)	New breed of cattle or goats (1)
Weedicides (1)	Rearing Livestock (1)	Rearing livestock (3)	Cleaning grains through machines (1)
	Injection for cows (1)	Injection for livestock (2)	
	Home gardening (2)	Growing vegetables (1)	

having new/improved seed varieties (including wheat, maize and vegetable seeds). However, women also desire improved water resources/tube wells, while men did not mention women needing tube wells.

Figure 3: Perceptions of women's agricultural innovation needs



Each focus group was asked to select the top two most important agricultural innovations for women meaning a total count of 72 “top two” innovations. In actuality, the total count of top two innovations totals only 58. Out of the 36 FGDs, some mentioned only one innovation while a few reported none (Fig 3).

Across all of the FGDs, which ranged in age, economic status, gender and village, most people believe that women need improved seed varieties of different types and harvesters/reapers. At the same time, water resources/tube wells and rearing improved breeds of livestock also received strong support as important innovations for women.

7.2 The top two most important innovations for men

Male and female respondents showed a shared interest in men having improved seeds, including improved wheat seeds. However, men also desire a zero-tillage practice, row planting application of sprays, soil and water tests, while women did not mention men needing such innovations (Table 8). This trend continued with many of the items listed by women not listed by men. It also appears that women are eager for their male counterparts to learn more about fruit packing, irrigation, solar energy and new vegetable varieties among others.

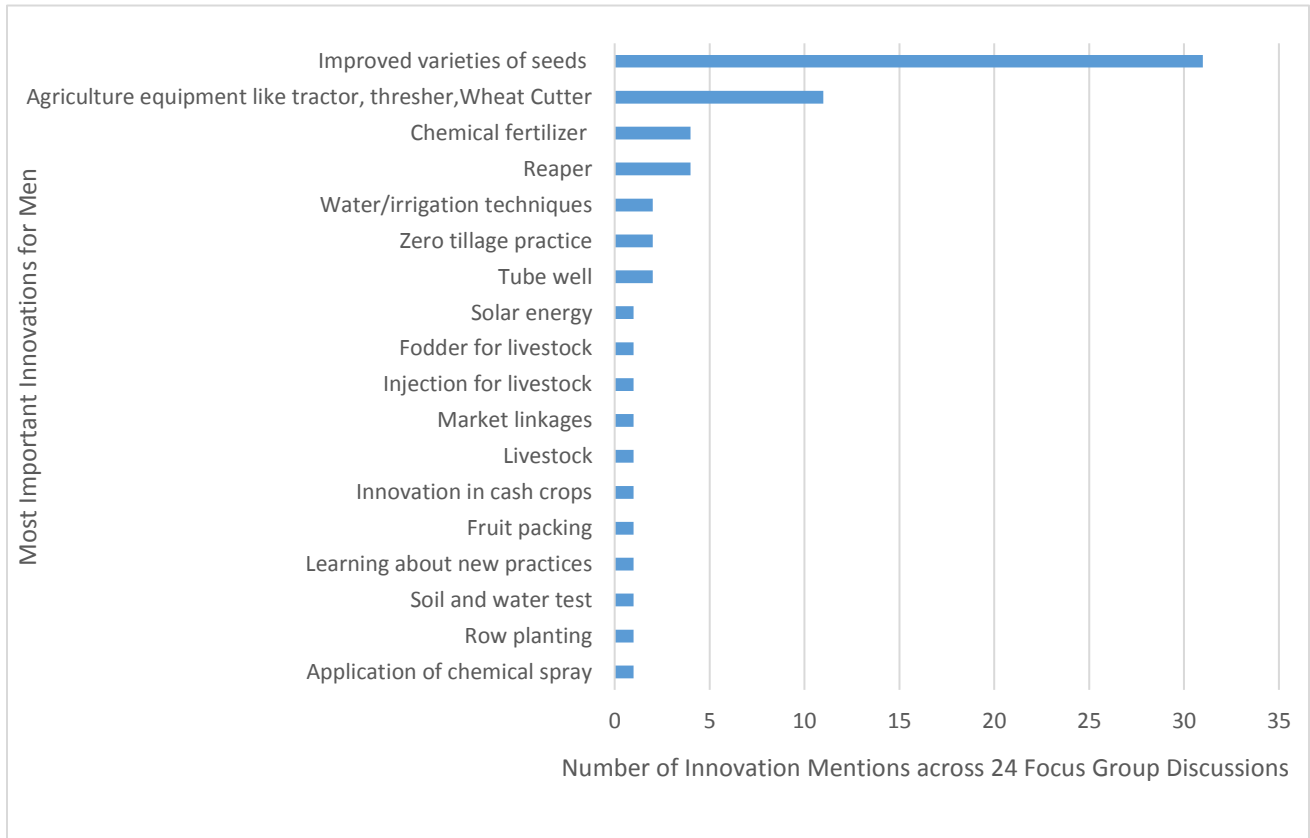
Table 8: What innovations are most important for men?

