

# AGRILINKS



## Breaking Barriers: Integrating Gender and Nutrition within Agricultural Extension Services

**Speakers:** Andrea Bohn, University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign, Associate Director, INGENAES  
Edge Kuyper, University of California Davis, Nutrition Advisor INGENAES  
Jeannie Harvey, USAID Bureau for Food Security

**Moderator:** Julie MacCartee, USAID Bureau for Food Security

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## Jeannie Harvey

Jeannie Harvey is a Gender Advisor with USAID's Bureau for Food Security, providing technical assistance to Feed the Future (FTF) missions in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. She also served as Program Analyst for South Asia in the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) Foreign Agricultural Service and has a Ph.D. in International Development and Gender Auditing. Ms. Harvey has extensive experience in gender integration, including program development and evaluation, gender auditing and gender audit training. Prior to joining USAID and USDA, Ms. Harvey served as the Senior Manager for Gender Integration at InterAction, Director of the University of Idaho Women's Center, and Gender Advisor for USAID/Bangladesh while serving in the Investing in Women in Development (IWID) fellowship program.



## Andrea Bohn

Andrea Bohn is based at the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign. She is the associate director of the Integrating Gender and Nutrition within Agricultural Extension Services (INGENAES) project. Previously, she managed the Modernizing Extension and Advisory Services (MEAS) project, both funded by USAID.

Before coming on board as the manager of the MEAS project, she ran international education programs for students at the University of Illinois. In her home country of Germany she worked at the University of Hohenheim in curricular reform and innovation in Agricultural Sciences. Andrea's experience spans many country lines, with strong connections in Southeast Asia, parts of Africa, Latin America, and Europe.

She has worked with extension implementers, policy makers, and extensionists worldwide, connecting people with resources and training for strengthening agricultural growth and sustainability.

## Edye Kuyper

Edye Kuyper is based at the University of California Davis. She provides nutrition leadership to the INGENAES project. In this role, Edye supports public and NGO agricultural extension providers in Zambia to better integrate gender and nutrition. She is also working to improve global partner coordination in order to advance the role that agricultural extension can play in supporting better food systems and nutrition outcomes.

Raised on a farm in Vermont, Edye served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in rural Mauritania.

In addition to her work with global agriculture and nutrition, Edye has 10 years' experience with local and statewide community-based nutrition education and food security projects that engage low-income US households.

Edye holds an MS in International Agricultural Development from UC Davis. Prior to joining the INGENAES project, she worked at the UC Davis World Food Center, and the Program in International and Community Nutrition with Alive & Thrive Small Grants Program.





**IN**

Integrating

**GE**

Gender and

**N**

Nutrition within

**A**

Agricultural

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Extension

**S**

Services



## Need to address issues such as

- Many agricultural development efforts and extension services systematically **fail to target women or young farmers with services**, or utilize approaches that make it difficult for women or young farmers to engage.
- Many extension services have a topic **bias towards trainings on staple crop production and new seed varieties and practices**, with little consideration of nutrition or women's priorities/needs.
- Significant **capacity constraints** (institutional, individual) & weak enabling environment → limit reach and effectiveness

# Presentation Overview:

- Why INGENAES?
  - Context of agricultural extension
  - Extension's contribution to gender equity, nutrition
- Why capacity development?
  - Needs observed in intervention countries
- Delving in:
  - The Institutional Review and Processing Framework
  - Training approach and products for frontline workers
  - Opportunities for further dialogue & collaboration

# What You Should Know About Agricultural Extension ...

## **Pluralistic:**

Many different types of service providers (government, NGOs, CSOs, private sector (commodity based, linked to sales or contracted purchase of products, fee for service), universities, research. And its not really a system ...

## **Paradigms:**

Operate from different paradigms (knowledge and technology transfer, human capacity development, advising, facilitation).

## **Project dependent:**

Intriguing innovations in methods and approaches, but not implemented at scale, not sustained over extended period of time.

## **Public sector in particular:**

Understaffed, under-resourced, male dominated, aging, subject to governance issues. Expected to do too much with too few resources and too little support.

