

Community gender profiles across livestock production systems in Ethiopia: Implications for intervention design

Wole Kinati (ICARDA) and Annet Abenakyo Mulema (ILRI)

Why community gender profiles?

The design of research and development interventions promoting gender-responsive value chains is hampered by the lack of gender disaggregated data. Data shortages in the livestock sector span multiple issues including gender roles, time allocation, access to and control over resources, economic decision-making and gender-based constraints, and value chain development opportunities (Rota et al. 2010). In Ethiopia, there is a general lack of intra-household sex disaggregated agricultural data. While Ethiopia's annual Agricultural Sample Survey does allow women to identify as female farm operators/holders, few women with a male spouse (less than 5%) choose this category (Warner et al. 2015). Available data is generally based on headship analysis typically indicating the gender of the household head, making intra-household analysis, using inclusive analytical categories i.e. women in male-headed households practically impossible. These constraints prompted recent studies to recommend the collection of gender disaggregated data to take into account intra-household division of labour, access to and control over resources and decision-making (Njuki et al. 2013; Doss et al. 2013). For instance, identifying who is responsible for specific livestock husbandry practices may reveal who within the household is best placed to observe clinical signs of animal health problems (Curry et al. 1996 in World Bank et al. 2009). Community gender profiles provide an understanding of the intra-community and intra-household gender relations helping the design and implementation of more effective and sustainable interventions.

Background

In 2015 and 2016, a participatory rural appraisal (PRA) exercise was undertaken into the gender characteristics of the small ruminant value chain sites in five regions of Ethiopia, one of the value chains of the CGIAR Livestock and Fish (L&F) research program. The assessment helped guide development of gender profiles of 14 target peasant associations in seven *woredas* (districts) within the regions. Horro, Astbi, Menz and Doyogena districts, located in the highlands, are characterized by crop–livestock mixed

farming system. Yabello, Abergelle, and Shinelle districts are located in the semi-arid and arid agro-ecology with agro-pastoralist and pastoralist farming systems. Focus group discussions—constituting 8 to 12 participants—were conducted with men, women, and male and female youth within the L&F target sites. The information collected included but was not limited to: roles and responsibilities of community members—men, women, boys and girls; **labour and time allocation**; and **access to and control over resources**. Gender analysis and PRA tools were employed, such as daily activity clocks, access to and control over resources' profile and seasonal calendars. The daily activity clock was used to capture the relative workloads of the different community groups, the types of activities undertaken, amount of time worked by group, amount of leisure time available by group etc. The groups recorded the data on activity clocks for peak and slack seasons represented by the wet and dry seasons. Household- and community-level power dynamics were assessed by analysing access to and control over key household and community resources. Seasonal changes in activities, income, expenditure, and other livelihood-related activities were assessed using calendars. Overall, 137 men, 114 women, 115 young people (73 male and 42 female) participated in the group discussions. Since the number of male and female youth was small in most cases, they formed one group. But, the activities that applied to a specific group were specified during the discussions.

The 24 hour daily activity clock

All household members actively participate in productive roles related to crop and livestock production. Reproductive roles are exclusively carried out by women and girls in the mixed crop–livestock farming system, while certain reproductive roles such as barn cleaning and milkingⁱ are shared by men in the agro-pastoralist and pastoralist farming systems. Women, supported by young girls, are mostly responsible for all domestic activities—e.g. cooking, fetching water and firewood, childcare and milking.

