

# Presentation overview

- I. Ways of asking questions using gender/feminist lens
- II. Ideas for practical application

Julia Jordan - International Agricultural Development Graduate Group, UCD  
[jdjordan@ucdavis.edu](mailto:jdjordan@ucdavis.edu)

Halie Kampman - PhD student in Environmental Studies, UCSC  
[hkampman@ucsc.edu](mailto:hkampman@ucsc.edu)

# I. Asking research questions using feminist lens

*All in the name of “fighting for a society in which no single position can legitimate the silencing of others, who are supposed not to count” (Stengers, 2018)*

# Asking questions with a feminist lens

- What does it mean to use a gender-sensitive lens? To use a feminist lens?
- Feminist inquiry encompasses a wide range of questions that seek to reexamine
  - How relations of gender are embedded in social, political, cultural formations
  - Relationships of power
  - Social constructions that shape the way we interact
  - (Thus, you don't need female interlocutors to use a gender lens)

# Asking questions with a feminist lens

- How could you re-examine the following for your own RIFA project research questions?
  - Subject-object relationship
  - Ethics and empathy/relationality

# Construction of subject-object relations

Subject (observer) / object (thing being observed)

- Evaluate power relations between subject and object
- Consider positionality - recognition of how personal values, views, location in time and space can influence view of world
- Beware essentialism - assumptions made about the heterogeneity of your object
- Consider the politics of your choice of object
  - “Studying up”- study not only disempowered groups, but groups who wield power in society (Laura Nader, 1972)
  - Studying the colonizer vs. the colonized (TallBear, 2013)

# Construction of subject-object relations

Questions:

- What is my object of study?
- What diversities exist within the category of my subject?
- What power dynamic exists between subject and object?
  - Is the subject passive, or engaged?
- Am I studying up or down? What would it look like to do the opposite?

# Ethics and empathy / relationality

- Decision making in the presence of those affected by the decision (Stengers 2018)
- Standing with as compared to speaking for (TallBear 2013)
  - Idiom – who are you equipped to speak for? (language, age, gender, shared history, contextual understanding)
  - Giving voice
  - Global dialogue that situates your area of research (North-South, South-South...)

# Ethics and relationality

## Questions:

- Would my questions change if I crafted them in the presence of those who are most affected by the outcome of my research?
- Do my questions make any presuppositions about my ability to speak for others? On what grounds may I find a shared idiom?
- How does my question reinforce or challenge a global dialogue?
- Who does my research give voice to?



# Ideas for Practical Application

# Community-level and group-level facilitation

- Employ strategies for equitable participation (but not only 50% women)
  - Which women? Which men? what are the power dynamics that mediate gendered expectations of participants?
    - \*Even in a group of all men, there are power dynamics related to gender\*
  - Consider who is responsible for mobilizing participants (farmers, project team members, government stakeholders, etc.); who is leading the activity?
  - In group meetings: pull out specific input from a diversity of people; raise hands/fingers; anonymous writing (if group is literate)
  - In trainings: encourage diversity of trainees to practice

# Community-level and group-level facilitation



- Community gender dialogues with existing farmer groups or stakeholders
  - Facilitated discussions that address power dynamics in the community directly
  - [Participatory gender training for community groups](#) (2:37-3:38)
- Capacity-building in understanding gender issues for technical experts
  - I.e. interactive workshops

Striking a balance: avoiding “Western savior” while pushing for gender equity in a transnational context - that’s why local partnerships and relationship-building is important

# Mapping Resource Equity





## Village Resource and Inclusion Toolbo

Some suggested questions are in Checklist 2:

	Is there enough for everyone? How is its quality?	How is changing driving
Forest y 		
River x 		
Add your own		

**Step 8-** The village map is also an opportunity labor roles associated with them. You can refer are often gender specific along with probing c