# Necessities and Expectations ...



More “Powerful”  
and Effective:

## Production +:

- not just staples and cash crops, also horticulture, fisheries, livestock, ...
- profitability, farm management, market oriented, entrepreneurship, ...
- natural resource management, climate change adaptation, post-harvest loss reduction, value addition ...
- **NUTRITION**

Client  
oriented

Demand  
driven

GENDER  
equitable

# Getting on the NUTRITION Bandwagon!



## Exciting times!

- UNO Decade of Nutrition
- Sustainable Development Goals
- Scaling up Nutrition Initiative
- USAID Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Strategy (2014-2025)

→ \$\$\$\$

Extension has to and wants to get on this bandwagon.  
But how to position itself?

# Improving Nutrition - What is the Role of Agricultural Extension?



Many Sectors and  
Actors!

Agricultural  
EXTENSION

How to improve the enabling environment for extension to play its part?

How to develop the institutional and individual capacity to integrate gender and nutrition within agricultural extension?

# Some Principles for GENDER-Equitable Extension

- Equip all extension officers with the knowledge and skills to address men and women farmers equitably.
- Increase the proportion of women extension officers.
- Adapt gender-responsive techniques and methods to the local context.
  - Account for time, mobility, and literacy constraints
  - Make content interesting, engaging, and relevant for women
- Strengthen women's right to land
- Collect sex-disaggregated data.
- Evaluate the impact of extension services on reducing gender disparities in agricultural productivity.

# Some Principles for NUTRITION - Sensitive Extension

- Build a nutritious food system
  - May include farm-level diversification, or specialization
- Engage men and empower women
  - Address nutrition needs across life course
- Link rural households with postharvest opportunities
  - Including storage, processing and value addition
- Improve demand for dietary diversity
  - Both at level of household and market
- Promote improved agricultural practices relevant to nutrition:
  - WASH
  - Conservation agriculture/CSA

# Guidance and Support for Extension Service Providers



- **Introductory Training on Gender and Nutrition Integration** with 7 basic activities
- More Info, Facts, Tips, and Activity Sheets
- Other training packages & tools
- Technical Notes (several forthcoming)

- **Conceptualizing the Contribution of Agricultural Extension Services to Nutrition** (Discussion Paper)
- **Competency Framework**
- **Institutional Review and Planning Framework (IRPF)**

# Honduran Extension Service Providers: Knowledge Gaps



- Extension services in Honduras primarily provided by NGOs and agricultural input companies
  - Training content determined by internal or external motivation; little coordination among projects, sectors
  - Pilot survey findings (n=100, Sta. Rosa de Copan): nutrition knowledge exceedingly low, WASH relatively high
- Proposed responses:
    - Harmonize content
    - Harmonize approaches
    - Support organizations (esp. local NGOs) in prioritizing goals

# Zambian Extension Service Providers: Food System Challenges

- Zambia employs 1,700 Camp Extension Officers
- NGOs, private/for-benefit enterprises also provide extension
- Alarming rates of stunting, food insecurity persist despite economic growth, strong harvests
- Proposed responses:
  - Harmonize content
  - Harmonize methods
  - Support organizations in prioritizing goals



# Institutional Capacity Development

- AES providers are typically committed to improving food security via increased production
  - Strong trust relationships
  - Yet often overstretched
- Opportunities for organizational leaders/management to reflect on their work are few and far between
- As a result:
  - Mission/strategy poorly defined
  - Operations/activities not aligned with organizational mission

# What Role to Play

- Nutrition, gender integration:



- One more thing piled on the backs of overstretched staff?



- Or a catalyst for realizing organizational mission and outcomes?

# Institutional Review and Planning Framework



Helping agricultural extension service providers include approaches that improve gender equity and nutrition outcomes

**Extension professionals contribute to improving rural livelihoods, but does it seem efficient to add gender and nutrition integration to their existing (and very full) list of responsibilities?**

