

Activity report

Participatory Epidemiology and Gender training

ILRI Addis Ababa, 15.-19. June 2015

Training facilitators: Barbara Wieland and Annet Mulema (ILRI) and Wole Kinati (ICARDA), with support from Shiferaw Tefesse (ILRI)



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Participatory Epidemiology and Gender training

Introduction

A five days training focusing on participatory epidemiology and gender was organized in the ILRI Campus, Addis Ababa from 15-19 June 2015. The training brought together participants from the Livestock and Fish as well as Africa RISING intervention sites. The training was facilitated by Barbara Wieland and Annet Mulema (ILRI) and Wole Kinati (ICARDA), with support from Shiferaw Tefesse (ILRI).

Background

Infectious diseases have a huge impact on productivity in small holder livestock systems and repeatedly come up as major constraints in household surveys. In Ethiopia this is not only true for Africa RISING sites, but has been mentioned in sites of different project or programs where ILRI has been involved.

In order to better understand what these main livestock disease constraints are, how they affect different members of households, and how much men and women farmers know about their transmission, a training on participatory epidemiology and gender was put together by ILRI and ICARDA staff. The training targeted veterinarians and researchers at the national agricultural research institutes affiliated with the Livestock and Fish CRP program sites and with sites of the Africa RISING project.

This training was the first step in a series of activities aiming at defining disease constraints in livestock systems in Ethiopia and how they affect household members, in order to identify and test appropriate interventions which potentially can be scaled out. The cluster of activities comprises 6 steps, which are:

1. Training in participatory epidemiology and gender
2. Field work, collation of research findings and preliminary analysis
3. Follow-up training on data analysis and interpretation of results
4. Training on sero-surveillance and planning of epidemiological sero-surveys
5. Sero-prevalence survey on key livestock diseases
6. Identify and plan site-specific interventions

A total of 21 veterinarians and livestock scientists representing different regions of Ethiopia attended the participatory epidemiology and gender training at the ILRI Campus in Addis Ababa from 15.-19. June 2015. Only one of the participants was female.



Photo 1: Participants break in to groups to exercise ranking and scoring tools (Photo credit: ILRI\Apollo Habtamu).

Sessions- overview and outcomes

On Monday participants were introduced to principles of participatory epidemiology and had a first chance in experiencing ranking and scoring tools which are commonly used in participatory epidemiological surveys. As the training was very hands on, little time was spent on teaching theory, instead participants learnt the principles through exercises and were asked to reflect on their experiences afterwards. As an example to illustrate advantages and disadvantages of different ranking and scoring tools, participants evaluated factors affecting the delivery of animal health services in Ethiopia. This in itself was very interesting as 3 groups assessed the same factors, the example was also used to show how data from different focus groups can be collated and analysed.



Photo 2: Participants highly engaged in group work (photo credit: ILRI\Apollo Habtamu)

On Tuesday participants were introduced to the concept of gender, gender mainstreaming and gender analysis and in the afternoon participants learnt how to conduct semi-structured interviews, which was corroborated through role plays.

On Wednesday, using the Harvard and Moser gender analytical frameworks participants delved into the relationship between gender and animal health, teasing out the role of gender relations in animal disease diagnosis, transmission and prevention/control. Differences between men and women in exposure to animal diseases was also explored in detail. Linking these issues with participatory tools, participants mapped the disease transmission pathways and the roles of men, women, boys and girls in this process – spelling out who is more susceptible at each point of transmission. Participants appreciated that integration of gender in animal health is not an option but a requirement. Animal health workers need to be aware of the gender differences to be able to engage the right household members in the process of diagnosis and treatment of animal diseases.

What stood out clearly was the appreciation of the triple role of women (productive, reproductive and community roles). Participants also acknowledged that women are overburdened but their work is not appreciated by men but also by women themselves. One of the suggestions was to sensitize community members and researchers about the importance of gender relations and the need to address gender issues for us to realize gender equity.

The last two days of the training focused solely on planning field activities, of which an important component was to experiment with the different PE tools and ensuring that gender differences are taken into consideration. Some of the tools included ranking and scoring (simple ranking, pairwise ranking and proportional piling), visualization using maps, semi-structured interviews and seasonal calendars among others. Using the knowledge and skills on gender analysis using the Harvard framework, the tools and processes were engendered so that the roles and perceptions of men, women, boys and girls are taken into account. By Thursday evening a tentative study protocol had been developed and on Friday participants tested the protocol by running mock focus group interviews among themselves as sort of role play. This process highlighted what works and what needed further refinement in discussions on Friday afternoon and clarified for participants how to conduct the focus group discussions. An important part was to test a template for systematic note taking. This is crucial as different groups will be facilitating focus group discussions, but findings of each of these will need to be compiled in the end.

The final study protocol was agreed on Friday afternoon and participants finalized planning of the field work. In groups of 5-6 people they will conduct interviews in 22 villages over the next 4-6 weeks. The aim of the focus groups discussions are to identify key animal health constraints (diseases), their impact on men, women and youth, Identify coping strategies employed by men, women and youth, and to identify who is involved in transmission risk activities or situations. In each village separate focus group discussions using exactly the same protocol will be held with men, women, young men and young women. This will be very valuable to highlight different perceptions of disease priorities between men and women.

To stay in contact during field work, we set up a community of practice facebook group where the teams can share their updates on field work and discuss issues they encounter during focus groups discussions with farmers.

Agenda of the training

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
PE intro	Gender	Gender	Develop tools fieldwork	Practice fieldwork
PE tools Ranking scoring	PE tools SSI	PE tools Analysis Running FGD	Finalize study protocol, practice fieldwork	Logistics