Gender and Global IPM

Sarah Hamilton
Graduate School of International Studies
University of Denver
And IPM CRSP Investigators

Gender Issues in Global IPM

- Why women need IPM
  - Livelihoods
  - Health
- What women bring to IPM
  - Specialized knowledge
  - Health perspectives
- Why women face severe adoption constraints
- How IPM research and technology transfer can address constraints
Gender and IPM Adoption

- Why are farmers in the Global South slow to adopt IPM?
- Half of them (at least) face extraordinary constraints to adoption because they are women.
- Throughout the Global South, women have assumed more responsibility for agriculture during the last 25 years.
The “Feminization of Agriculture”

- Women’s labor and labor share increased during the last 25 years
  - Larger proportion of both own-account farmers and agricultural employees
  - Wider range of tasks on family farms
  - Total agricultural labor time increased
  - **50-80%** of people and work in agriculture
- Women’s managerial responsibility (and authority, depending on setting) also increased
  - Women are no longer “secondary” workers in small-scale agriculture in much of Asia and Latin America
  - Women remain primary farmers in Africa
“Feminization of Agriculture” and “Feminization of Poverty” are linked

- Responsibility for agriculture has increased
- Women aim to increase value of their labor and output
- Women farmers are much less likely to access
  - Credit (formal)
  - Technology and Information, including IPM
  - Many production and marketing organizations
- Why?
  - Lack recognition of role as farmers
  - Primary structural constraint is land, not education
Gendered Land Constraint

- FAO estimates that women own or control much less land than men
  - 5% in Asia
  - 18% in Africa
  - 22% in Latin America
- Land rights raise women’s productivity
- Research is needed to document
  - gender differences in ownership and effective control
  - Determinants and pathways toward equity
  - FAO, IFPRI, WB, USAID support; IPM research is relevant
Landless women are least likely of all farmers to have access to technology transfer in IPM.

Landless women are less able to hire labor or call upon household labor:
- supply constraint
- IPM adoption constraint

Land ownership also tends to act as an incentive for adoption of labor-intensive and other relatively-expensive sustainable crop management strategies.
Women are on the Front Lines of Pest Management

- Women do the work of pest management
  - Women spray pesticides in many settings where a decade ago they did not
  - Women handle pesticides and have greater exposure levels than do men, even where they do not spray

- Women make decisions that impact pest management practice
  - Aim for new markets that affect their pest management strategies
  - Choose among pest management strategies
  - Budget for, select, and purchase pesticides
Women offer specialized knowledge and perspectives

- Indigenous knowledge of pest management is often highly gendered
- Women farmers’ priorities and hypotheses reflect gendered experience of agro-ecologies
  - Plants, soils, micro-climates
- Women may be more likely to innovate
Women Manage and Value Integrated Agro-ecosystems and Biodiversity

- Specialists in conservation and management of seeds
- More likely to integrate management of plants from diverse spaces: wild, field, and garden
- More likely to integrate livestock and plant ecologies
- Manage food crops for diversity:
  - Dietary diversity, seasonality, preparation and storage properties of foods, consumption quality of foods
- Specialists in medicinal plants
  - Although men often are assumed to be the healers
Women’s Attitudes Toward Pesticides

- Women are responsible for family health, and often take leading roles in community health
  - More responsive to information about health costs of pesticides
  - Take active roles in community IPM, even when they are not farmers

- In the absence of IPM information, women value pesticides equally with men
  - Lack information about health costs
  - Women and men both view pesticides as economically necessary
Gendered Pesticide Use

- Bottom line: women are not “naturally” more inclined to prefer natural pest management.
- Women are as likely as men to use pesticides in many settings:
  - Despite lack of cash for inputs
    - E.g., women’s group formed to raise money for pesticides in Kenya
  - Very high levels of usage by women documented by FAO, PAN
Research and Technology Transfer to Enhance Women’s Adoption of IPM

- How can we identify women in need of IPM?
  - Disaggregate all research by gender
    - Especially research linked to tech transfer
  - All women should be considered: farmers, farm family members, community members, agribusiness workers

- How can we address constraints such as land?
  - Incorporate women and gender analysis at all phases of stakeholder identification, research, and tech transfer
  - Work with women’s groups (NGOs, community-based) to promote literacy, legal literacy, other bases for empowerment
IPM CRSP Model for Incorporating Women in Research and Technology Transfer

- Initial partner and stakeholder identification
- PAs and other qualitative data collection
- Baselines for Impact Assessment
  - Include women’s labor, land, markets
- Research activities
  - Prioritize working with women
- Technology Transfer activities
  - Build on platforms created during research
  - Women’s networks uncovered through research
  - Women’s groups, Health organizations