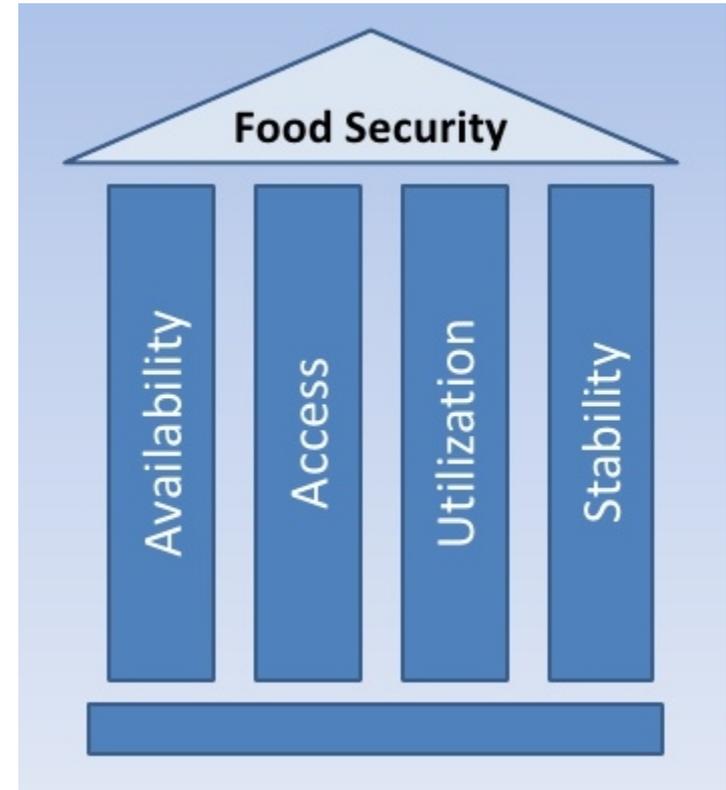
This institutional review and planning workshop will guide participants to:

- Analyze organizational missions in setting strategy and operational priorities.
- Define their vision for the rural households they engage
- Evaluate how nutrition- and gender-responsive programming contribute to vision and mission
- Translate mission into goals and SMART objectives
- Develop an action plan to implement nutrition- and gender-responsive extension interventions.

This workshop will empower organizations to better support healthy, well-nourished farming households that produce more diverse foods for robust markets, benefiting both men and women.

# IRPF: Nutrition Integration

- Connects to four pillars of food security
- Glass half full: AES *already* contributes to availability, access
- Builds on lived experience
- Leads to competency framework: AES skills, practices and behaviors of increasing complexity



# IRPF: Activity Break

- Personal reflection on food:

What was the first thing that you ate or drank in the morning?



# IRPF: How to Access and Use It and Report back

- Available at the Agrilinks “Resources” link
- Technical assistance available from INGENAES team members ([emkuyper@ucdavis.edu](mailto:emkuyper@ucdavis.edu))
- Feedback is most welcome!



# INGENAES Competency Framework

- What skills, attitudes, and behaviors do AES staff need to embody in order to facilitate gender equity and improved nutrition?

