

# APPENDIX 2: GENDER IN AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Equity issues have been identified in multiple aid policies and papers. The promotion of gender equity and the empowerment of women are identified in the third of the United Nations MDGs as fundamental to development. Gender issues impact on all aspects of society and culture—from economic growth to the health and wellbeing of the overall population.

Despite the importance of gender equity, discrimination against women is pervasive. The destructive effects can be seen in lower global literacy skills in women, high regional infant and maternal mortality rates, poor representation in government at local and national levels, and a high percentage of violence against girls and women worldwide.

In agriculture the negative impact of gender inequality has been seen in reduced agricultural productivity and the undermining of development agendas.

Ignoring the roles and relations of the genders in agriculture and development can produce food and nutrition insecurity through poorly designed projects that omit essential contributions and results.

Two approaches to improve gender equity will be progressed in 2011–12. One approach involves raising gender to a 'program' or 'country' level and dealing with it strategically in identifying R&D priorities. Alternatively, or conjunctly, ACIAR can capture gender equity at the administrative level during project design, implementation and impact assessment. Both approaches are valid—it will be judged which is more appropriate in different contexts.

Regardless of the project/program context, ACIAR will learn from its dealings with gender R&D issues and feed these back into future program/project design.

In 2011–12 the 'Gender Impacts' subheading will be further refined in the project proposal template under 'Community Impacts'. A checklist of questions to assist with addressing gender issues at the two stages of project design (preliminary and full) follows.

## Preliminary proposal

- What are the roles of women and men within the scope of the project (both in the target agricultural systems and in project implementation)?
- Is there potential for the project to improve the lives of women involved in agriculture through targeted research and communication activities? Are there constraints for farming women in accessing or participating in the key agricultural and production resources and services within the scope of the project?
- Is there potential for the project to improve the involvement of women in project implementation?

These questions are deliberately broad and overarching at the preliminary stage of a project's design. The details of the design are incorporated at the full proposal stage, which is where additional gender questions will be added to guide the provision of more-specific and in-depth information.

## Full proposal

- Is there a need for the project to gather disaggregated demographic data on women? If yes, how would this happen?
- How will the project determine if there are specific opportunities for targeting research and communication activities towards women? If constraints emerge, how will it address these to enable women to better participate in development of new technologies, and their dissemination and evaluation?
- How will the project address any constraints that limit access or participation by women in the key agricultural and production resources and services within its scope?
- How will the project progressively monitor outcomes of these targeted activities?

Once a project has been approved and commences, the various approaches to, and intended impacts on, gender equity will be monitored to ensure that the project continues to consider the implications of its activities on the roles and responsibilities of household members. Again, ACIAR has the structure in place to make it a simple matter to incorporate gender as a priority. All ACIAR projects are required, under standard conditions, to submit an annual report on the progress of the project against its stated objectives. As with the design template, the annual report template can be altered to ensure that gender remains a priority throughout the project.

### Annual report template

- Are the activities and outcomes that targeted understanding gender in the project design being realised? If not, what are the reasons? Can further steps be taken to make sure that the needs of all participants are addressed?
- Have new gender-related activities and/or opportunities been discovered that were not foreseen at project design? Have new strategies been proposed for addressing these as the project progresses? Are these strategies feasible within the current scope and constraints of the project?

ACIAR has two stages at which to assess the impact of project activities on smallholder practices—(1) project final reviews, conducted either immediately before, or immediately after, project conclusion; and (2) impact and adoption assessment, conducted a number of years after a project has finished. As with each previous stage, there are already reporting and assessment protocols in place, to which gender equity can easily be added.

### Final report, Research Program Manager analysis, end-of-project review and impact assessment methodology

- How were the roles and livelihoods of women and men affected throughout the duration of the project? How did the outcomes of the project impact differently on women and men (e.g. labour, income, role)? Were there impacts on their other tasks and responsibilities? In determining the impact of project activities, what individuals, groups or organisations were consulted? Is the impact sustainable without further action from outside researchers and project staff?
- Were the gender-specific activities and outcomes that were targeted in the project design realised? If not, what are the reasons?
- Did new gender-related activities and/or opportunities emerge that were not foreseen at project design? Did the project identify, characterise and respond to these opportunities?

The questions listed here are a starting point, to be built on and modified as ACIAR learns more specifically how best to go about achieving gender equity from within the program portfolio. Within the process, structures and templates that ACIAR has in place currently, they are easily integrated into any new project to help ensure that ACIAR's impact on gender equity in the communities with which our projects work is a positive one.