

Implementing “Gender Equity” in Development Interventions: Caught between Patriarchy and Paternalism?

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First Annual Scientific Conference
CGIAR Collaborative Platform for Gender Research
December 5, 2017



RESEARCH
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Livestock and Fish



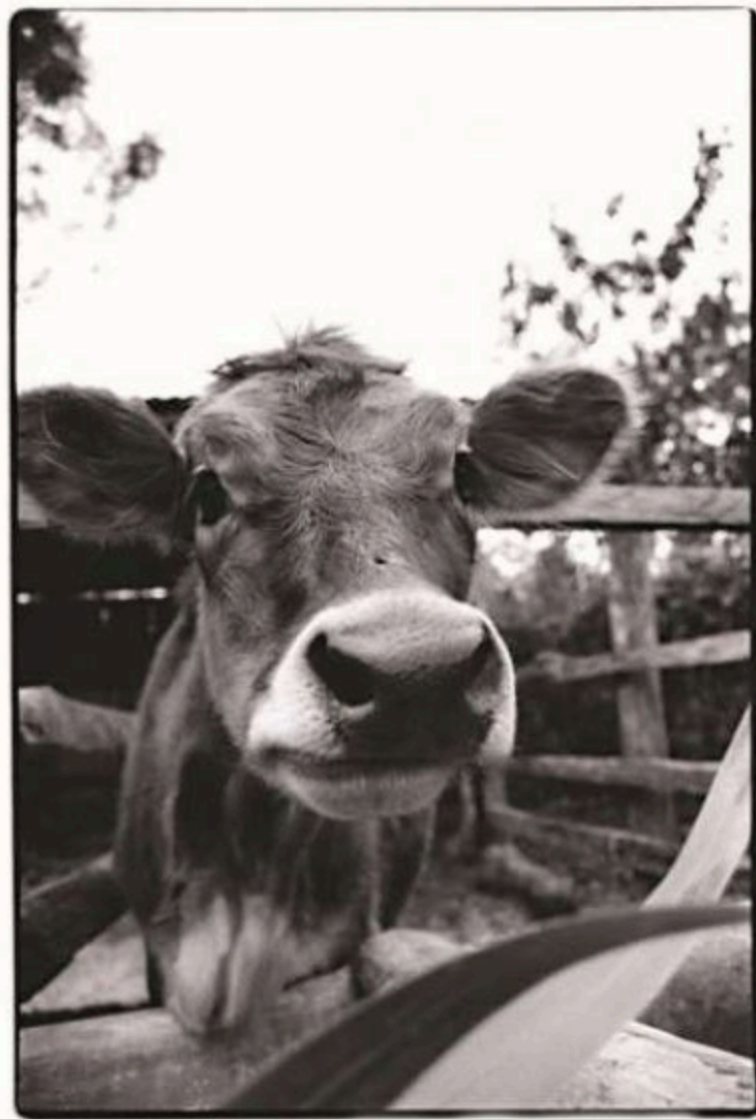
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Caught between patriarchy & paternalism?

- Gender transformative approaches (GTA) framing of “local” cultures
- Import/impose solutions to gender-based production constraints
- What of contextualized, intersectional, & relational approaches to gender...?
- ... acknowledging that exogenous notions of ‘equity’ are not shared by “beneficiaries”?

Paternalism trap?



What does “gender equity” look like?

- Notions of gender equity vary widely across VC
- Gender equity interventions in Kenya formal milk value chain
 - Improving access to markets & assets,
 - Increasing women’s decision-making power
 - Sharing incomes & labor responsibilities
- ... tend to ignore how localized constructions of masculinity around dairy production and household headship

“I don’t want a 50/50 with my husband. If I get 20% of the [formally sold] milk income, that would be wonderful. I can buy small things for the house & the secret things my husband cannot buy for me.... Are you giving any trainings on chickens?”

- Middle-aged married woman, Aldai Mooi co-op discussion group, Nandi County, Western Kenya



Where do we go from here?

We need to seriously re-think our gender research agenda

- 1 - An over-reliance on market based generic global level indicators for measuring gendered inequity obscures the intersectional, relational, & contextual nature of gendered relations.
- 2 - In Western Kenya, emphasizing “women’s empowerment” through dairy cows may not achieve desirable outcomes because culturally, cows are for men. The majority of married women interviewed prefer chickens to cows...however, there is a ceiling to success!

The Bottom Line

- The way gender equity is currently normatively framed in R4D fails to capture the complexity of women's & men's lives.
- If we start from the standpoint of women's & men's own ideas about equity & center on their lived experiences, aspirations, & agency in value chain development, interventions can hopefully avoid the 'paternalist trap.'

A Final Thought

GTA is the current paradigm among us in the CGIAR – Given this research and reflection, uncomfortable questions remain:

- Who do we think we're going to transform?
- What are rural societies/people going to transform into?
- Where does our mandate come from?

- What is the middle path between patriarchy and paternalism?

Questions/Comments?

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Acknowledgements

- The CGIAR Research Program on Climate, Change, Agriculture, & Food Security (CCAFS) and Livestock Research Program
- Special thanks to Carolyn Sachs & Margreet van der Burg for their comments on this draft during and after the 2017 Gender Research Integrated Training (GRIT) held at the Pennsylvania State University

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ILRI thanks all donors and organizations who globally supported its work through their contributions to the **CGIAR system**

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