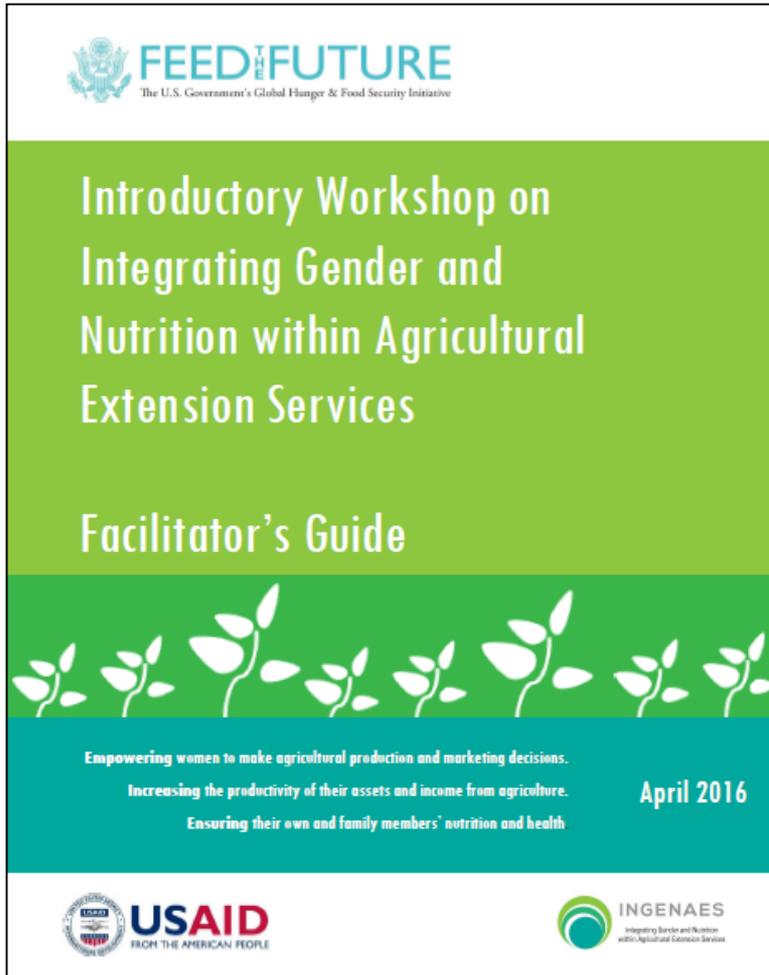


Source: [Society of Actuaries](#)

# INGENAES Competency Framework, cont'd

Competency domains	Description of specific competencies within the domain	Learning	Transfer	Impact
<b>IV Nutrition-Specific Competencies for Extension and Advisory Services</b>				
Conviction of importance of nutrition	Is convinced that nutrition is important, and motivated to take action at personal, family/community, and professional levels (attitude/perspective)	<p>Analyze how nutrition contributes to good and bad health outcomes in own, family experiences.</p> <p>Describe nutrition actions that lead to positive health outcomes.</p>	<p>Motivate farmers, value chain actors to identify how nutrition personally affects them.</p> <p>Share opportunities to act on conviction.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Agents and community members are motivated to act to improve nutrition because they believe it is important to them</li> </ul>
Production diversity (as economically and agro-ecologically appropriate)	<p>Can identify trees, crops and livestock appropriate to the specific context that can meet nutrition needs of specific/targeted communities and households</p> <p>Can provide examples of complementary tree, crop, and livestock farm combinations which contribute to improved consumption diversity, and are appropriate for the market context</p>	<p>Describe fruits, crops, meat/fish that can be grown/raised in the local context that can meet specific nutrient deficiencies of targeted population using basic food groups related to dietary deficiencies.</p> <p>Describe technically and economically complementary tree, crop and livestock farming combinations that have the potential to meet specific nutritional needs of the target population.</p>	<p>Discuss fruits, crops, <u>meat/fish</u> appropriate for local production with farmers linking them to meeting specific nutritional requirements.</p> <p>Promote packages of complementary tree, crop and livestock farm combinations to farmers while discussing the consumption/nutrition and market benefits and tradeoffs of the foods.</p> <p>Outline benefits and costs of diversifying production in terms of both nutrition/health and market sales to farmers.</p> <p>Engage other value chain actors to realize economic opportunities that could result from greater diversity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Farmers grow/raise more foods that meet specific nutritional needs and requirements</li> <li>- Farmers have greater knowledge of complementarity of diverse tree, crop and livestock production</li> <li>- Farmer and household members consume more diverse foods from own production.</li> <li>- Markets demand more diverse, nutrient- dense foods</li> <li>- Farmers gain additional income from the sale of nutrient-dense foods</li> </ul>

# Introductory Training



## What's so special?

- **Designed for field agents** who can directly put their learning into practice within the communities they work in
- **Simple, engaging, fun**
- **Learning by doing**
- **Practical and relevant**
- **Eye-opening**
- **Entry point on which to build**

<http://ingenaes.illinois.edu/training-materials>

<http://ingenaes.illinois.edu/library>

# 7 Activity Sheets



**Available in  
English, Spanish,  
Russian, Nepali,  
Bangla**

# Lots of Resources for Going Deeper



Also see: **Overview of Training Manuals, Toolkits, and Similar on Gender-responsive and / or Nutrition-sensitive Agricultural Programming (Excel Spreadsheet)**