What men believe men need		What women believe men need	
<i>Men only reported</i>	<i>Shared Interest in Innovations (number of mentions)</i>		<i>Women only reported</i>
Application of spray (1) Zero-tillage practice (2) Row planting (1) Soil and water test (1)	New/improved seeds (15) Improved varieties of seeds (wheat, rice, maize, vegetables) (11) Chemical fertilizer (1) Tube well (1) Thresher (1) Reaper (1) Machines: Tractor / wheat Cutter (4)	New varieties of seed (8) New variety of vegetables (2) New wheat variety (2) Chemical fertilizers (3) Tube wells (1) Harvester/reaper (3) Machines (1)	Learning about new practices (1) Fruit packing (1) Irrigation techniques (2) Livestock rearing (1) Market linkages (1) Injection for livestock (1) Fodder for livestock (1) Solar energy (1)

Each focus group was asked to select the top two most important agricultural innovations for men meaning a total count of 72 “top two” innovations (Fig 4). Across all of the focus groups discussions, which ranged in age, economic status, gender, and village, most people believe that men need improved seed varieties, including wheat and maize. This was followed by agricultural equipment such as tractors, threshers and reapers and then fertilizer. Irrigation, zero tillage and use of tube wells are the next level of new practices important for men.

The responses in Fig. 4 show a greater consistency in responses compared to Fig. 3. Thus, women’s innovation needs are more diverse than men’s. Moreover, agricultural development project designers should consider the center two columns in Table 7 and 8 where both males and females independently felt these innovations would be meaningful.

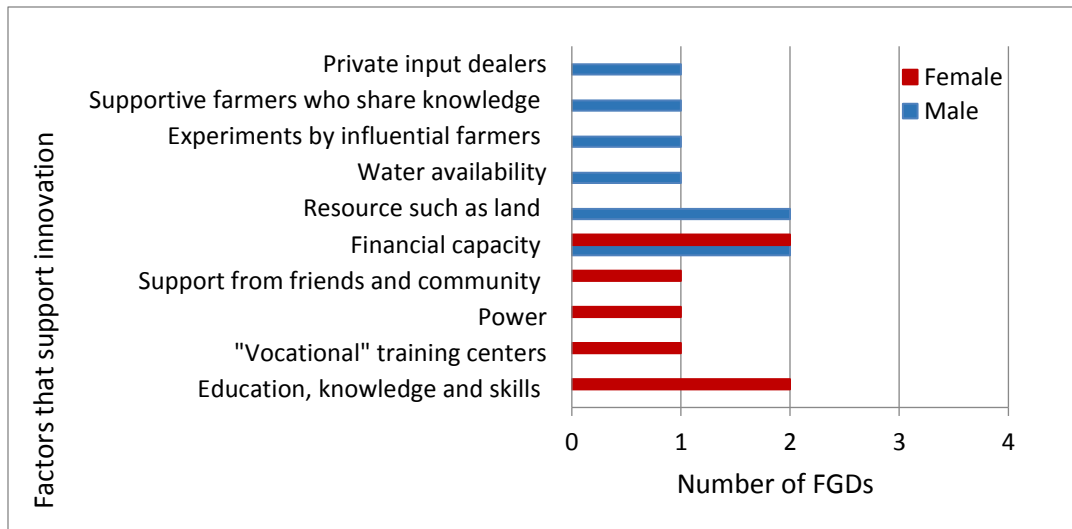
Figure 4: Perceptions of men’s agricultural innovation needs