**Step 2 -** Ask the participants to introduce themselves, and note the name and any special

Checklist 3		Who does the labor? Who helps them?	How long does it take them?	How often is it collected or made?
<b>Water</b> 	Irrigation			
	Potable			
	Livestock			
<b>Fuel</b> 	Firewood			
	Charcoal			
	Farm Residue			
<b>Land Mgmt.</b> 	Fertilizers			
	Compost			
	Manure			
<b>Livestock</b> 	Grazing			

the cipants ojects

marking,

, ask to your

Maps should be drawn using symbols, pictures and diagrams so that non-literate people can participate.

es	Special Use Places e.g:	Agro-ecological Zones e.g:
1 s, ils,	Bus stops, cemeteries, shrines, waste sites	Soils, slopes, elevations, degraded lands, forests, wetlands

scribe the map and discuss the stions about anything that is unclear. s further discussion and changes to

i been produced, ask a participant e to write each resource's name,

the map. You may choose to prompt your group on this,

**Step 7 -** When the group has finished the map, start a discussion to deepen your understanding about the resources depicted.

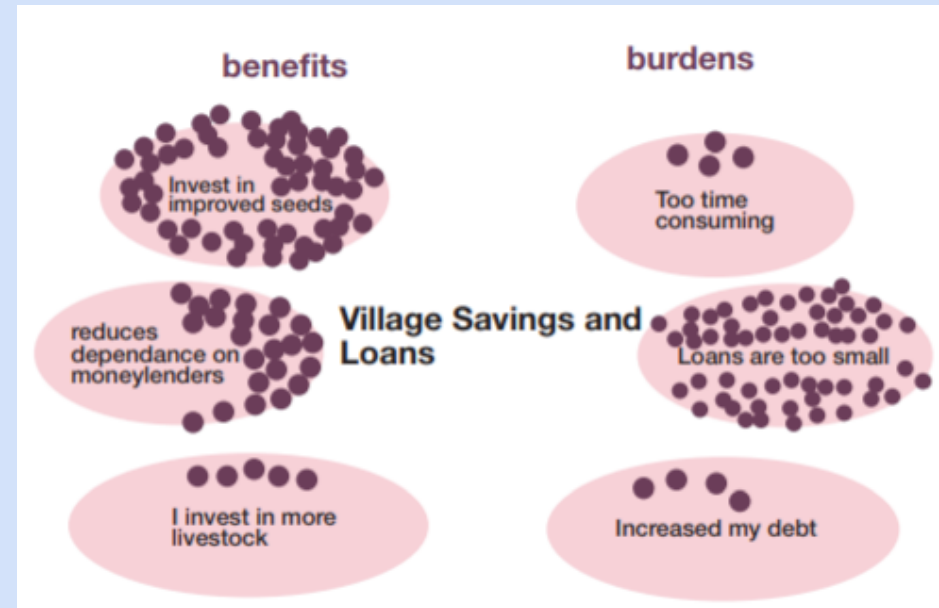
# Example Research: Soil testing in the Philippines

- Looks at local soil knowledge (Researcher knowledge vs. farmer knowledge)
- Examined men and women farmers' perceptions of soil fertility via mapping
- Collected spatial and soil data
- Comparison of qualitative knowledge of soils and quantitative data determined that farmers knowledge was usually in line with the soil tests
- Women and men agreed on best soils, but differed on worst --- perception based on labor differences

“This case study is an example of how researchers can take multiple forms of knowledge using mixed methods, analyse it based on a social identity variable and overcome the tension from overlaps and differences in the results.”

# Introducing new practices/technologies

- Soliciting on-farm, direct feedback from a diversity of farmers about the technology/practice
- Considering the social and technical qualities of the technology/practice that will be differently acceptable to different groups
  - I.e. labor required, availability of materials, necessary maintenance, land availability, effect on surrounding communities, nutritional implications....

