



FEED THE FUTURE

The U.S. Government's Global Hunger & Food Security Initiative

Integrating Gender-responsive & Nutrition-sensitive Approaches when Working with Farmer Groups Engaged in Markets in Mid-west & Far-west Regions of Nepal

Activity Sheet
June 2016

Gender Myths¹

Time:

1 to 2 hours

Materials Needed:

- Flipchart with title of activity and objectives
- Flipchart papers
- Masking/scotch tape
- Markers or crayons



Introduction

Understanding the conceptual distinction between sex and gender is crucial to examining the difference between biological characteristics and socially constructed roles. While “sex” is the biological characteristics that define men and women at birth, “gender” is the socio-cultural role assigned by society. Being born a particular sex cannot be changed, while aspects of gender roles assigned by society will vary over time and across cultures. Raising awareness about gender myths and their impact on men and women can help extension providers to challenge some of these stereotypes and offer more equitable access to and control over resources and information. For example, until early 1980’s, the overarching myth in Nepal’s agriculture sector was that that farming is a male’s activity and woman’s homestead farming is not the subject of agricultural policy. Research shows the need to debunk such gender myths so that women’s access to agriculture resources can be increased, which can lead to enhanced productivity and food security, as well as improve the nutrition, health and education of children.

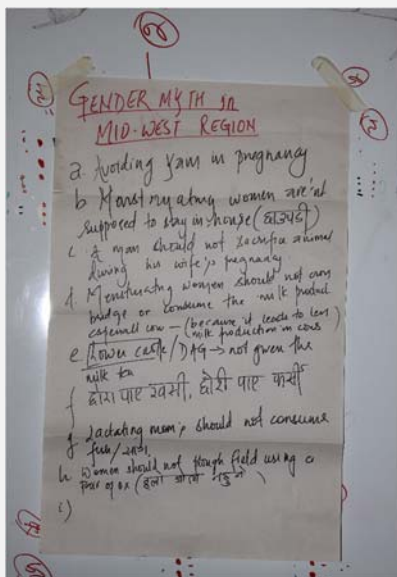
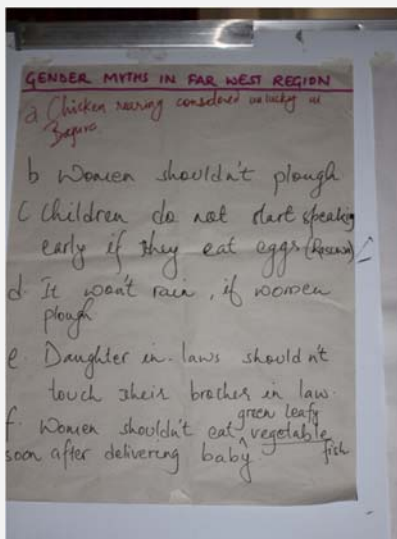
Objectives

- ✓ To explore perceptions about how women and men behave, and what is appropriate and inappropriate behavior.
- ✓ To identify where and how gender myths develop within a society.
- ✓ To examine the implications of negative and positive behaviors on the individual household, farm, and the community.

Steps

- 1) Review title of activity, objectives, and brief introduction. **(5 minutes)**
- 2) Divide participants into male and female group. If more male participants than females, create two male groups, and vice versa. **(5 minutes)**
- 3) Give each group one to two sheets of flipchart paper and markers

¹ This activity is modified version of the original activity “Exploring Gender Myths” outlined in INGENAES 2015 by Jan Henderson, which explored perceptions about how women and men behave in a particular society through interactive role play by participants.



or crayons. Ask the participants to list their on-field experiences or personal experiences on gender and nutrition related myths that occur in the home, on the farm, or in the community. Provide a few examples. **(20 minutes)**

Home

- chaupadi during menstruation
- lactating women should not consume green leafy vegetables

Farm

- Women cannot plough fields
- Women should not plough fields using pair of ox

Community

- Menstruating women should not touch any growing plants
- Daughter-in-law cannot talk in the presence of father-in-law

4) Have each group display their drawing on the floor or taped to the wall and give a brief presentation. **(5 minutes)** Compare and contrast their findings, ask the audience to add to or clarify the list of activities as needed. **(20 minutes)**

5) After each group has presented their list, ask the participants the following questions. **(30 minutes)**

- What negative behaviors did you observe in the particular myth?
- What positive behaviors did you observe in the particular myth?
- Origins of perceptions about how men and women should behave?
- In what ways can the **negative** behaviors you observed in the particular myth be addressed by the individual household and by the community?
- In what ways can the **positive** behaviors you observed in the role plays be encouraged and nurtured?

Now What?

Putting the activity into practice. Ask the participants to return to their small groups and discuss how they see themselves using this activity in the field by responding to the following questions, ensuring that every group member has the opportunity to provide his or her response:

- As the trainer, in what **ways** and with what **audiences** could you implement this activity?
- What **changes** might you need to make to the activity?

Ask each small group to share **one idea** from their discussion with the whole group. **(20 minutes)**

References

“Integrating Gender and Nutrition with Agricultural Extension Services” Facilitator’s Guide. USAID Integrating Gender and Nutrition into Agricultural Extension Systems (INGENAES), 2015. <http://dev.ingenaes.illinois.edu/wp-content/uploads/Gender-and-Nutrition-Facilitators-Guide.pdf>



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Prepared by Jan Henderson, University of Illinois and Bhawna Thapa, University of Florida