7.3 Supporting and hindering factors for agricultural innovations

The factors that support innovations for men and women from all six villages are detailed in Fig. 5.

Figure 5: Factors that support innovation for women and men



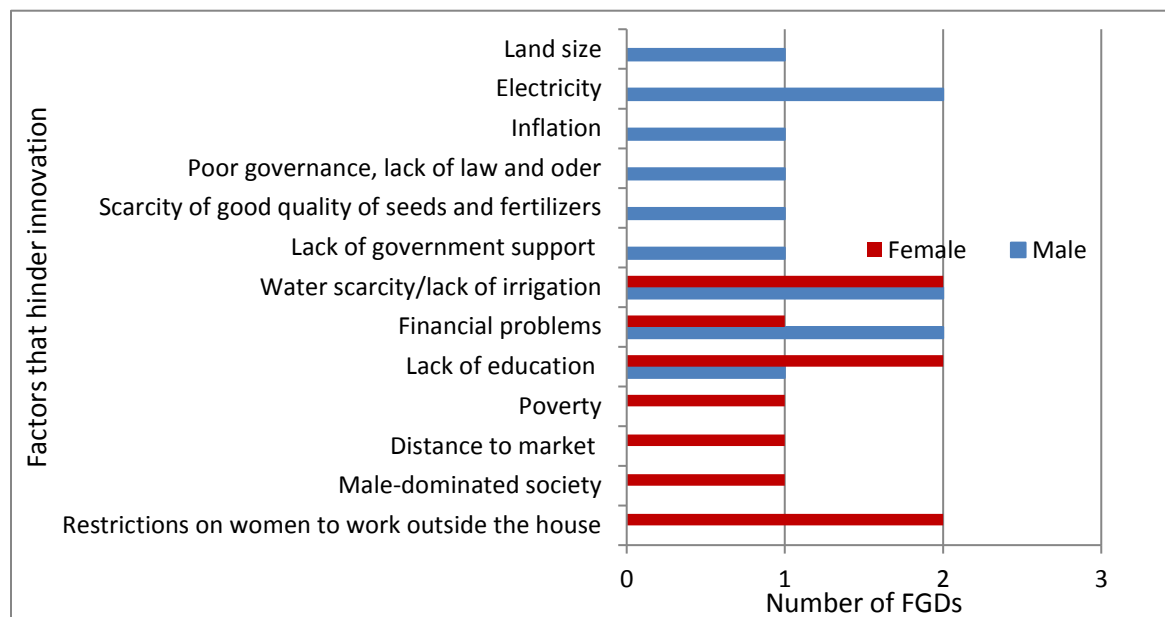
Farmers indicated that the new varieties and the recommended practices are expensive and, therefore, difficult for smallholder farmers to easily adopt them. Farmers from all villages stressed that innovation involves risks. For example, one farmer from Balostan said that the majority of farmers “are small [holders] here and cannot afford to buy expensive wheat seeds and experiment. There is risk involved. In case of failure, we lose one whole year.” Many argue that improved seeds available in local markets are not only expensive but are also often not good quality, and this increases the likelihood of failure for smallholder farmers. FGD participants from Naidura, Ismashal and Duranhai explained land-holding size also matters for one’s willingness to be at the forefront of adoption/innovation. Loss for smallholders means higher risks; therefore, it is difficult for small farms to adopt improved seeds and recommended practices easily. For large land holders, they can use a proportion of their land for experimenting before completely adopting.