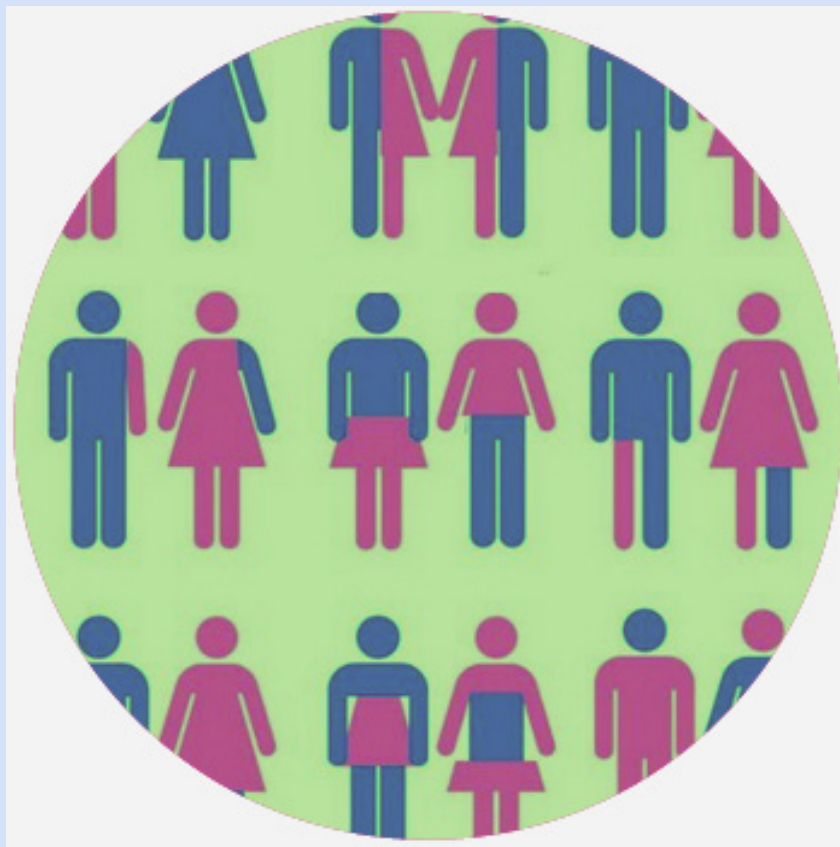


# Evaluating Programs and Policies

- A gender analysis can identify areas of policy and operations in formal projects that have been successful or need adjustment to promote gender equity and/or “empowerment”
  - Women’s Empowerment in Agriculture Index
  - Gender in Irrigation Learning and Improvement Tool
  - INGENAES technology assessment
  - What others?

# A Missing Conversation

- In many cultural contexts, gender will appear mostly binary, but consider thinking more broadly about gender identity in the cultural context where you will be
  - I.e. *hijra, kathoeys, balka, LGBTQI communities globally*
- Many people who identify with less represented categories of gender identity are also still farmers, scientists, NGO workers, development practitioners, etc...





# Sources

Rocheleau, D., Thomas-Slayter, B., & Wangari, E., eds. (1996). *Feminist Political Ecology: Global Issues and Local Experience*. London: Routledge.

Stengers, Isabelle. 2018. *Another Science is Possible: A Manifesto for Slow Science*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Tallbear, Kim. 2013. "Standing With and Speaking as Faith: A Feminist-Indigenous Approach to Inquiry," *Journal of Research Practice* 10(2), ArticleN17.

Mali, C. (2016) Gender and local soil knowledge: Linking farmers' perceptions with soil fertility in two villages in the Philippines (<https://doi.org/10.1111/sjtg.12134>)

## *Tools & Guides:*

- [Gender and Inclusion Toolbox \(CGIAR, Care Int'l\)](#)
- [Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index \(Int'l Food Policy Research Institute\)](#)
- [Participatory gender training manual for community groups \(CGIAR\)](#)
- [Guidelines on how to collect sex-disaggregated data \(UN World Water Assessment Program\)](#)
- [Gender in Irrigation Learning and Improvement Tool \(Int'l Water Mgmt Institute\)](#)
- [INGENAES Technology Assessment](#)