

# CGIAR Research Program on Grain Legumes

**Cultural norms and practices influencing the Ethiopian women's participation in chickpea agricultural trainings and capacity development**

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# Presentation Outline

- Background and situation
- Research objective
- Possible reasons from literature review
- Methodology
- Key scientific findings (men only and women only focus group discussions)
  - ✓ Gender norms defining a good wife
  - ✓ Interactions with extension agents and attendance to trainings
  - ✓ Views about involvement of female extension officers as trainers
- Conclusions

# Background and situation

- Ethiopia - largest producer of chickpeas in Africa accounting for over 90% of SSA chickpea production.
- Increased investments in the Ethiopia's chickpea value chain from government and donors.
- The TL II programme (2007-2015) in Ethiopia focused on chickpea research and development activities including: PVS, field days, demonstrations, and farmer trainings.
- Notably, researchers working in the TL II project highlighted that there is very low participation of women in training events organized by the program compared to men.
  - ✓ A training of about 70 participants would have only 5-6 women; and yet the scientists would 'see' the women working on the chickpea fields [Ojiewo, 2015: Personal communication]

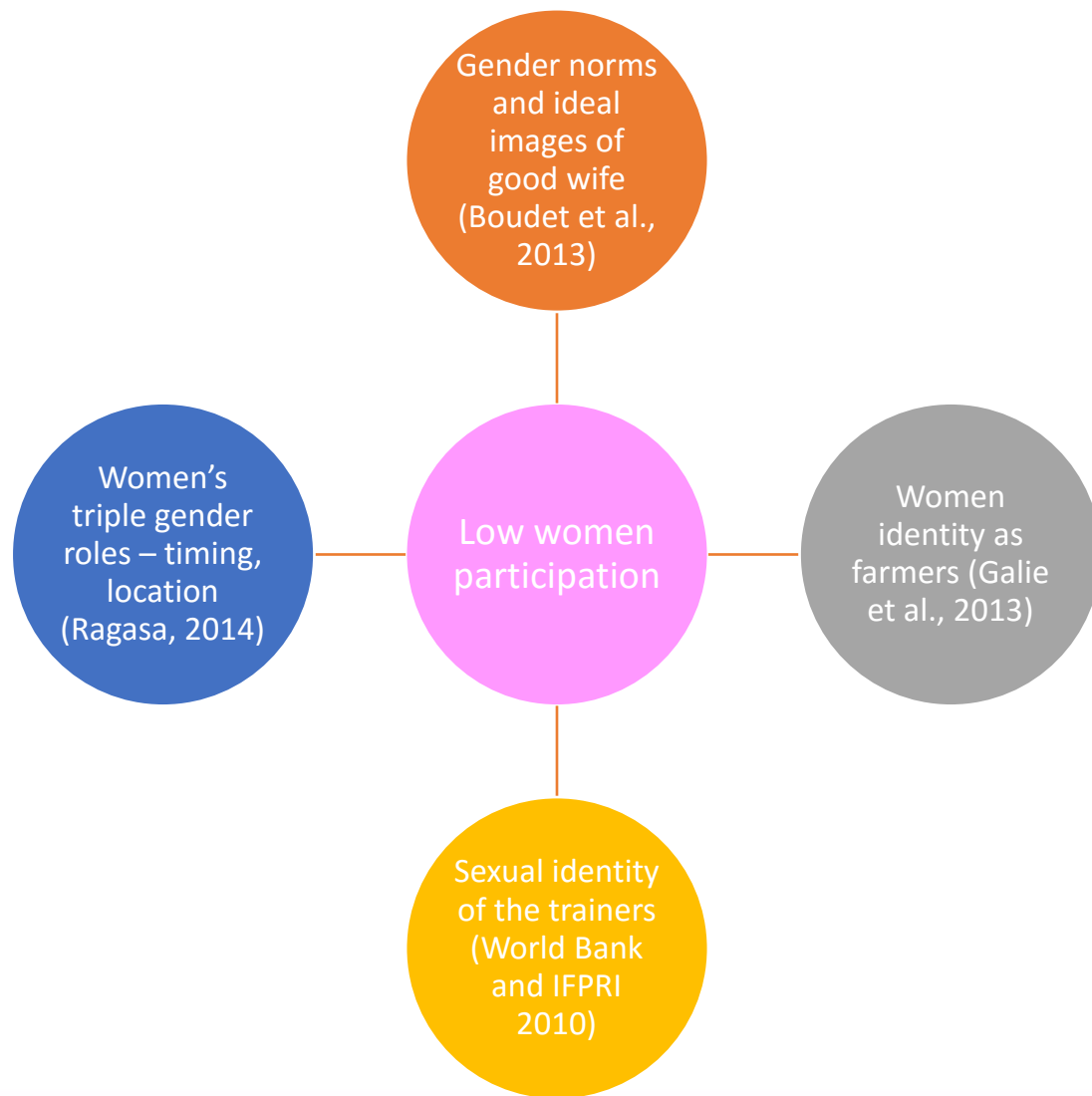


# Research objective

The main objective of the study was to explore, by gender, the factors contributing to women's low participation in ICRISAT's Tropical Legume II chickpea training programmes in Ethiopia.



# Possible reasons from review of literature



# Methodology

## Study sites

- Eastern Shewa region (Debre-Zeit) and
- Northern Shewa Region (Debre-Berhan) in Ethiopia

## Study design

- Qualitative, adopting a series of vignettes – based on insights from literature review
- Designed 8 scenarios revolving around a typical Ethiopian couple called “*Getachew and Gete*”.

## Data collection

- Purposive sampling of chickpea farmers within ICRISAT’s project implementation sites
- Six sex-disaggregated FGDs with 58 participants (28 female and 30 male) were conducted in November 2015.

## Analytical techniques

- Creation of coding tree, coding of data (verbatim field notes) in Nvivo 11
- Sex-disaggregated analysis based on emerging themes, Findings were presented by use of excerpts



# Key scientific findings:



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# Gender norms defining a good wife

- **Consensus in all FGDs** – respect, hard work, loyalty and commitment for marriage by learning husband’s behavior, and avoidance of infidelity:

*“She should not disrespect her husband. In our culture [a] husband is considered as head of the house. Our religion also teaches us to respect our husbands.” (Female FGD, Debre-Berhan, 25 November 2015)*

