

# Participatory Methodologies to Increase Women Farmers' Access to Productive Resources

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# Why Participation?

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The way "**participation**" is practiced  
in any given planning process  
affects women farmers

Adapted from FAO Gender & Participation in Agricultural Planning  
[www.fao.org/docrep/X2950E/X2950e02.htm](http://www.fao.org/docrep/X2950E/X2950e02.htm)

# Why Participation? (2)

Levels of women farmers' participation in **agricultural planning**:

- ❖ **All stakeholders** – not limited to elites only (elected representatives)
- ❖ **Women farmers consulted from inception and management of project**
- ❖ Women farmers find their places in all planning, execution, M&E mechanisms at the various levels, including highest policy-making level
- ❖ **Participation in which women farmers control the decisions at all levels**

(Source: FAO Gender and Participation)

# Problem Identification Using PAR

## Methods

- ✘ Simple economic assessment rarely adequate to solve people's real problems
- ✘ Quantitative methods not always adequate to focus on farmers' felt needs
- ✘ Increases human capital, adoption and farmers' profits
- ✘ Increases impact and shortens time for technology development

# Factors that Underlie Participation

Important gains from inclusion of women farmers in field research:

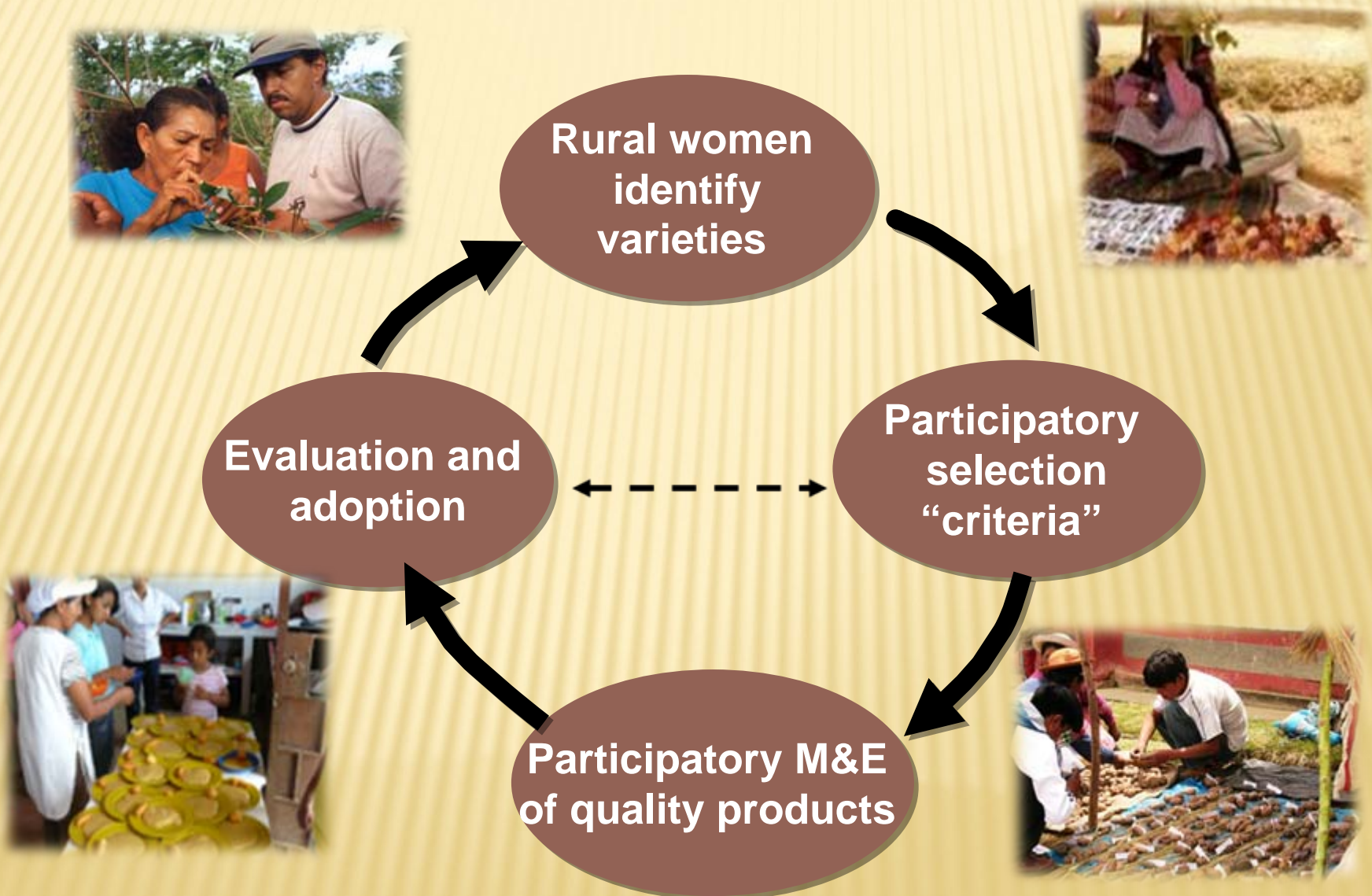
- ✘ Higher rates of success (lower failure rates)
- ✘ Take into account different needs
- ✘ Save in cost/time (better-adapted technologies)
- ✘ Higher adoption by diverse groups (i.e. PPB)
- ✘ Empowerment of women farmers
- ✘ Institutional innovation

