

Capacity Development on Gender Issues and Impact Assessment for SLARI Scientists

By Richard Bockarie

In order to successfully implement the West Africa Agricultural Productivity Programme (WAAPP) in Sierra Leone as well as promote other relevant research activities and programmes, another two week long training on gender issues and impact assessment has been concluded for Agricultural Scientists of the Sierra Leone Agricultural Research Institute at Njala, Kori Chiefdom, Moyamba district.

Looking at gender and agricultural value chain analysis, the facilitator explained the concept and definition, adding that gender issues are not restricted to women only as is commonly understood by many people, but also includes men, youths, adults, ethnic groups, rich and the poor.



A group picture of training participants

The basis and rationale for shifting the exclusively entrenched long standing leadership role and domination of men in agricultural development and other development issues was explained and discussed.

“There is no biological basis in support of the superior position and role of men and other groups but the idea was

socially constructed over the years,” the facilitator explained.

To this end, she said that data have to be collected and analyzed on the problems and opportunities along the agricultural value chain. Such a pool of information she said will among others throw light on understanding of gender relations, sexual division of labour, relationship between and among chain actors; national development and poverty reduction strategies, public expenditure, budget and legislation to address the negative impact and constraints facing the various categories of gender. She spoke of the need for gender equity where opportunities and resources are allocated in line with needs, interests and motivation than gender equality that may not be so much relevant and effective.

Madam Dr. Adetonah Sounkoura discussed with the participants gender analytical frame work and specific tools for gender value chain analysis, setting indicators for gender equity as well as

taking the participants through three case studies including integration of gender in cowpea value chain in South-West of Benin.

Discussing the impact assessment of the other facet of the training, Lead Facilitator Dr.Ousmane Coulibaly explained the importance of ex ante and ex post ex ante studies for impact assessment analysis of the WAAPP/SLARI activities and programme further stating:

“Impact assessment is important and critical if one is to determine the benefits and losses of agricultural research and other related development activities on the beneficiaries and take measures to adopt solutions that will at least mitigate the effects”.

The four elements of short and long term impact assessment of agricultural projects and programmes were also discussed- economic, social, environmental and institutional considering their efficacy, quality and efficiency.

Coulibaly dilated on the positive and negative issues these will bring out including the level of employment rate, roads, access to market, distribution of and access to resources; diseases with

financial responsibility on communities and nations as well as environmental degradation. In conducting impact assement, he said that key questions have to be taken into account such as the intended achievements of the programme, the target population, the gap the programme is to respond to as well as questions relating to evaluation

In his presentation, Facilitator Dr.Djal A.Arinloye explained and discussed with the participants how to collect research data, design and input same and make analysis followed by conclusion and recommendations, explaining also the line between Quantitative and qualitative data and testing hypothesis. On the topic of sampling in experimental and non experimental research, he told participants the different types and the principles, merits and demerits involved in the application of each.

During the hands-on exercise, the trainees were able to learn how to develop questionnaires and pretest them in which case the goal, objectives, checklist and indicators of the research work were considered. They also learned how to develop a data base and carry out the entry.



Hands-on exercise on questionnaire administration

Earlier at the opening ceremony, the Director of the Njala Agricultural Research Centre (NARC) Dr.Sahr N. Fomba welcomed the participants. He elaborated on the importance of gender issues and impact assessment in developing and implementing project proposals and therefore encouraged all to be attentive and learn from the presentations and discussions.