*“She must avoid adultery ...She should socially agree mainly with neighbors and must identify between what harms and benefits her family ... she should better understand each other.” (Male FGD, Debre-Zeit, 17 November 2015)*





# Gender norms defining a good wife ... contd'

- **Women FGDs - responsible for domestic tasks and love her job:**

*“She should be a role model in cooking, cleaning her kids, her house, surrounding, she should be good in social interaction with neighbors and should advice neighbors regarding cleaning their surroundings” (Female FGD, Debre-Zeit, 17 November 2015).*

- **Men FGDs – time management, discipline and creativity:**

*“She should timely manage her time when going to market, visiting her family ... [She] Should not have other address number in her cell Phone ... and must avoid unnecessary relation with other male ... She has to be disciplined ... creative, wise use of finance or appropriate budgeting on expenditure” (Male FGD, Debre-Zeit, 17 November 2015).*



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# Interactions with extension agents and attendance to trainings

- **Both FGDs** - Women are over burdened with reproductive activities – mostly men can attend trainings:

*“Most of [the] women are busy [with] homework and they do not get chance to attend training.” (Female FGD, Debre-Berhan, 25 November 2015)*

*“No, because she perform home activities like preparing food, milking cows, looking after her children ... she keep children and cattle ... we don't think [she will attend training] ... they cannot get permission from their husband.” (Male FGD, Debre-Berhan, 26 November 2016)*

- **Female FGDs**- Men do not allow women to ‘go outside home’

*“No, she can ’t go for the training because there is a negative influence, the husband says she spent more time outside home and the women get stressed because of this.” (Female FGD, Debre-Zeit, 17 November 2015)*



# Interactions with extension agents and attendance to trainings ... Cont' d

- **Both FGDs - Husbands** feel uncomfortable when their wives interact with male officers:

*“He feels uncomfortable because the trainers are male and he suspected as if she is going to commit adultery ... She is a female, the training place is far away and the trainers are male who called her to far distance. (Male FGD, Debre-Berhan, 26 November 2015)*

*“She will not go because her husband do not allow her to go because he thinks that other men will see her.” (Female FGD, Debre-Zeit, 17 November 2015)*

Therefore, **women are unable to bargain** with their husbands to attend trainings - but will rather keep silent because of:

- ✓ Fear of a disagreement and conflict arising;
- ✓ Inability of the husband to listen because he is the head of the household.



