

Gender Issues in Integrated Pest Management (IPM) in Tajikistan

Michigan State University, University of California-Davis, Kansas State University, University of Chicago, ICARDA, AVRDC, CGIAR-PFU, and University of Central Asia
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The Central Asia IPM CRSP Project is developing ecologically based IPM packages for key food security crops in Tajikistan. Gender issues are

incorporated in all aspects of this collaborative research and capacity building program. These issues include:

- **Representation:** important to ensure participation and representation of women in all research, training and outreach activities of project.
- **Impacts and up-take:** to help raise the standard of living, increase educational capabilities, and improve the environment.

Our Partners

- Michigan State University
- University of California-Davis
- Kansas State University
- University of Chicago
- International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA)
- CGIAR-PFU
- World Vegetable Center (AVRDC)
- Ministry of Agriculture & Water Resources, Uzbekistan
- Institute of Plant Protection, Tashkent, Uzbekistan
- Tashkent State Agrarian University (TSAU), Uzbekistan
- Tajikistan Institute of Zoology
- Tajik Academy of Agricultural Sciences
- Agricultural Training and Advisory Center (ATAS), Tajikistan
- Training, Advisory and Innovation Center (TAIC), Kyrgyzstan
- Kyrgyz Agrarian University
- Kyrgyzstan Ministry of Agriculture, Water Resources and Processing Industry
- Agro-Lead NGO, Kyrgyzstan
- Aga Khan Foundation - Kyrgyzstan
- University of Central Asia

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Context

- Soviet legacy of mono-cropping and lack of participatory decision-making.
- More than 75% of the rural population relies on agriculture for at least 50% of their income.
- Because of out-migration, women make up the majority of work-aged individuals in rural areas.
- Women hold only about 14% of land certificates.
- In addition to their work on Dekhan and collective farms, women exclusively tend to household gardens (kitchen gardens), which account for 50 to 60% of food production in Tajikistan.
- Women also exclusively manage wild-growing herbal and medicinal plants used for pest management.
- A UN-FAO report raises issues about whether other gender differences in farming may be present (e.g., in use of pesticides, recognition of disease, etc.) and why. It finds:
 - o Female-headed households are less likely to use fertilizer than male-headed households.
 - o Women are less likely to use mechanical equipment than men.



Key Findings from Field-Based Research

Interviews with agriculture and gender specialists in Tajikistan and Rapid Gender Assessments in five villages in three different districts of Tajikistan (July-August 2010 and June 2011) indicate the following:

- General factors affecting rural women:
 - o A weak economy and poverty
 - o Deteriorating educational system
 - o Health care and sanitation issues
 - o Conservative social and religious influences.
- Agriculture and food security issues:
 - o Deteriorating farm machinery and irrigation systems
 - o Electricity shortages
 - o Poor supply chain
 - o Inadequate extension services
 - o Politics of decision-making related to land use and crop selection;
 - o Women have poor access to inputs such as pesticides, capital, machinery, fertilizer, information about new farming techniques, seeds, cash crops and marketing.

Recommendations

For further research work:

- Women's perceptions of pests and attitudes towards pesticide use.
- Use of indigenous medicinal plants for pest management and other purposes.
- Women's attitudes towards agricultural extension workers and specialists.

For outreach:

- Better community engagement to understand women and men farmers' needs and preferences.
- Closer connection with local community leaders to encourage widespread participation in IPM training.
- Involvement of a Tajik woman trainer and translator for demonstrations at farmer field schools.
- Organization of women-only training at times convenient to their work and home schedules.
- Widespread dissemination of IPM technologies to rural women for use on farms and in kitchen gardens.



Visit Central Asia IPM CRSP Project website: www.ipm.msu.edu/central-asia-htm



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