Gender and well being In Flood Based Livelihood Systems

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Points of departure

- Objective is to improve well being in flood-based livelihood systems
- Well being differs between women and men
- Well being differs among women
- Flood based farming systems have special circumstances and challenges
Flood based farming systems have special circumstances and challenges

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<td>Higher uncertainty creating family stress</td>
<td>Uncertainty can cause tensions and even violence; male labour migration leads to broken families</td>
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<td>Special livelihood circumstances</td>
<td>Cultivation of specific crops (coarse grains, pulses, oil seeds – but hardly vegetables) and importance of (small) livestock</td>
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<td>Access to drinking water</td>
<td>When there is no groundwater, access to drinking water is a huge challenge in the off-season, whereas during the flood season, water quality from storage ponds is problematic</td>
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| Remoteness and isolation | Coverage with basic amenities is often far below national averages:  
  - Electricity  
  - Improved water supply  
  - Health clinics with staff  
  - Schools with teachers |
Well being differs between women and men

Due to prevalence of outdated traditions & cultural practices:

Women have no role in decision making, even women headed household, handover responsibility of managing their field to a close male relative

However women help in harvesting, take care of livestock and fetch water, fodder for animals and work as daily wage laborers on farms – yet they are not consulted on selling or buying land, in crop production, livestock, choices and other matters. Few women have knowledge of spate irrigation

Similarly, youth are considered as lacking experiences and insights are shun by elders and not consulted on most of decision making. Like women, they are assigned role of working as laborer: this is a huge missed opportunity.
• Receive lower wages for the same work.
• Are less likely to purchase inputs.
• Have less access to innovations and new technologies.
• Have weaker property rights and land tenure security.
• **Compared to men, women:**
  • Operate smaller farms.
  • Keep fewer livestock.
  • Have a greater overall workload.
  • Are poorly represented in leadership positions in rural organizations.
Well being differs among women – take into account, for instance:

• Women in female headed households
• Economically and socially more vulnerable
• Less access to labour and resources
Consequences of lack of active women participation in Flood Based Livelihood Systems

- **Lower** productivity
- **Lost** income
- **Increased** levels of poverty and malnutrition
To better understand these, undertake ‘well being surveys’

Objective is to improve well being in flood-based livelihood systems

Well-being is a broad construct that encompasses multiple dimensions, which can essentially be divided into two large domains: objective and subjective well-being.

Subjective data are information from the person point of view (“symptoms”), including feelings, perceptions, and concerns obtained through interviews.

Objective data are observable and measurable data (“signs”) obtained through observation, physical examination, and laboratory and diagnostic testing objective research claims to describe a true and correct reality, which is independent of those involved in the research process.
Well-being is long and healthy life, access to knowledge, and a decent standard of living.

GDP Gross Domestic Product Measures.

Prosperity. It includes having good mental health, high life satisfaction, a sense of meaning or purpose.

It is formally defined as the process of enlarging people’s freedoms and opportunities and improving their well-being.
The 3 stages

The first stage concerns the establishment of common human interest. As human there are a number of areas that touch us all deeply, what ever our background: our health, our autonomy and security and the future of our children. This we can share and discuss and exchange our experiences.

A number of questions that can be asked at this stage:

• How is your health and what are the concerns?
• How do you see the life and future of your children?
• Do you feel safe and secure? Can you manage with your income?
• How do you feel from day to day?
• What risks do you see for your family?

Not all questions need to be asked – what is important is the natural flow of the conversation and the understanding that is jointly developing.

It is good to do this as equals and exchange experience – with interviewer/visitor comparing one’s own life with that of the interviewee and also encouraging mutual questions.

This stage of questions established the human connection. It also triggers thinking about what is important for one’s self and the choices one is making.
Following common human-interest stage, more reflective questions can be asked. These encourage light analysis of one’s situation and that of others and give a lot of mutual of often unexpected holistic insight.

Examples of such reflexive questions are:

• How are things done?
• How do other help each other?
• How is your relationship with members of family?
• How is your relationship with neighbors?
• How you look at things in your life, how you look at others; how you look at yourself?
• What are your roles, are you content with these?
• Would you say that people help each other?
• Do you think things will be different in the future?

One can also ask to give examples and relate to what is in the house or immediate environment to illustrate the points.

What is important, is to listen to what is behind something out of empathy. This will often generate new perspectives/ understanding of priorities. It will help one to understand what is driving, how decision are made, and what are boundary constraints.
The 3 stages

From these two stages one can move to topics that originally triggered the learning visit (e.g. road construction program, mobility and access and environmental effects) and that one wants to understand better.