Men with limited resources are afraid to try to innovate because, if they fail, they do not have alternatives that will help them keep their family from starving. According to a male participant from Nareed, “The poor farmers would not take any chance adopting something of which he is not 100 percent sure of the outcomes ... If they fail, they will face starvation.” Another male participant from Duranhai added that, “Those who have money, can take risk, without any fear...” Risk aversion is the main reason why men have difficulty in innovating in agriculture.

Factors hindering women from learning about and adopting agricultural innovations relate to gender norms and surrounding discriminatory practices. For example, women mentioned male permission and mobility restrictions to be among the major factors hindering women’s opportunities. Prevailing unfavorable views toward women working outside of the house, access to education, their limited role in farming and other factors contribute to their lack of knowledge and minimal roles in agricultural innovation. This all culminates in men explaining that there are major differences between male and female farmers when it comes to agricultural innovations. One male participant from Duranhai reported: “There is a big

difference, and that is that a female knows zero about innovation. Innovation is done by males. Females are far from farming.” The factors hindering agricultural innovation that women and men in all villages identified are detailed in Fig. 6.

Figure 6: Factors that hinder innovation for men and women



Besides financial capability, women lack access to information, skill and knowledge. Women from all villages insisted that the availability of female-only vocational training centers is crucial for them to try to innovate. Otherwise, for women, there is no way they can go into public places and learn in the presence of men apart from their relatives. Women insisted that the lack of decision-making power also contributes to their absence in agricultural innovation. A woman from Balostan commented:

For innovation, the power of decision making is very important. It is difficult for a woman to make an independent decision in trying out a new way of doing things. Even if she wants to grow a new variety of vegetable, she has to ask permission from her husband or father ... She does not have the courage to take the risk.

This finding shows that power and freedom to decide independently is a very important element of technology adoption and innovation.

7.4 Gender innovation conclusion

The overall dynamics around enabling and constraining factors for innovation illustrate the way gender norms shape opportunity structures for men and women differently. The ability to work outside of the house and physical mobility put men in a more advantageous position than women when it comes to learning about, trying and adopting new agricultural

innovations. Women's lack of access to education, financial resources and decision-making power limit women's innovative capabilities. Hence, women require more support to make up for historical discrimination. Moreover, for a woman to innovate, she requires multi-component program designs that can tackle her many forms of discrimination (low education, lack of mobility, low control over assets and resources) simultaneously.

Agricultural innovations, such as improved wheat seeds and recommended practices, are adopted gradually. Smallholder farmers adopt more slowly based on experiences of rich farmers who pioneer agricultural innovations. Rich farmers with larger land holdings try out new varieties easily because they can withstand the risks associated with failure. Land size determines the benefits accrued from improved seeds and recommended practices due to price, access, labor intensity and the impacts of unpredictable weather patterns due to climate change. Men and women in all villages agreed that financial position is one of the major enabling factors for agricultural innovations and decision-making. However, women from financially well-off families are less mobile, do not work for pay and feel powerless. Thus, financial position can enable men's ability to innovate but when combined with gender norms, limit a women's ability to innovate and make autonomous decisions.

The findings reveal how socio-economic position, age, location and gender are important determinants for men and women in terms of their innovation capacity. While it may be expensive to consult women and men separately and equally, these results indicate the value in trying. Men and women can have different needs and women's needs may remain unmet if agriculture research continues to largely interview household heads.

8. Overall conclusion

Gender relations play a significant role in shaping rural household dynamics. The man is the farmer, the sole economic provider and the one who is responsible for moving the household out of poverty. Women are responsible for household activities and a woman working for pay negatively impacts a man's honor. Women's economic role is discounted as having substantial contributions in movement out of poverty, leading to the lack of recognition of women as farmers and development agents. Religion is also connected to men's superior position. Thus, more discussion with Imams on where there is fluid spaces (grey areas) for women to overcome traditional norms should be identified. Following this, programs can be developed to expand these spaces so that women's development opportunities are not inhibited as Pakistan modernizes.

