



Gender transformative approaches for food security and nutrition



GOOD PRACTICE GENNOVATE

PREPARED BY

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SECTION 1

OVERVIEW OF THE METHODOLOGY

Name of the methodology**GENNOVATE****Countries with implementation experience**

- **Asia:** Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India (Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh), Indonesia, Kyrgyz Republic, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Uzbekistan, Viet Nam
- **Africa:** Burkina Faso, Burundi, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Morocco, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania and Zimbabwe
- **Latin America:** Colombia, Mexico

Start/end date

- Data collection start: April 2014
- End: 2018

Lead organization sponsoring the development and implementation of the methodology

- Executive Committee members from the Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research (CGIAR): International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT) (Chair); Bioversity International; International Potato Center (CIP); International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA)
- Other participating CGIAR centres: International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA), International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR); and WorldFish
- Resource persons from: Cornell University, University of Brighton, Wageningen University

Purpose of the methodology and the domains of gender inequality that are addressed

GENNOVATE was designed as a diagnostic study to understand gender norms in order to inform the subsequent design of interventions, programmes and policies. It was not designed as an intervention that would itself transform gender norms. However, several of its instruments can be applied to stimulate critical reflection and dialogue on gender norms as part of a larger set of gender transformative interventions.

Gender norms related particularly to agricultural and environmental innovation and technology adoption include:

- the distribution of labour and benefits;
- decision making;
- participation in projects, programmes and markets;
- access to and control over assets; and
- mobility.

Contribution of the methodology to wider development/organizational/project goals

- Enhancing the gender responsiveness of CGIAR Research Programmes in terms of targeting, priority setting, theories of change, and investments in agricultural research for development
- Advancing gender transformative outcomes of agricultural research and development interventions at scale for the widespread equitable uptake of innovations
- Building the evidence base and actions to address the role of gender norms in relation to agricultural technology adoption and development processes

Target group

GENNOVATE is applied with an equal number of women and men, representing a cross-section of:

- poor and middle-income adults (over 25 years old); and
- youth (18 to 25 years old)

It is used in separate focus group discussions (i.e. young women; poor women; middle-income women; and a parallel three groups with men). Focus group discussion instruments are different for poor- and middle-income adults and youth, although some questions overlap to enable comparative analyses.

SECTION 2

IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

Key entry points for applying the methodology

- Individuals (semi-structured individual interviews, key informant interviews)
- Groups (focus group discussions)

Implementing partners

Partners include universities and research organizations, Women Organizing for Change in Agriculture and Natural Resource Management (WOCAN) and Grameen Communications.

A full list of GENNOVATE's 27 partner institutions can be found at:

<https://gennovate.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Gennovate-team-members-and-partners-1.pdf>

Process of and criteria for selecting facilitators/champions/mentors

Facilitators are members of the research team with social science skills and capacities in conducting participatory fieldwork (interviews, focus group discussions).

The field team consists of at least four members: (i) at least one woman and one man who have strong experience facilitating focus group discussions, and (ii) one woman and one man who serve as notetakers during the sessions and are responsible for complete narrative and numerical documentation of the data collection activities.

The women on the team facilitate and take notes for the women's focus group discussions, and the men facilitate and take notes for the men's focus group discussions.

Training of facilitators/champions/mentors

GENNOVATE's data collection instruments are challenging to implement in the field. Every field team member requires training and field-based practice to acquire the necessary information and skills to use these instruments. The GENNOVATE model of training for application of the full methodology features a five-day training of trainers programme that combines classroom and field-based sessions for the principal investigators and/or field team leaders. For training the field teams, an additional one or two days are highly recommended to allow time for further practice and review, especially for the requirements for managing the rating activities and visuals during the focus groups and taking thorough field notes.

A detailed training agenda is available in the annex of the GENNOVATE methodology guide (See section on resource materials).

Topics for the training include:

- study purpose and comparative case study methodology;
- brief roundtable discussion of sample cases and innovations;
- introduction to preparing for fieldwork; and
- detailed review of study questions and use of participatory tools.

SECTION 3

IMPLEMENTATION CYCLE

Key steps in the implementation cycle

The GENNOVATE approach is used to conduct gender-responsive research and explore gender norms in a wide variety of contexts, including initiatives focused on climate-smart-agriculture, conservation agriculture, mechanization, farmer training events, natural resource management and nutrition.

