Factors influencing gender and youth integration in agricultural research and innovation in Africa

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Introduction

• Increased demand for food, infrastructure, employment and entrepreneurship: Youth population (75%).

• COVID-19 threatened the livelihoods of women and youth.
• Projects targeted at improving food and nutrition security.

• Good quality seeds, disease-resistant varieties, and farm management approaches.

• Low uptake of the innovations and technologies due to poor gender and youth integration.
Increased interest in gender and youth integration

- National and international agricultural research institutions.
  - Developing strategies for gender and youth integration,
  - Raising awareness: biophysical researchers.
- Gender-transformative approaches
  - Constraints that create and reinforce the inequality.
  - Discriminatory social institutions.
Objective and Methods

- Examine factors influencing gender and youth integration in R &I systems
- Gender lens on project documents, reports, publications [FNSSA project database (wur.nl)]
- Projects including CASSAWAGMARKETS, InnovaAfrica, Improved Orange Fleshed Sweet Potato value chains
- Key informant interviews; Stakeholder workshops
Food and Nutrition Security, and Sustainable Agriculture (FNSSA)

- A coordination support action: European and African institutions
- Sustainable Partnership Platform for research and innovation
- Increased synergies and coherence between actors, research and innovation projects
- Central, Eastern, Northern, Southern Western (2018-2022)

Types of Organizations
- University
- Private company
- Research institution
- Government agency
- Farmer
- Government agency
- Expert network
- Non-governmental organization
- Others
Objective and Methods

Exploitative: Takes advantage

Accommodating: Works around existing gender differences

Transformative: Addresses underlying causes of inequalities

Gender blind: Ignores

Gender aware: Adopts approach

Gender equality and better development outcomes

Analytical framework: Gender Integration Continuum
Gender and youth integration in R & I with different emphasis.

Imbalance in gender vis-à-vis youth integration

Projects activities have NO gender blind and exploitative activities.

Gender aware Projects limited to gender and youth integration in baseline surveys.
▪ Most of the gender and youth integration activities referred to accommodative levels.
▪ Positive progress in gender integration in R & I in the projects.
▪ Some activities have led to achieving transformative levels.
# Gender and youth integration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Integration activities</th>
<th>Extent of use</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sex disaggregated data and gender analysis</td>
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<td>Clear inclusion criteria</td>
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<td>Gender action plan</td>
<td>**</td>
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<td>Analysis of gender roles</td>
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<td>Thematic areas on gender and youth</td>
<td>**</td>
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<td>Work package on gender</td>
<td>**</td>
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<tr>
<td>Using input of men and women</td>
<td>**</td>
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<td>Intersectional lens to cover heterogeneity</td>
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<td>Improve access to resources</td>
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<td>Building on social networks</td>
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Enabling factors

- Gender and youth analysis from the onset to project evaluation
- Integrated approaches
- Tailored to the interests and capabilities of women and youth
- Partnerships with multidisciplinary teams
Constraining factors

- Inadequate gender and youth expertise and competence within projects
- Limited access of women and youth to R & I
- Limited accessibility and affordability of R & I products, services
- Limited consideration for youth’s preference in R & I
- Lack of relevant frameworks for youth integration in R & I
Conclusions and suggestions

- Efforts were made in integrating gender and youth in R & I.
  - Strategies for communication, capacity development, learning
- Imbalance was observed in gender integration vis-à-vis youth integration.
  - Strategies for youth engagement in R & I
  - Youth-specific projects for employment and entrepreneurship in R & I.
Women and youth’s limited access to leadership roles in R & I.

- Frameworks for youth integration in R & I.

The trend of considering youth issues the same way as gender issues may discourage proper targeting in R & I.

- Call for separating gender and youth.
Acknowledgements

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Thank you!