

GENDER AND AGRICULTURAL TECHNOLOGIES



Participants of the Structural Transformation of African Agricultural and Rural Spaces: Gender and Adoption of Agricultural Technologies in East Africa workshop organised by *icipe* and PEP on 17 March 2017.

icipe and the Partnership for Economic Policy (PEP) (<https://www.pep-net.org/>), working within the Structural Transformation of African Agriculture and Rural Spaces (PEP-STAARS) (<https://www.pep-net.org/staars>) initiative, are contributing critical knowledge to understand factors that affect adoption of agricultural technologies in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA).

Although agricultural technologies could increase crop productivity, contribute to food security and strengthen incomes for many people, there is low adoption and mixed results of such approaches. Further, since women contribute more than 65% of agricultural production in the region, gender equality in production systems can pivot the translation of SSA's agricultural socioeconomic transformation potential into a reality. However, women have fewer opportunities and access to productive agricultural resources, including technologies. Also, many agricultural technologies are gender biased in design and implementation, leading to their low adoption by women farmers.

Overall, factors that affect adoption of agricultural technologies in SSA are generally not studied in a systematic way, and associated research methodologies are not robust enough.

At a workshop held on 17 March 2017, *icipe* and PEP presented findings obtained through four research projects: Three of the studies were conducted by the *icipe* Social Science and Impact Assessment Unit, including: *Does adoption of push-pull technology induce productivity growth and aggregate poverty reduction? A case study in western Kenya*; *Does gender matter in adoption of sustainable agricultural technologies?* and *A case of push-pull technology in Kenya?; Women's empowerment in agriculture and household productivity: Evidence from rural maize farmer households in western Kenya* (which was co-funded by the PEP-STAARS initiative). The fourth study, conducted by a PEP-STAARS fellow based at the University of Nairobi, Kenya, focused on the adoption and dis-adoption of improved maize varieties in Tanzania.

The forum re-emphasised and demonstrated the importance of technology adoption and gender equity in agriculture, and existing challenges. Stronger methodological rigour, theory and application to policy, and capacity building of young economists, were also highlighted, to realise Africa's strong potential in research leadership. Requirements were also identified for clear articulation of gender, as well as the

mainstreaming of gender in agriculture as a research priority. Importantly, the forum observed a disconnect between research and policy, noting the crucial need to translate research results into strong policy statements. A gap was also flagged between researchers and the private sector, as a key player in developing and disseminating appropriate technologies for farmers.

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