GENDER INTEGRATION FRAMEWORK

Summary: Causal Mapping

Women's empowerment is essential to achieving Feed the Future's topline objectives of improving nutrition and reducing poverty through inclusive agricultural growth. Women are empowered when they define their own goals and have the necessary resources and power to achieve them.

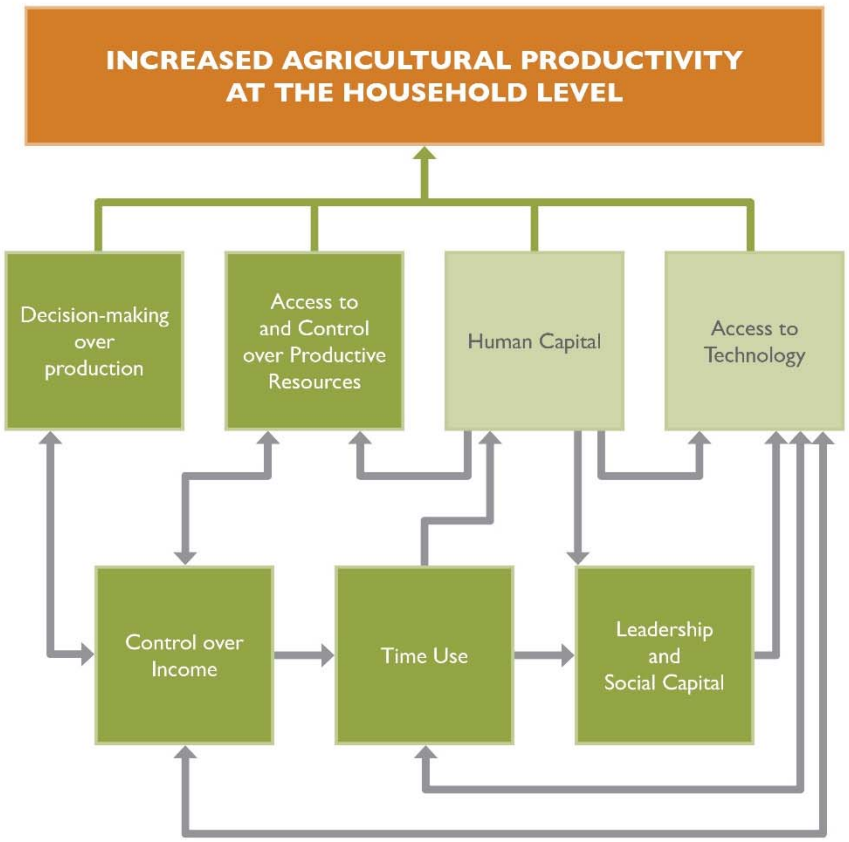
The Feed the Future Gender Integration Framework is a USAID programmatic tool that was developed to meet two objectives related to women's empowerment. The first was to enhance development practitioners' understanding of the most critical constraints to women's empowerment in the agricultural sector. The second was to provide information on how programs can best address existing constraints. The framework, which can focus on an individual country or context, has seven dimensions (see below). The Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI) measures the first five dimensions.

The GIF's Seven Dimensions

1) **Production:** awareness of different possibilities for and decision-making power over agricultural production;
2) **Resources:** access to and decision-making power over productive resources, including but not limited to land, credit, and equipment;
3) **Income:** control over the use of income and expenditures;
4) **Leadership:** social participation, including leadership in the community and ability to voice opinions in public;
5) **Time:** ability to choose a workload that allows adequate and satisfactory time for non-work activities;
6) **Human Capital:** having adequate skill and knowledge to productively use resources, new technologies, and information to improve the household economic situation; and
7) **Technology:** access to beneficial technologies.

The full paper reviews the empirical literature on linkages between dimensions of women's empowerment and greater household agricultural productivity. It places focus on production, resources, human capital, and technology, which are the dimensions that are evidenced to most directly contribute to increased agricultural productivity. Figure 1 maps the broad relationships between the seven dimensions and agricultural productivity.

Figure 1: Linkages between Domains of Women's Empowerment and Agricultural Productivity



NOTE: WEAI domains are indicated in the darker green boxes.

Production

There is little empirical literature that directly links women's decision-making power in agriculture to household agricultural productivity. This is because the majority of studies do not take into account one of the following factors: (1) production decisions are often made by multiple household members or (2) the sex of the person(s) making the decisions. However, the literature has consistently found that productive resources generally are not efficiently allocated between women and men and that re-allocating inputs from male-managed plots to female-managed plots or increasing women's decision-making power over agricultural assets would likely result in overall increased agricultural productivity for the household.

Resources

Many studies in agricultural economics that address gender and agricultural productivity find that, on average, men farmers are more productive than women farmers. However, much of this gender gap is explained by differences between women and men in access to resources such as land, social and human capital, inputs, and services. Most studies found that, controlling for differences in access to resources, women farmers were as productive as or more productive than men farmers. Estimates suggest that women and men would achieve similar levels of

agricultural productivity if women's access to land and other resources were similar to men's access. This change, in turn, would increase household agricultural productivity.

Technology

Women farmers' lower use of technologies, such as fertilizers, herbicides, pesticides, and improved crop varieties, is responsible for much of the gender gap in agricultural productivity. Access to technology is also positively correlated with access to resources, such as land (Doss and Morris [2000]).

Human Capital

Although empirical associations between farmers' education and productivity are mixed, farmers with more education appear to use technology more efficiently (Rahman 2010; Oladeebo and Fajuyigbe 2007). Beyond formal education, Doss and Morris (2000) found that differences in access to extension services resulted in gender differences in the adoption of beneficial technologies on maize plots in Ghana. Because information about farming practices and new technologies may not be fully shared within the household, it is important to ensure women's equal access to agricultural extension services.

Conclusion

The literature suggests that increasing women's control over decisions in agriculture (the Production dimension) and their access to the resources needed for agricultural production (the Resources, Human capital, and Technology dimensions) empowers them. Such empowerment has the potential to greatly increase household agricultural productivity. Although the literature neither directly nor empirically links the Income, Leadership, and Time dimensions to increased agricultural productivity, they support the other dimensions, especially human capital, to contribute to agricultural productivity.

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