# Interactions with extension agents and attendance to trainings... Cont' d

- **Both FGDs- Aunties** contest and admonish women's appearance in 'public spaces' including local and sleepover trainings facilitated by male officers:

*"They [aunties] feel bad saying that she want divorce ... she becomes out of the existing societies' norms and undisciplined ... They [aunties] are now about to conclude that he [husband] is sick, how could he send his wife for three days." (Male FGD, Debre-Berhan, 26 November 2015)*

*"They will say she killed him in life ... he is not alive." (Female FGD, Debre-Zeit, 17 November 2015)*



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# Interactions with extension agents and attendance to trainings... Cont' d

- **Both FGDs-** The **community** has negative feelings towards women's attendance to trainings facilitated by male officers:

*“The community will not feel good. They consider her as inferior ...They consider her as bad woman and she is bad model to other ... They will say that why is this woman be like this? Her husband has a hand, why not break her?” (Female FGD, Debre-Zeit, 17 November 2015)*

*“The community complain why she wants to participate while the husband is alive!” (Male FGD, Debre-Berhan, 25 November 2015)*



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# Views about using female officer to facilitate trainings for women

- **All FGDs** – Women will be receptive to listen and attend her trainings because women:
  - ✓ Prefer speaking and sharing their ideas freely with female expert
  - ✓ Can pay more attention and speak frankly
- **Only female discussants in Debre-Zeit** opined that the husband, aunties and the community **will not support** women's attendance to the female-facilitated trainings:

*“He [husband] doesn't support because he doesn't want her go out ... [Aunties] They don't support... [men in the community] They don't support.” (Female FGD)*

# What female officer should know and change that male officers have been doing

- Timing, duration and venue of training matters for women – **All FGDs**

*“The training time should not compete and interfere with working time of the ladies, since they are given many roles at home such as caring for children, fetching water, food preparation and others assignments ... If beyond this it difficult for the ladies to actively attend the meeting ” (Male FGD, Debre-Zeit, 17 November 2015)*

✓ Duration – 2 to 3 hours and mostly from 0900 hours to 1200 hours; All agreed the venue should be within the ‘kebeles’ .

- Women need to be given a notice and called in person - **Female FGDs only:**

*“He [husband] won ’t be happy, but if she was called he cannot do anything ” (Female FGD, Debre-Berhan, 25 November 2015)*

*“Women usually cannot go without notice unless they are called in person ” (Female FGD, Debre-Zeit, 17 November 2015)*



# What female officer should know and change that male officers have been doing... cont' d

- Women face language barrier problem – **Female FGDs only**

*“She should communicate with known and understandable language.”  
(Female FGD, Debre-Berhan, 26 November 2015)*

- Female officer should dress properly- **only female FGDs in Debre-Berhan**

*“[What female officer should change] She should understand the feeling and the behavior of community like ... She should wear similar dressing style.” (Female FGD, Debre-Berhan, 25 November 2015)*

- Provide consistent trainings to female and male farmers on issues of women' s rights and gender mainstreaming – **only male FGDs in Debre-Berhan**

*“... giving regular training on issue of women rights for women farmers and their male counterpart [and] on gender mainstreaming that might be not given by previous male extension officers.” (Male FGD, Debre-Berhan, 25 November 2015).*



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# Conclusions

Key effective strategies for ensuring women's attendance to trainings will include:

- Engaging female officers as trainers - possibly by engaging and working with local women groups, as Women in Agriculture Units, in dissemination of agricultural information.
- Addressing women's specific constraints to participation such as women's time, venue, language, dressing, and notice.
- Need to find novel ways of using aunties as cultural brokers/societal transformative change agents so that they can help shift the community contestation - accepting that the inequities women suffer are socially constructed. This is especially the case for Debre-Zeit.





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