One can raise these in a conversational way and see how they relate to the well-being. By this time there is a good deep understanding of each others lives and the thematic question can relate to these interests. Best is to use of a checklist that one either has memorized or quickly glances at.
What are the Challenges

- Low productivity, Low added value, Failed crops
- Domestic Violence
- Migration, Shortage of Family Labor
- Insecure access to land and water
What matters is to improve well-being

- Improve livelihood opportunities
- Labour saving
- Reduce gender-based violence
- Improve women positions and access to decision making
- Improve access to assets
- Improve well being in general, health and nutrition, personal develop
1. Improve livelihood opportunities

Increase women’s access to cash and income

- Will increase their autonomy
- Will improve their family position (can help reduce violence)

Opportunities differ from place to place, but winners are often in:

- Livestock keeping
- Poultry
- Storage
Tihama, Yemen:
- Women facilitators training women in vaccination of goats
LOOK FOR NEW PRACTICAL IMPROVEMENTS
Poultry and animal fattening

- Own source of income improves standing and autonomy
- Many opportunities in poultry, animal fattening, food processing
2. Labour saving

Introduce small electric equipment with solar packs:
- milk churners
- grinders and presses
- fodder choppers

Introduce basic equipment:
- wash boards
- household storage
Electric milk churner:
Big labour saver and making higher quality product

Small grinder: convenient in food processing

Improved storage
3.
Improve women positions and access to decision making

Representation in committees and meetings
- Increases status and confidence through creating space opportunities

Woman as examples of changes - for instance female social organizers
- Serve as source of inspiration - freedom to move and carrier of knowledge
Female extension worker in Tihama, Yemen: Apart from providing services and skills, she serves as a role model for other women.
Create space for discussion
Facilitating women’s active participation in decision making:
Amazon region Ecuador
4. Reduce gender based violence

Own source of income improves standing and autonomy

• What is the situation at community level?

Remove unsafe places

• Remote fields and water points, high crop stands along footpaths – all these create opportunities for harassment.
• In developing countries, women represent more than half. In many countries gender-based violence and domestic violence is wide-spread, affecting more than 70% of women in a given year.
5. Access to resources

- **Access to land**
  - Create awareness on rights to land and set examples

- **Access to water**
  - Where possible for instance develop water wells for women
Food Security

Women play an essential role in food and nutrition security through their responsibilities in provision and preparation of food consumed in the home.

For girls, land rights mean better nutrition, healthcare, access to education, and delayed marriage.

For women, land rights means a more equal power within the home and community, and ability to realize economic opportunity and legal rights.

For everyone, regardless of gender, stronger rights for women and girls means more prosperity, peace, and sustainability.
6. Improve well being in general

- **Life skills training**
  - Family care and relations
  - Planning and saving
  - Basic skills (nutrition, health, family planning)

- **Registration**
  - Identity cards

- **Better access to drinking water including household water treatment**
  - Time saving
  - Improved health
  - Reduced costs
Improving drinking water ponds
- Improved piped water supply is preferable but not always feasible
- In the meantime the water supply from ponds may be improved
  - Control seepage with clay or plastic lining
  - Prevent pollution from animals with fences or trenches
  - Maintain depth (7 meters) with stair cases
  - Use sand filters with hand pumps or promote household water treatment
what are male and female farmers’ and different sectors’ perspectives on women’s involvement in water governance and climate change adaptation?

What are the main constraints on farmers’ (especially women’s) roles in agriculture, irrigation management and climate change adaptation?

What resources and practical measures are needed to remove women’s constraints and strengthen their roles in water management, agriculture, livelihood improvement and climate change adaptation?

How can farmers (especially women) gain equitable access to these resources and measures?
Indicators

• Currently, mainly in developing countries, women represent more than half of the workers in the agricultural sector, this being the case in sub-Saharan Africa, where women account for 60% of the labor force and produce 80% of food according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nation (FAO).

• The improvement of the situation of women in the agricultural sector would cause an increase in productivity and in food security indexes, as well as economic growth and social welfare.
CLOSING THE GENDER GAP

• Policy makers
• Institutions
• Integrate women at local and regional level.
• Non-governmental organizations (NGOs)
• Creating participatory, demand-driven, group-based approaches.
• Emphasizing education and skill development, including use of ICT.
• Providing legal information and advice.
• Plan, Research, Monitoring, Case study, Evaluation
• Incorporating approaches that reach all household members: women, men, youth
What about woman farmers in FBLN Sudan?