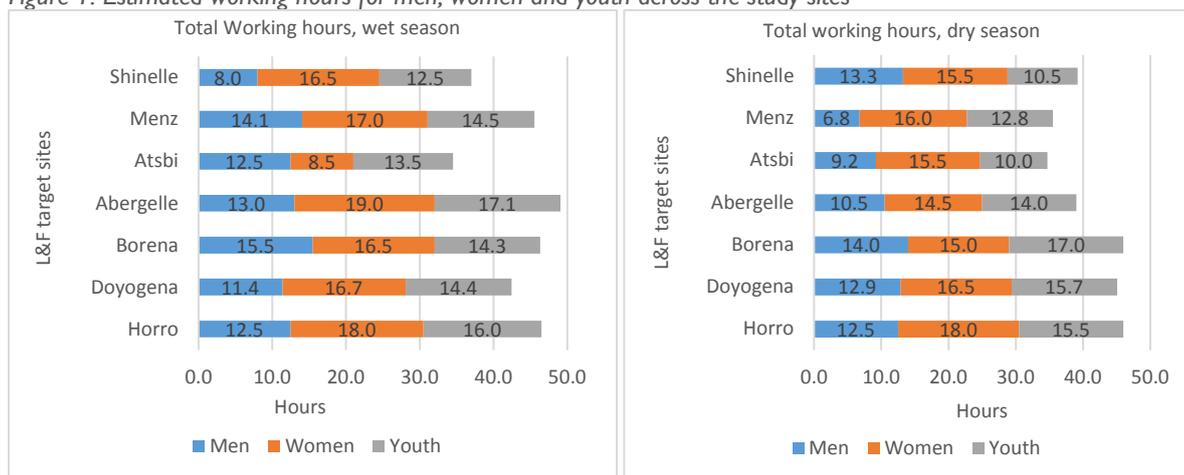
Table 1. Sample daily activity clock for women and men in wet season Doyogena, Serara Bokata peasant association

Women			Men		
Time	Activities	Hours	Time	Activities	Hours
6:00–7:00	Wake up, clean house and self	1	6:00–7:00	Wake-up and feed oxen	1
7:00–9:00	Fetch water, prepare coffee and take to farm	2	7:00–8:00	Have breakfast	1
9:00–12:00	Collect animals feed, milking, weeding, sowing, planting cabbage, Enset decortication	3	8:00–14:00	Ploughing and have lunch (on-farm)	6
12:00–13:00	Prepare lunch, firewood collection, take lunch to farm	1	14:00–15:00	Resting time	1
13:00–15:00	Fetch water, collect feed for cattle, collect firewood	2	15:00–19:00	Feed oxen, prepare animal feed for tomorrow	4
15:00–18:00	Collect cabbage, cooking, gardening, Enset cutting and decortication	3	19:00–20:00	Have coffee	1
18:00–19:00	Gather animals to home, feeding, prayer program	1	20:00–22:00	Leisure time and discussion with family	2
19:00–21:00	Prepare coffee and inset cooking	2	22:00–23:00	Have dinner	1
21:00–23:00	Milking, serve dinner, help children to sleep, prepare bed	2	23:00–6:00	Sleep	7
23:00–24:00	Clean house utensils and bath	1			
24:00–6:00	Sleep	6			

As most women's and young girls are engaged in multiple tasks simultaneously, their activities across the study sites are difficult to fit into hour-long time slots as compared to men and boys. Women get less sleep and take less leisure time than men in both seasons, except during the dry season in the pastoralist farming system where men spend more time searching for water and feed for their animals.

On average, women work 8.5–19 and 14.5–18 hours, and men 8–15.5 and 6.8–14 hours in the wet and dry seasons respectively (Figure 1). During dry season, women spend much of their time on reproductive activities and lose the help of their children when school begins. Youth also work longer hours (12.5–17.1 and 10–17 hours in the wet and dry seasons), including time spent studying at home. Young girls share women's activities, whereas young boys share those of men but also participate in other activities considered feminine e.g. fetching firewood.

Figure 1. Estimated working hours for men, women and youth across the study sites



Gender roles and valuation of labour

Across the study sites, livestock-related activities carried out around the homestead—such as milking, burn/shade cleaning, supplementary feeding, looking after weak/sick animals—are mainly regarded as women's and girls' tasks and culturally less valued. Conversely, activities such as herding, taking sick animals to the veterinary clinic and market are usually done by adult men and young boys, and culturally highly valued. Table 2 illustrates the gender roles in small ruminant production at the different sites.