# Top Take-Aways

**What might be applied to other programs and contexts?**

**What are the indispensable lessons to share with others?**

1 Ag extension services stand to make an important contribution to gender equity, nutrition and healthy food systems

2 Institutional and staff capacity to implement gender-responsive, nutrition-sensitive services is limited

3 The IRPF supports institutions in...

4 The Competency Framework specifies concrete SABs...

5 Other training materials support frontline workers and those who train them

6 INGENAES stands at the ready to support organizations

7 Together we can test and identify better ways to leverage extension and achieve gender equity, improved nutrition!

# Questions and Sharing



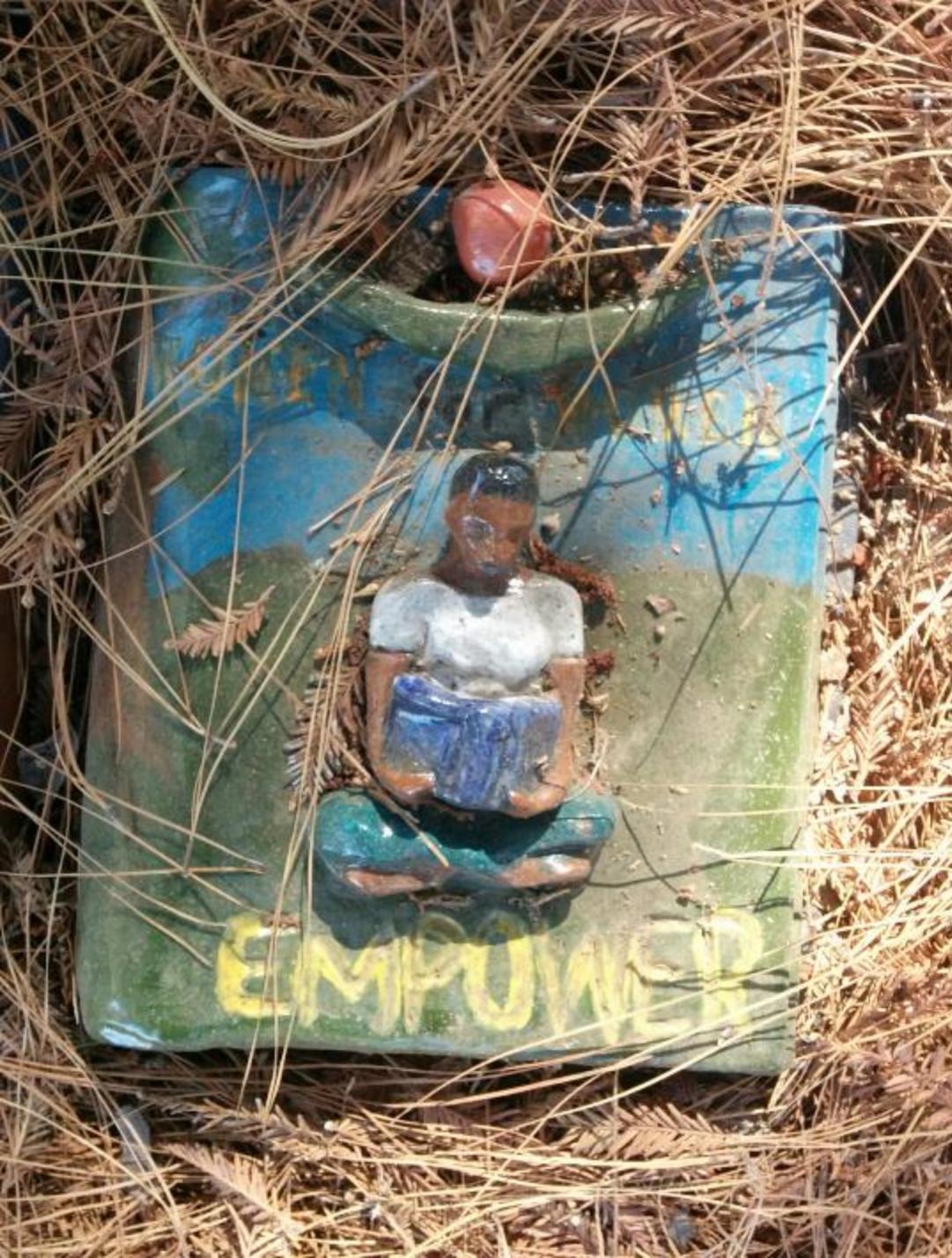
**Questions ?**

**Please share your experience  
with institutional capacity  
development ...**

**How have you been able to  
motivate change related to  
gender and nutrition?**



**Please  
share!**



# FEED <sup>THE</sup> FUTURE

The U.S. Government's Global Hunger & Food Security Initiative

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# *Questions and Answers*

# JOIN THE DISCUSSION

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