



Gender, Work & Organization Conference

28-30 June 2023 | Stellenbosch, Cape Town | South Africa



Stellenbosch
Business School



Gender, Work and Organization

13th International Interdisciplinary Conference

28-30 June 2023, Stellenbosch, Cape Town, South Africa

Conference theme

Marginalised gender identities - how can intellectual activism transform work and organization?

CALL FOR ABSTRACTS/PAPER SUBMISSIONS

COLLABORATIVE EVENT TITLE:

Inclusive Agribusiness: key changes that must happen for a more inclusive agri-business growth

EVENT ORGANISERS:

Dr Eileen Nchanji, Alliance Biodiversity and CIAT, Kenya
Ms Annrita Njiru, The Rallying Cry, Kenya
Me Precious Greehy, Solidaridad, South Africa
Dr Deepa Joshi, IWMI, Ukama Ustawi Regional Initiative
Dr Ojong Baa, IWMI, Ukama Ustawi Regional Initiative

Context

Women contribute significantly to agriculture in Africa, and agriculture is the largest employer of African women, with approximately 50-70 percent of economically active women employed in agriculture (Doss, 2011). However, women's work in agriculture happens in the face of a series of challenges: unequal ownership of quality farmland, a disproportionately higher www.usb.ac.za/usb_events/gender-work-organization

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reliance and responsibility for subsistence agriculture vis-à-vis opportunities for high-value production, their relative inability to mobilize [male] family labour, higher levels of unpaid labour in family farms, unequal wages for agriculture labour,

the lack of capital, credit and collateral to invest in agriculture innovations, and increasing demand on meeting household food needs in the face of persisting domestic care responsibilities¹. It is not surprising then that agricultural work, paradoxically is what is primarily responsible for women's economic disadvantage - what holds African women in persisting poverty (Shaver, 2020).

We see an urgent need to critically analyze calls for increasing women's engagement in agriculture in Africa. Firstly, there is the need to assess the conditions under which women are being approached to operate in agribusiness (Isakovic, 2018). Agri-business opportunities cannot be promoted unless there is more visibility and attention to women's domestic care work - which can be increasingly taxing in the face of "fuel, fodder, water" challenges which are exacerbated by climate impacts. Subsistence agriculture and domestic care work is not "[just] 'reproduction'", but in the face of increasing food insecurity, a necessary and "separate mode of production articulated by and within capitalism" (Farhall & Rickards, 2021). Related to these issues, we need to question narratives that present African women as a homogeneous entity, narratives that fail to take note of specific social, political, economic contexts, as well as account for uniquely local dimensions of intersectional inequalities - including by class, ethnicity, religion, age, and sexual identities.

Feminist scholars have long argued that that simply integrating women to agri-business interventions without considering wider political, economic changes, for example, the politics of land grabs and export-oriented commercial production (Dieng, 2020), can reiterate existing gendered inequalities and further marginalize women in new ways (Farhall & Rickards, 2021). A feminist political economy (FPE) approach helps analyse intersectional gendered dimensions and dynamics of women's work in agriculture in the context of other drivers of change, enabling the unpacking of the plurality of gendered changes in the face of diverse formal and informal economies of agriculture (Dzanku et al., 2021).

In this session we will discuss how feminist political economy and ecology (FPE/E) approaches make visible the nexus of women's inputs to and outcomes from agriculture in the context of assets, resources, the notion of decent work (indicators of human well-being), gendered disparities in labour and wages, unpaid care work, and the implications of short term economic gains versus longer term environmental sustainability (Isakovic, 2018; Ossome, L., & Naidu, S. 2021; Moser, 2014). This requires paying attention to local historical contexts, colonialism's persisting impacts on land and food sovereignty as well as issues of masculinity, patriarchy across institutions (Farhall & Rickards, 2021). We will discuss challenges and opportunities in agribusiness for marginalized women in light of the above issues.

This session is hosted by the Regional Integrated Initiative for East and Southern Africa, Ukama Ustawi (UU), under the One CGIAR Initiative. The UU initiative seeks to **support climate-resilient agriculture and livelihoods in 12 countries in East and Southern Africa, and aims to enable intensifying, diversifying and de-risking maize-mixed farming for smallholders**

¹ <https://africa.unwomen.org/en/stories/experts-take/2022/06/experts-take-gender-inequalities-reducing-agricultural-productivity>

through improved extension services, enterprise development, and private investments. A key objective is to empower and engage women and youth in agribusiness by applying a Gender and Social Inclusion lens².

Purpose and objective of the session:

Our aim is to bring together researchers, grassroots feminist actors working on agriculture, agribusiness, food systems, land, water, and environment to facilitate a dialogue with public and private sector actors engaged in promoting agri-entrepreneurship in Africa. These discussions will be used to co-design a Gender Equitable and Socially Inclusive (GESI) framework of action for inclusive agri-business.

Questions for panel discussion

- Why is it important to consider women's domestic care burdens in relation to increasing opportunities for women in agri-business in Africa?
- How do intersectional inequalities shape marginality, vulnerability and exclusion of women in relation to agri-business?
- How does patriarchy and masculinity shape production, value chains and entrepreneurship, what are ways to tackling systemic and structural barriers for women in agribusiness?
- What needs to transform for women to operate and excel in agribusiness? What will be key drivers for transformative, inclusive change?

Benefits of attending this event

- Engage in and contribute to FPE scholarship on agri-business and food systems
- Engage with diverse actors: grassroots activities, NGOs, donors, private and public sector
- Join the Ukama Utsawi team (WP5) in co-designing a framework for inclusive agri-business
- Explore opportunities for future research and innovations in inclusive agribusiness

Session Plan

Panel presentations with interactive discussions

Panel speakers:

Dr Eileen Nchanji, Alliance Bioversity and CIAT, PABRA, Kenya

Ms AnnRita Njiru, The Rallying Cry, Kenya

Ms Precious Greehy, Solidaridad, South Africa

Dr Deepa Joshi, IWMI, Ukama Ustawi Regional Initiative

² <https://www.cgiar.org/initiative/21-ukama-ustawi-u2-water-secure-and-climate-resilient-agricultural-livelihoods-in-east-and-southern-africa/>

Dr Ojong Baa, IWMI, Ukama Ustawi Regional Initiative

To know more about the CGIAR Ukama Ustawi Regional Integrated Initiative, follow the link <https://www.cgiar.org/initiative/21-ukama-ustawi-u2-water-secure-and-climate-resilient-agricultural-livelihoods-in-east-and-southern-africa/>

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