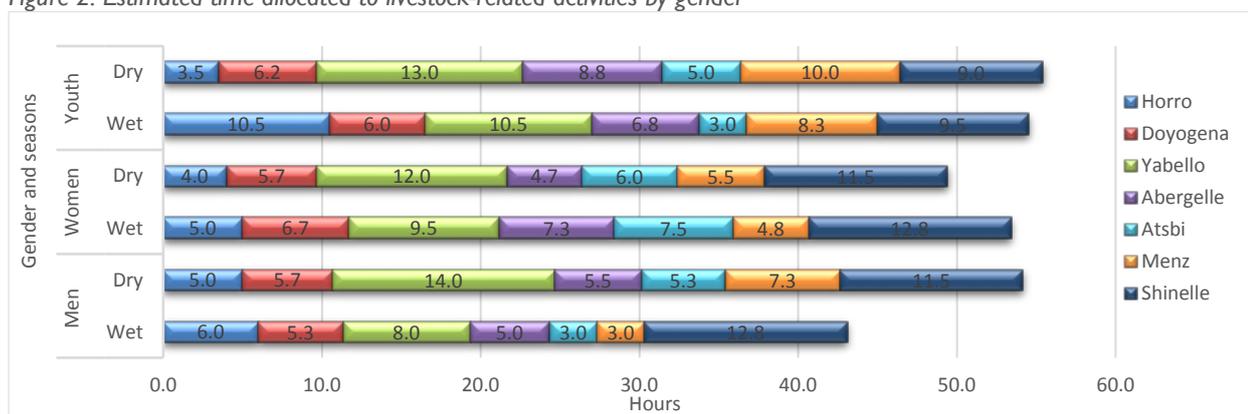
Table 2. Main gender roles in small ruminant production and sheep fattening

Target sites	Men	Young male	Women	Young female
Horro	Selection of breeds, deworming, castration, go to veterinary clinic, marketing (mostly)	Herding during grazing, watering, deworming	Supplementary feed preparation and feeding, watering, cleaning, marketing (rarely)	watering, cleaning
Doyogena	Herding, feeding, watering (rarely), castration, housing, marketing	feeding, watering, cleaning(rarely)	Supplementary feed preparation and feeding, watering, cleaning, marketing (rarely)	feeding, watering, cleaning (rarely)
Yabello	Herding, feed preparation and feeding, watering, milking, marketing	Herding, feeding, watering	Herding, cleaning, feed preparation and feeding, milking	Herding, feeding, watering, milking
Abergelle	Feeding, watering and cleaning (rarely), castration, housing, take to veterinary clinic, marketing	Herding, supplementary feeding, watering, cleaning (rarely), go to veterinary clinic	Supplementary feed preparation and feeding, watering, cleaning, go to veterinary clinic, marketing (rarely)	Herding, supplementary feeding, watering, cleaning (rarely), go to veterinary clinic
Atsbi	Feeding, watering, marketing	Herding, feed preparation and feeding	Supplementary feed preparation and feeding, watering, cleaning	Prepare supplementary feed and feeding
Menz	Housing and selection, construction of feed trough, deworming, castration, feeding and watering, removing hair, marketing	Herding, supplementary feeding, housing, construction of feeding trough	Selection, cleaning, supplementary feed preparation and feeding, watering, marketing	Herding, supplementary feeding, watering, cleaning
Shinelle	Selection, housing, deworming, castration, milking, marketing	Housing, herding	Selection, supplementary feed preparation and feeding, watering, cleaning, milking, marketing	Feeding, watering, cleaning

Men are main decision-makers and generally in charge of general herd management. Women retain primary responsibilities for managing small ruminants and dairy-related activities in pastoral farming systems. In crop–livestock mixed-farming systems, men also actively take part in small ruminant activities. In the drier areas of L&F target sites, feed collection and animal feeding constitute

the main tasks of both genders in the dry season; though this role is gendered based on animal species—i.e. men are responsible for large animals, while women are responsible for small ruminants and large but weak/diseased/or lactating animals. Across the study sites, all groups spend a significant portion of the day on animal-related activities (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Estimated time allocated to livestock-related activities by gender



Seasonal calendar exercises

As seasons change, the number and type of activities for men and women change. During the wet season both men and women are busy with cropping activities in the crop–livestock farming system. In agro-pastoral farming systems, wet seasons give men time for social affairs and leisure, but not women. In the dry season, households engage in more livestock-related activities. It is a busy season for both men and women living in drier areas. In some study sites, during the dry season, women engage in non-farm activities, such as brewing local beverages and petty trading which are important sources of family income.

