



Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Collaborative Research on Sustainable Agriculture and Natural Resource Management

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CCRA-7: Gendered Perspectives for Conservation Agriculture

The Gender CCRA (Gendered Perspectives for Conservation Agriculture: Local soil knowledge and crop-livestock interaction) is qualitative, case study-based research carried out by the PI in coordination with individual LTRAs based on their interests, opportunities, and resources. Within the context of the two objectives below, LTRAs are asked to apply a common methodology to the following overall goals: 1. Identify gender-related factors that contribute to the success or failure of CAPS across sites, and 2. recommend gender-related practices and policies to improve the success of CAPS while reducing inequities between women and men. The Gender CCRA will provide guidance with methodology and background literature, and will carry out research in targeted sites in collaboration with LTRAs and the Technology Networks and Soil CCRAs.

Problem Statement

Women possess specialized agricultural knowledge in areas such as seed selection, soil quality, and crop-livestock management. Such knowledge may differ from that of men's based on women's practices, access to and control of assets, and other factors, providing incentives (or disincentives) for women's participation in CAPS. Even when women are not the formal decision-makers in the household or community, their participation in the development and evaluation of proposed CAPS is necessary because this will involve a reallocation of their resources including time and labor. Interactions among households, livestock, and soils in terms of allocation of biomass present competition and integration opportunities for CAPS. For example, dung may be used for fertilizer, but also as fuel for cooking. Post-harvest field stubble may be left to return nutrients and structure to the soil, but may also be used to feed ruminants. The decision over resource allocation may have significant gender dimensions given that animals are often among women's few agricultural assets, with women benefitting from selling or trading animal products in addition to using them to supplement the family diet. Leaving crop residue on the field may limit animal feed and fattening – adversely affecting women's interests and household wellbeing – and put livestock needs in conflict with recommended conservation practices. Such possible gender-based constraints may also provide opportunities for increasing gender equity and advancing SANREM research, such as engaging women in planting new cover crops in their fields or collective gardens, as well as supplying animal dung to increase soil fertility.

Objectives and Hypotheses

Objective 1: Document differences in men and women's knowledge, beliefs, and perceptions of soil quality

Hypotheses

1. Women will describe more soil characteristics than men
2. Agricultural spaces controlled by women have more fertile soil than agricultural spaces controlled by men

- 3. Women are more likely than men to express attitudes which support conservation agriculture production practices

Objective 2: Document the gendered nature of crop-livestock interaction with respect to the conservation objective of maintaining crop residue cover on the soil

Hypotheses

- 1. Men are more likely than women to adopt practices that maintain crop residue on staple crop fields
- 2. Maintaining crop residue cover on the soil will reduce women’s access to assets, specifically use and sale of animals and animal by-products

Methodology

The Gender CCRA uses a series of qualitative research techniques, including: focus group discussions, structured and unstructured interviews, participant observation, participatory mapping, and interpretation of photographs and soil samples. See Focus Group Activities Guide [add hyperlink]. It uses the Gender Dimensions Framework (GDF) developed primarily by Deborah Rubin and Deborah Caro of Cultural Practice that incorporates the following four dimensions: access to and control over key productive assets (tangible and intangible, including knowledge); beliefs and perceptions; practices and participation; and legal frameworks in addition to the cross-cutting dimension of power.

Outputs

Articles, theses, and other knowledge products that can serve as tools for future research and development.

Women and Development Teaching Modules Available Now

In line with SANREM's Gender CCRA, we created an on-line worksite in the Collaboration and Learning Environment web resource at Virginia Tech called *Scholar*. The worksite houses teaching modules for a Women and Development class. These modules include a great deal of key readings (and their summaries) relating to gender, the environment and development. For access to the worksite, please send a request to Dr. Maria Elisa Christie at mechristie@vt.edu.



Also In This Section

Also on this site

News: Stories covering the recent work of the SANREM Innovation Lab. Go to News.

Knowledgebase: A searchable database of scientific papers and other resources of interest to SA and NRM scientists and policy-makers. Go to Knowledgebase.

Partners' Team Room: All the resources that our Principle Investigators (PIs) and their teams

Management Entity Contact

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What is the SANREM Innovation Lab?

The **SANREM Innovation Lab** uses the science of Conservation Agriculture as part of an interdisciplinary approach to improving the livelihoods and food security of small farmers in the developing world. We run a USAID-funded program that supports international collaborations that research sustainable agriculture and natural resource management.

need, with forms, timelines, and checklists. Go to [Team Room](#).

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