

Securing Women's Access to Land: Linking Research & Action



Gender

MISR & PLAAS Small Grants

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Gender Definitions

- Many
- Come from different theoretical perspectives, belief systems and cultural contexts
- Female/Male vs. Women/Men



Gender Definitions

- **Gender** – refers to the social construction of masculinity and femininity, not the biological characteristics of the sexes (Marchand, M.H., Parpart, J.L., 1995:244)



Gender Definitions

- **Gender** – culturally specific set of characteristics that identifies the social behaviour of women and men and the relationship between them. Gender refers to social differences, as opposed to biological ones, between men and women that have been learned, are changeable over time, and vary widely both within and between cultures.



Gender Definitions

- **Gender** – socio-cultural construction of roles and relationships between women and men - roles that change over time and are context-specific (Havorka, 1998:4).



Gender Definitions

- **Gender** - sex categories based on biological characteristics (male and female) are replaced with an analysis that takes into account the roles and relationships among and between men and women – differentiated by multiple axes of difference such as class, race, ethnicity, caste, life-cycle positioning, marital status, etc. (Mackenzie, 1995: 100, Leach 1991:22).



Gender Definitions

- **Gender** – women's and men's identities and positions are not reducible to any one axis of difference such as origin, skin colour or material locations, but are the products of struggle over meanings that represent an achieved, not an ascribed trait (Mbilinyi, 1992:35).



Gender Definitions

- OWN working definition of gender



Gender Definitions

- Working Definition for THIS project
 - *Gender refers to the socio-culturally and politically constructed roles and responsibilities ascribed to women and men that change over time, context specific and are inseparable from power relations. It also refers to a domain of characteristics that determine the value and status of women and men within society.*



Gender Definitions

- Important to have knowledge of basic gender concepts & definitions
 - International project – basic standards
 - Rigorous and credible research evidence that can stand up to peer review
 - Not rhetoric, but solid comprehension by researchers



Gender Definitions

- Gender Equity & Equality – Own Definitions.



Gender Definitions

- Gender Equity & Equality – THIS project
 - *Gender Equality refers to equal opportunities, benefits, rights, chances, access and control over resources between and among women and men.*
 - *Gender Equity refers to notions of fairness and justice between and among women and men.*



Gender Analysis

- **Gender Analysis**

- The systematic examination of the roles, relationships, social institutions and processes between and among women and men in different cultures and societies - focusing on imbalances of power, wealth, workload and access to resources.
- Examines the multiple ways in which women and men, as social actors, engage in strategies to transform existing roles, relationships, social institutions and processes in their own interest and in the interest of others.
- Gender Analysis but Enhancing Women's Power



Positionality

- **Positionality (Gender & Diversity)**
 - Multiple identities resulting in the intersection of gender with different domains of difference such as age, class, caste, ethnicity, nationality, marital status, life-cycle positioning, profession, etc.
 - Focus on those who are marginalized and vulnerable



Gender Power Relations

- The personal is the political
- At household level = micro-politics
- **Women's empowerment**
 - Redress and change in power relations in a positive way, resulting in better control over resources and livelihood decisions (economic, socio-cultural, political, legal, symbolic)
 - Enhanced bargaining and negotiating power



Agency & Resistance

- **Agency**

- Women are active participants, not passive objects or victims
- Women have the capacity to affect change
- Strategies, networks, resources, etc.

- **Resistance**

- Resistance by women is not always open, public and overt
- “Back-door” decisions
- Internalized Discrimination
 - Women uphold patriarchal discourse, while doing their own thing (back-door resistance)
 - Results in perpetuating patriarchy (paradox)



The Household

- **The African Household**
 - Problematic – not nuclear family unit
 - Complexities reduced to aggregations (FHH, co-wives, etc.)
 - Neo-classical economic terms: altruistic, democratic, co-operative decision-making unit, joint utility welfare function, pooling of resources
 - Division of labour

The Household

- **Beyond the Household as a Black Box**
 - Unpack the concept
 - Socially constructed concept: complex, cross-culturally diverse
 - Negotiation, accommodation, bargaining, contestation, changing, not stable (divorce, extra-marital relations, etc.)
 - As part of wider web of relations, responsibilities, obligations and rights and broader political-economic context
- **The household as a point of departure**
 - Social institutions (kinship, marriage, women's groups, networks, etc.)

Questions & Answers

- Q:



Proposals

- How to conceptualize & integrate into your proposals



Thank You!