Access-to and control-over resources profile

Resources such as land, crops, livestock, farm equipment and extension services are considered important productive resources by participants across the study sites. Additionally, cow dung in Menz and camel carts in Shinelle district are important household resources. Regardless of the region or farming system, men and women generally have access to these productive resources. But when it comes to control over these resources, including decision-making power over their disposal, women tend to have less voice. Men and women participants mentioned that income is usually controlled by men or jointly by both spouses. Resources like milk and milk products are

under the control of women. Women also have equal control over food crops in Abergelle districts (Amhara and Tigray regions), and livestock and food crops in Menz and Shinelle districts (unlike at the other study sites). In Borena, men control important food crops, such as beans and *Teff*. Participation in community training and politics is considered the role of men across all study areas. Women across all sites conceptualized access to and control over resources differently. For Horro women accessing extension services meant being able to obtain information at farm gate, while for Menz women it included participation in community training, extension visits and demonstrations. This may imply that it is not culturally acceptable for Horro women to participate in extension activities outside the home. However, more research is needed to understand how these gender concepts are defined by men, women and youth across socio-cultural contexts and farming systems.

Key messages

- Innovations reducing women's workload free up their time to engage in economic activities and community affairs, helping improve their control over benefits and income.
- Differences in gender roles in livestock production are not only observed across regions but also across farming systems. Men undertake a few tasks, while women do multiple activities, illustrating the complexity of their roles.
- Women are primarily responsible for dairy-related and small ruminant management activities across sites, particularly in the drier areas. Interventions aimed at improving livestock production in general and small ruminant production in particular are more likely to help increase women's incomes in the short run and enhance their economic decision-making position vis-à-vis household productive resources in the long run.

- Designing technical solutions to the problems of men and women farmers should take into account the amount of time allocated to household and productive activities, access to and control of resources, and cultural norms. Innovations working well in one area may not in others due to contextual differences.
- The small ruminant value chain development initiative will maximize its impact if youth are considered key actors.

Acknowledgments

We thank Barbara Rischkowsky and Rhiannon Pyburn for their support; Scientists from the national agricultural research system for conducting the field work; district and *kebele* level development agents for facilitating the focus group discussions; and all the farmers who provided information.

References

- Doss, C., Kovarik, C., Peterman, A.A.R. and van den Bold, M. 2013. *Gender Inequalities in Ownership and Control of Land in Africa: Myths versus Reality*. International Food Policy Research Institute Discussion Paper 01308.
- Njuki, J. and Pascal C.S. 2013. *Gender and Livestock: Key Issues, Challenges and Opportunities in* (Eds) Njuki J, and Pascal C.S. *Women, Livestock Ownership and Markets. Bridging the Gender Gap in Eastern and Southern Africa*, Routledge, London, UK and New York, USA.
- Rota, A. and Sperandini, S. 2010. *Gender and livestock: Tools for design*. International Fund for Agricultural Development: Rome, Italy.
- Warner, J., Kieran, C., and McMullan, S. 2015. *A review of selected topics of gender and Agricultural research in Ethiopia over the Last Decade, Identifying Themes and Research Gaps for Further Action*. International Food Policy Research Institute: Washington DC, USA.
- World Bank, Food and Agriculture Organization and International Fund for Agricultural Development. 2009. *Gender in agriculture sourcebook*. World Bank Publications: Washington DC, USA.

¹ Milking can be a reproductive or productive role depending on the utilization of milk and its products— for domestic consumption or sale.

CGIAR is a global partnership that unites organizations engaged in research for a food secure future. The CGIAR Research Program on Livestock and Fish aims to increase the productivity of small-scale livestock and fish systems in sustainable ways, making meat, milk and fish more available and affordable across the developing world. The Program brings together four CGIAR centres: the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) with a mandate on livestock; WorldFish with a mandate on aquaculture; the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT), which works on forages; and the International Center for Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA), which works on small ruminants. <http://livestockfish.cgiar.org>



The program thanks all donors and organizations which globally support its work through their contributions to the [CGIAR system](#)

Patron: Professor Peter C Doherty AC, FAA, FRS

Animal scientist, Nobel Prize Laureate for Physiology or Medicine—1996

Box 30709, Nairobi 00100 Kenya
Phone +254 20 422 3000
Fax +254 20 422 3001
Email ilri-kenya@cgiar.org

ilri.org
better lives through livestock

ILRI is a CGIAR research centre

Box 5689, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Phone +251 11 617 2000
Fax +251 11 667 6923
Email ilri-ethiopia@cgiar.org

ILRI has offices in East Africa • South Asia • Southeast and East Asia • Southern Africa • West Africa