A community typology of social change devised from the bottom-up

GENNOVATE

• Large-scale collaborative research initiative on interlinkages between gender norms, agency and innovation in agriculture and NRM across different contexts

• 137 community case studies in 26 countries and >7,000 women and men of different age- and socio-econ groups

• Standardized qualitative comparative methodology enables identification of broad cross-case patterns that remain contextually grounded in local realities

• Bottom-up perspective that draws on feminist and participatory research traditions

www.gennovate.org
Gender norms

“... specifically mean differential rules of conduct for women and men, including rules governing interactions between women and men.” (Pearse & Connell 2016)

Agency

“The ability to define one’s goals and act upon them.” (Kabeer 1999)
Conceptual Framework

Source: Badstue et al. 2018
Paper focus

How are gender norms and men’s and women’s agency changing?

Under what conditions do they stimulate inclusive innovation processes?

Materials

• 79 GENNOVATE community case studies in 17 countries
  • Sex-specific FGDs with poor and middle-class men and women and youth
  • Ladder of Power & Freedom
  • Ladder of Life
  • Other data support contextually informed analysis
Community typology

• Transforming: 8
• Climbing: 39
• Churning: 32
Figure 1. Perceptions of change in power and freedom and poverty reduction, focus group assessments by type of cases (316 focus groups, 79 cases)
Churning context: Amatuma - peri-urban Luhya village of Vihiga county in western Kenya

A normative climate where men fear emasculation but norms for women are relaxing as they take on expanded roles in their family and local economy.

• “Back then women were less informed, but today we attend seminars like this one so you find that [now] women even can keep cattle for milk produce, which gives them cash.”
  Women’s middle class focus group

• “There is a crisis in this area. Men are dying at a fast rate! Women are then the heads of the home . . . .”
  Female key informant, community leader
Transforming context: Nodira—Commercial farming village of Uzbekistan’s Andijan Province

A normative climate where some patriarchal norms persist alongside very relaxed norms that enable women to exercise significant economic roles.

• “We [women] need to work and take matters into our own hands and head our households. This has had a very strong impact on the economic activity of women.”
  
  Local social worker

• [Women] enjoy the same rights as men do. There is nothing bad about this. It’s good. And the longer couples live together, they start to take decisions together related to the household.

  (Focus group of poor men)
Transforming cases

Figure 2. Selected community infrastructure, by type of cases (Key informants, 79 cases)
Conclusions

• Women and men uphold, withdraw from, and sometimes alter gender norms as they pursue their day-to-day lives and interests
  • Contextual - Relational – Fluid

• Women’s and men’s agency and engagement with agri innovation strongly conditioned by normative expectations
  • Position in household and life cycle
  • Provisioning role
  • Institutional reproduction of stereotypes

• Typology informed by local normative climate provides entry point for diversified intervention strategies
Opportunities

• Equality of opportunity a strategic interest for AR4D

• Integration of institutional dimension in targeting

• Invest in institutional innovations in agri-food systems R&D
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