A step-by-step guide to each tool that comprises the GENNOVATE methodology is provided in the methodology guide. For all tools, the following steps apply:

- Step 1: Training of trainers
- Step 2: Sampling
- Step 3: Mobilizing participants
- Step 4: Discussions/interviews with participants
- Step 5: Data analysis and, ideally, sharing of findings with communities to stimulate further reflection

Some of the innovative GENNOVATE tools include:

- **Ladder of Life:** This is a focus group tool used when conducting discussions/interviews with poor women and men that explores their understanding and interpretations of different aspects of well-being and poverty trends in their community, and the key factors and processes that are seen as shaping these dynamics. (See *Ladder of Life: Qualitative data collection tool to understand local perceptions of poverty dynamics*)
- **Vignettes:** The ‘vignette’ data collection method can be employed for exploring intra-household decision-making dynamics and perceptions of the social acceptability of different behaviours by women and men. (See, for example, *Using vignettes to explore gender dimensions of household food security and nutrition*, where the vignettes were used to map the engagement of household members along the nutrition pathway)
- **Ladder of Power and Freedom:** This is a qualitative tool whose purpose is to provide meaningful contextual and comparative evidence of local men’s and women’s assessments and interpretations of the levels of agency in their lives, and the key factors and processes that they perceive as shaping their capacities for making important decisions. (See *Ladder of Power and Freedom: Qualitative data collection tool to understand local perceptions of agency and decision making*)

The documents on these tools may be found at Gender Resources and Tools page of the GENNOVATE website (See section on resource materials).

Average length of the implementation cycle

Comprehensive application of one full case study lasts approximately one week.

Graduation from the methodology

Not relevant

SECTION 4

MONITORING

Monitoring system

Not relevant.

However, GENNOVATE could be used to monitor changes in gender norms and agency if applied longitudinally or before and after an intervention. The methodology also asks participants to reflect on changes they have experienced in norms over the past decade.

Indicators

Not applicable

SECTION 5**BUDGET****Main items of expenditure**

- Field team time and travel to study communities
- Time required for data analysis

Total budget

- Approximately USD 10 000 per case study

SECTION 6**RESULTS****Number of beneficiaries reached**

To date GENNOVATE studies have been conducted in 27 countries, covering 137 communities and 7 500 rural participants (50% women, 50% men), representing (as per the sampling):

- one-third poor adults (women and men)
- one-third middle-income adults (women and men)
- one-third young (18 to 25 years old) women and men

Main changes attributed to the methodology

- **Gender-related changes**
 - Critical consciousness, reflection and awareness of gender norms among community members and research teams
 - Gender-responsive and gender transformative design of projects and initiatives

Key success factors and strengths of the methodology

- Highly interactive tools stimulate the engagement of, and critical reflection by, participants.
- Topics broached are very relevant to participants' lives, and the participants appreciate the opportunity to discuss them.
- Engagement with different groups (based on gender, age, socio-economic status) offers perspectives on how gender norms vary across groups.
- Allows attention to be given to a specific context and comparisons to be made across contexts.
- Provides insights into the nuanced, negotiated and fluid ways in which gender norms operate.
- Facilitates transparent reflection by researchers on how gender norms are (re)produced through research processes or applied interventions.

Challenges and measures to overcome them

- Sessions cover several topics and can be long.
- Session guides can be revised and shortened, or sessions can be split into more than one sitting

Potential for upscaling

- **Requirements to support upscaling**
 - Ensuring or strengthening the qualitative research capacities of field teams and researchers conducting analyses
 - Resources to spend a week in a village in order to engage participants from different social groups
- **Potential improvements**
 - The next steps are to integrate GENNOVATE tools into gender transformative approaches that pursue dialogues with community members on gender norms as part of a longer-term engagement process.
 - Systematic sharing of GENNOVATE findings to participant communities would encourage dialogue across gender and social groups.

— **Adaptation**

- The full methodology can be broken down into separate focused instruments to illuminate or generate critical reflection and discussion on particular topics.
- As noted above, GENNOVATE was designed as a diagnostic study, but its tools can be integrated into gender transformative approaches.
- GENNOVATE can be used not only to understand gender norms in a given time and place and among different social groups, but also to monitor changes in norms if applied at different points in time.

Potential for replication

The full methodology has already been replicated in 137 communities in 26 countries.

Sustainability of the methodology once project/external input is complete

Not applicable

SECTION 7

RESOURCES

Publications

- GENNOVATE research reports
<https://gennovate.org/research-reports/>
- GENNOVATE methodology
https://gennovate.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/GENNOVATE-Methodology_Feb2018_FINAL.pdf
- 15 tools for gender scientists and non-gender scientists derived from GENNOVATE
<https://gennovate.org/gender-tools-and-resources/>
- Special issue with GENNOVATE findings and other GENNOVATE articles
<https://gennovate.org/publications/>

Websites

- GENNOVATE website
www.gennovate.org

Videos

- Multimedia/videos
<https://gennovate.org/multimedia/>

Cover photo: GENNOVATE focus group discussion with middle-income men in the mid-hills of Nepal

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This good practice is part of the publication '*Gender transformative approaches for food security, improved nutrition and sustainable agriculture – A compendium of fifteen good practices*' prepared in the framework of the *Joint Programme on Gender Transformative Approaches for Food Security, Improved Nutrition and Sustainable Agriculture (JP GTA)*. The Joint Programme is implemented by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Fund for Agricultural Development and the World Food Programme and funded by the European Union.



Joint Programme on

Gender
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