

Integrating Gender and Nutrition within Agriculture Extension Services

Tip Sheet
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Gender Equity and Social Inclusion (GESI) Best Practices for Agricultural Programs in Nepal

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Gender-responsive Technologies

The needs and preferences of end users are often overlooked when designing agricultural technologies, which hinders their adoption, especially among women and other underreached clients. To help agricultural practitioners navigate this balance, INGENAES has developed a toolkit entitled [Assessing how Agricultural Technologies can Change Gender Dynamics and Food Security](#). See this [“Technology profile” of a mini tiller in Nepal](#) for an example of the kind of information that can be obtained through utilizing this toolkit.

This Tip Sheet is a summary of the best practices from the [Technical Note “Best Practices for Integrating Gender Equity and Social Inclusion \(GESI\) Strategies within Nepal’s Agricultural Extension System”](#). Please refer to the Technical Note for more detailed explanations of the best practices listed in this Tip Sheet.

Introduction

Gender inequality and social exclusion are two conditions that stem from historical patterns of inequality in Nepal. Power dynamics related to gender, caste, and family structure diminish the status of women, low caste groups (known as Dalits), and ethnic minorities (known as Janajatis). To address these issues within Nepal, **gender equity and social inclusion (GESI) strategies** have been developed and implemented by government and non-government organizations (NGOs; Bennett, 2008). This tip sheet presents select best practices for integrating GESI into agricultural extension services and projects based on group interviews conducted in July 2017 with stakeholders from the government, and local and international NGOs in Nepal. These best practices go beyond simple participation quotas (i.e. stipulating that a certain percentage of project beneficiaries must be women and/or ethnic minorities). While such quotas are important, they are not by themselves an effective means of fostering long-term empowerment and social inclusion within development institutions, extension systems, and communities and among practitioners and beneficiaries. Thus, in addition to the GESI best practices listed below, this tip sheet also includes links to INGENAES resources in English and Nepali that can be used to understand issues within a community related to power, gender roles, and household nutrition.

GESI Best Practices

1. **Foster buy-in among “power-holders” through the use of gender-, caste-, and ethnicity-sensitive information sharing, education, and communication.** These power-holders may include various members of the household and community, such as, men, mothers-in-law, community leaders, and high caste groups. This is understood to more effectively target the underlying causes of disempowerment in Nepal (i.e. longstanding structural patterns of

WEAI Domains and Adaptations

The traditional WEAI typically includes five domains: production (input on productive decisions and autonomy), resources, income, leadership (group membership and leadership), and time (workload and leisure). In the Nepali context, it may be more effective for organizations to tailor the WEAI to the unique situation of their target communities and capacity of staff utilizing the metric. The WEAI can be adapted to include any combination of domains and sub-domains of the original survey. Project indicators can also be incorporated within this metric depending on the survey focus. Due to the diversity in empowerment conditions and the effect of “layered disempowerment” caused by overlap of caste, gender, and ethnic exclusion, this may be the most effective means of gathering reliable data using the WEAI in Nepal.

It is important to note that the WEAI has not been validated for use at the project level, but that a project-level WEAI tool is in the development stage under the Gender, Agriculture, and Assets Project Phase Two (GAAP2), an IFPRI initiative (Martinez, 2017).

discrimination towards women, Dalits and Janajatis) (UN, 2007; Connell, 2014). Among other strategies, this targeting may take the form of group or individual counselling sessions with members from a specific power-holder group, like men.

2. **Encourage the representation of women, low caste groups, and ethnic minorities at the institutional level.** See INGENAES tip sheet on [Developing a Gender Equity and Diversity Policy for the Workplace](#) for more guidance on this best practice.
3. **Use established tools to track women’s empowerment, and tailor them to your district or communities.** Some tools include INGENAES info sheets on [gender analysis](#), the [Moser analysis framework](#), the [Harvard analysis framework](#), and the [Gender Analysis Matrix \(GAM\)](#). Another tool to consider is the Abbreviated Women’s Empowerment in Agriculture Index (A-WEAI), see this [webpage](#) and [instructional guide](#) for more information.
4. **Monitoring and evaluation tools should be used to identify constraints experienced by marginalized or disadvantaged groups.** Disaggregated data allow projects to follow the progress, needs, and goals of vulnerable groups. Depending on the context it may be data can be disaggregated by sex, caste, ethnicity, rural/urban, education level, religion or other important socio-economic factors.
5. **Account for new constraints on women’s time that have resulted from extensive male out-migration** (see Feminization of Agriculture in the sidebar) by holding short, engaging training or educational activities. See the INGENAES tip sheet [Accounting for Differences in Men’s and Women’s Time and Mobility Constraints](#) for more information.
6. **Assess the needs of end users to identify appropriate technologies** for both men and women and promote less intensive agricultural activities for women (see [Assessing How Agricultural Technologies can Change Gender Dynamics and Food Security Toolkit](#)).
7. **Address shifts in household nutrition by promoting home gardening and incorporating nutrition messaging in agricultural trainings.**
8. **Involve men and mother’s in law in household nutrition trainings** since they may influence women’s access to food, particularly foods rich in micronutrients (Diamond-Smith et al., 2017)
9. **Include Dalits and Janajatis alongside Brahmins in group meetings to challenge social norms that perpetuate isolation of lower caste groups or ethnic minorities.**
10. **Extend targeted trainings in GESI to all members of the organization (from top managers to specialists, and program staff) as well as field-level staff.**
11. **Use credit groups and participatory learning groups to further inclusion by facilitating collaboration between members of different genders, castes, ethnic affiliations, and ages.**

12. **Ensure that programming is accessible to people with low levels of literacy and numeracy.** See this INGENAES tip sheet for more information: [Adapting to Differing Levels of Education and Literacy](#).

Activity Sheets for Integrating Gender and Nutrition in Agricultural Extension

These INGENAES activity sheets are designed for trainers to use with various audiences to improve understandings about gender and caste issues in order to implement some of the best practices described above. These activity sheets can help projects move beyond gender or caste participation quotas to identifying issues related to power, gender roles, and household nutrition.

- **Who Has Power and Control?** This activity sheet explores the factors that give people power and analyzes the power dynamics, including how power can shift and change, within a household ([English](#)) ([Nepali](#)).
- **Who Does What?** This activity sheet identifies who performs the daily activities in various settings and analyzes the implications of unequal distribution of activities and ways to encourage more equal distribution among family members ([English](#)) ([Nepali](#)).
- **Exploring Gender Myths.** This activity sheet explores perceptions about the behavior of men and women, identifies how gender myths develop and examines the implications of gendered stereotypes ([English](#)) ([Nepali](#)).
- **Power Over v. Power With.** This activity sheet defines and illustrates two types of power, examines the challenges of discussing issues of power and identifies ways of moving from “power over” to “power with” ([English](#)) ([Nepali](#)).
- **Integrating Gender and Nutrition into Agricultural Value Chains.** This activity sheet explores the ways to integrate gender and nutrition into various stages of the value chain and confronts power relations within different stages of a value chain ([English](#)) ([Nepali](#)).
- **What Goes on the Plate?** This activity sheet identifies the components of a nutritionally balanced diet, examines the effects of nutritional inequalities and demonstrates the challenges of providing a healthy diet with limited resources ([English](#)) ([Nepali](#)).
- **Who Gets What to Eat?** This activity sheet examines inequalities based on gender and position in the household and the impact of the inequalities on type and amount of food received as well as explores who has the authority to decide food distribution ([English](#)) ([Nepali](#)).

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