Gender and Innovation a Cross cutting program theme

Innovation Technology and Society

IDRC

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There is no right way to innovate – just many different, equally valid, approaches

Pathways to Success: A Taxonomy of Innovation
The World Economic Forum’s Technology Partners 2006
What then is Innovation?

- "use of new ideas, technologies or ways of doing things, in a place (or by people) where they have not been used before

- Broader view Vs conventional notion of innovation (businesses, R&D based)
Innovation systems in developing countries

- what are they? Why are they so evasive to describe, characterize, measure or upscale?

- Do they exist at all?
Innovation Systems in Developed Countries

- Science & Speculative Thought
- Knowledge (Technology) Creation
- Design, Engineering Entrepreneurship & Innovation Management
- Production of Goods & Services

R&D

Education & Training

Domestic Capabilities (Modern)

International Capabilities
Innovation Systems in Developing Countries

R&D

Science & Speculative Thought

Knowledge (Technology) Creation

Design, Engineering Entrepreneurship & Innovation Management

Production of Goods & Services

Education & Training

Modern Capabilities

Traditional Capabilities

International Capabilities
Innovations happen all the time in developing countries – in myriad ways

Examples -

- We are still finding tools, methods and frameworks to understand them better.

- ITS work has been precisely in this direction from the past nearly 4 years
Innovation for the social agenda

- “Invisible” innovation actors - small time informal businesses, women’s groups,
- Grassroots innovators...
- Weak / dysfunctional knowledge linkage - dependent on external conditions
Innovation for the social agenda

- Serving locally and contextually relevant objectives
- With or without state intervention but driven by stakeholder processes
- Role of women in innovation processes and impacts on their lives least understood
Gender and Innovation perspectives

- Social inclusion - women as credible innovation system actors
- Efficiency - skills and human capital
- Rights - gainful employment and socio-economic development
- Decision making and governance
Global call for proposals along two thematic directions

- Involvement and influence of women in innovation process

- Impacts of (specific) innovation systems on women
Women in innovation systems – role and influence

Examples

- In what ways will greater engagement of women in a specific context of innovation contribute to economic / social value?
- Will higher enrolment of women in technical education and employment fill the gender gap in innovation?
- What are the key / distinct features of technology-business entrepreneurship for and by women?
Women in Innovation systems – role and influence

- How does the agency of women in business enterprises manifest itself in the innovation process?
- What socio-economic profiles of women enable their influence on technology governance and policy process?
- Does a higher gender balance trigger more innovation and if so what are the impacts of this higher balance on innovation?
Impacts of specific innovations on the lives of women (current and anticipated)

Examples

- Guiding principles for an engendered approach to technology regulation and policy
- In what ways do current technologies for water and sanitation impact women?
Impacts of specific innovations on the lives of women (current and anticipated)

- Are there gender biases in the diffusion and/or impacts of specific technologies, such as biotechnology, nanotechnology and ICTs?
- What are the opportunities for policy harmonisation to enable women to contribute to innovation processes?
- Does the knowledge economy and technological development promote greater knowledge and skills development of women?
Potentially connects to other work of ITS and could draw from:

- Benchmarking rural innovation capacity - focus on “below the radar” innovations and actors
- Capability, governance and nanotechnology - water, health and energy sectors in India
- Social technologies in Latin America
- Socially inclusive innovations in China and India - women in agriculture innovations in poverty dominant areas
This project launch

8 different country perspectives on gender and innovation in different sectors

- Agricultural innovation and technology
- Technology and innovation in water resource management
- Livelihoods and enterprises
- Governance and decision making

Afghanistan, Bolivia, India, Pakistan, Palestine, Uganda, Vietnam and Zambia
This project launch

Better understanding - gender manifests itself in innovation + impacts on women

Individually and collectively - what lessons can be learnt for policy and institutional changes - Innovations that are more inclusive of gender perspectives
To be accomplished

- Project commencement - exchange and learning
- Finalise work plan and fine tune methodology
- Explore comparative / collaborative agenda
- Prepare to communicate strategically to a variety of audiences
- Mechanism for networking, sharing and communication
- Have fun !!
Thank you

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