

Notes from INNOVATE Open Space Conversation
September 19, 2013

Group: Gender

Subgroup topic: How to Implement Gender-Aware Training at the Field level?

Points to Remember:

1. A focus on the client's needs during both assessment and implementation is critical for success.
 - a. Assessment must involve the target audience from the start:
 - What is the problem?
 - What do they want to learn?
 - How?
 - Who?
 - b. Be careful not to superimpose one's own agenda and put it above the target audience's needs and agenda.
 - c. Assessment must be an iterative process
2. A standard cookie-cutter approach to gender-aware agricultural training will not succeed. Therefore, be willing to adjust the when, where, how, and what, depending on the client (age, circumstances, gender...)
3. Expect to be surprised!
4. Our role (as educators, trainers, NGOs, etc) is to help (or facilitate) community members become agents of change. Change is more likely to be adapted if championed by local, known change agents from the community than from outsiders.
 - a. Messages are received better when they come from people who look like or are in similar situations to the recipients of the new information.
5. Training is not about telling people how to think or what to do. It's about giving them choices and options.
6. Any type of repeated involvement starts to foster change because more exposure leads to greater comfort (or at least the ability to deal with it). Therefore, if you want to open people's minds to changes, start with basic training on topics of interest to them. Once they feel comfortable with the idea of learning or trying something new that they learned in a training class, they may be more willing to try other things from other classes.
7. Beware of cultures where knowledge equals "power" because in those cultures the recipients are less likely to share or "trickle down" the new information to others. (This is a factor that should be added to the decision tree, See "Areas for further consideration" below.)
8. ICT is better for post-training support than for initial training.
 - a. But ICT communication should be two-way.
 - b. People still need training to understand how to use the information they receive via ICT.
9. Gender-aware training requires:

- a. Making sure one's own assumptions of gender don't cloud decisions on the selected training approach.
 - b. Becoming self-aware of what assumptions you are making sub-consciously.
10. For training to be adopted, training must address learners':
- a. Attitude
 - b. Behavior
 - c. Cognitive Knowledge
 - d. Confidence (by "learning by doing"/practicing in a safe, low-risk environment)
 - e. Commitment
11. Confidence is built by
- a. Letting learners practice in a safe environment
 - b. Providing low-risk opportunities in the real world (such as trying on a small scale first, or letting them try at free or lower than normal cost)
12. Age also affects acceptance in gender-equity training (older people tend to have more experiences which might make them more skeptical)

Areas for further consideration:

1. How to encourage the positive results from gender equity/financial training to spill over to men and businesses (i.e., to encourage the adaptation of new ideas beyond those who were trained)?
2. How to increase technical information given to women so they are better informed and can make purchase decisions comfortably on bigger-ticket items?
 - a. Encourage input suppliers to talk to both sexes equally
 - b. Talk to whomever does the associated job (e.g., talk to whomever irrigates about irrigation matters)
3. Is it better to train the sexes on the areas of their experience/expertise/strengths (strengthen the strengths) or train them on their areas of weakness (reducing their weaknesses)?
4. Identify a decision-tree/methodology by country or region to simplify decisions on whom to train (men, women, or both).