Gender norms and discriminatory practices cause imbalances in how men, women and youth are informed about, adapt to and benefit from existing opportunity structures. For example, women's lack of physical mobility, lack of access to information about agricultural innovation, lack of participation in trading and their need for male permission limit women's opportunities to benefit from development as equally as men. Agriculture training and extension services reach men who have more mobility than women and can travel to

markets. Moreover, while men and women listed financial means as a major factor enabling and constraining innovation and decision-making, when wealth combines with gender norms, women face greater restrictions. Given women from well-off families have less decision-making freedom and mobility than tenant women and given land and wealth is needed to take risks and innovate, the research shows how gender norms work with local farming realities to bar women from innovating. Men's and women's agency is differentially constrained by gender norms and other institutions that shape social status, access to opportunities and the distribution of resources and technologies

Gender norms are significant challenges hindering women from being involved in meaningful agriculture-related livelihoods. There has not been adequate discussion about how women with independent incomes who are educated influence decisions beyond household chores. Even household-bound women can make an income from dairy products; however, the findings show that their contribution is not counted as important to the household's economy. The research also identified women's education to be part of the reason for increasing domestic violence. These contradictions are important to future development programs as they show how gender norms determine what is valued and relate to the power and freedom to decide about agriculture.

Moreover, women negotiate the paradox of their roles with a finesse that is rarely appreciated or captured in data. Even this research has not been able to unpack how women negotiate and what constitutes good and bad (favorable/unfavorable) negotiation/navigation through contradictory gender norms. This is worth further scholarship for it may provide clues to how gender norms change and how women's multiple roles (as providers, reproducer, housekeepers, confidants, mothers, etc) can be recognized and valued.

Men at different ages, social statuses, financial positions and family compositions enjoy different decision-making powers and freedoms. In addition, women from economically well-to-do families feel less empowered because of their inability to work for pay. Female heads of households (widowed and divorced) who have no male support break some of the social norms concerning mobility by trading in markets to support their families at the cost of disrespect and being cast out.

Transforming such strict and deeply-engrained gender norms requires intensive male engagement. There is a long way to go before women are free to move around, engage in income-earning activities, adopt agricultural innovations and decide on issues of importance for themselves and their families without men feeling "less" and blocking the space for women to act as agents of change. Defying gender norms come at a cost such as social disapproval, violence, exclusion and gossip. Nevertheless, more women are joining the professional workforce, engaging in off-farm income-earning activities and becoming educated. These outliers may serve as positive role models and potential entry points for women's economic engagement.

The findings caution against generalizing when it comes to how norms affect people's lives. Women and men are not homogenous; therefore, gendered norms affect men and women

from different contexts, classes, religions and age groups differently. Expanding the benefits of agricultural innovation as widely as possible requires a more gender-equitable environment. There is a need to work with diverse stakeholders across the social sector and with progressive opinion leaders to change women's positions and enable them to contribute to, and benefit from, the agriculture sector and food security.

The GENNOVATE dataset is rich. Additional analysis is being completed by the GENNOVATE program.²³ Nevertheless, a number of recommendations can be made in this report:

8.1 Recommendations

- Explore where, why and in what types of households' gender roles become more fluid and how this can lead to improved agricultural outcomes.
- Develop multi-intervention designs that account for women's lower literacy, lack of access to resources and mobility restrictions.
- Work with women in groups and work with whole families, especially men and boys at the household and community level to help shift gender norms that reduce women's opportunities to earn an income for their family.
- Consult Imams about gender norms and grey areas for change.
- Think creatively about how to reach women with agriculture innovations.
- Promote female heads of households (widowed and divorced), mobile women and educated women who joined the professional work force as positive role models.

²³ See <https://gennovate.org/>