# PRGA and Participation of Women Farmers

Experience of CGIAR PRGA Program 1997–2011:

- + Participatory research and gender analysis through **small grants** and **collaborative research approaches** enhanced methods and frameworks with direct involvement of women farmers
- + **Developed strategies** to support participatory methods, adopting and documenting innovations across research lines (project cycle)

# PAR Approaches – PPB/PVS



# Case Studies: PPB & Women Farmers

Collaboration with ICARDA barley program, Syria:

- ✘ Combine gender analysis into a PPB program in 3 villages :  
Lahethah, Sweida Province; Souran, Hama Province;  
Ajaz, Aleppo Province
- ✘ Enhance genetic resources and farmers' knowledge to adapt  
crops to climate changes
- ✘ Support the development of PPB across borders

Photo Credit : A. Galie, S. Ceccarelli





# Reaching Women Farmers through PPB

*PPB is a dynamic collaboration between Breeding Institutions (National or International) and farmers which exploits their comparative advantages*



Photo: S. Ceccarelli-PRGA

# Reaching Women Farmers through PPB (cont.)

In General PPB Emphasis on:

- ✘ Local cultivar performance (food crops)
- ✘ Emphasis of products for human and animal consumption
- ✘ Timing of production (early varieties)
- ✘ Postharvest, labor and processing needs
- ✘ Traits and taste dimensions (cooking)



# Women Farmers and PPB

There are important process gains for women farmers at the farm level such as:

- × Farmer skill building (empowerment)
- × Control over and use of local germoplasm
- × Goal setting (according to women's criteria)
- × Introduction of new crop options and decentralization of sites (Climate Change)
- × In situ evaluation and emphasis in choice

# PAR & Women Cotton Farmers

Documented experiences with Transgenic Varieties  
(Colombia: CONALGODON –IFPRI) :

- ✦ Developed a Qualitative Framework

  - Mapping exercises of cotton activities by gender

  - Agricultural preferences matrix

  - Priorities Matrix/Ranking Exercises

- ✦ Pursued **impact evaluation** of crop biotechnology through participatory approaches

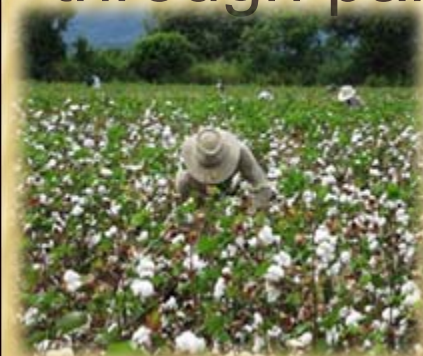


Photo Credit: PRGA, N. Palmer, P

# PAR & Women Cotton Farmers

Some Findings of the Participatory research:

- 1-Women actively involved in cotton farming
- 2-Women see information as key in the adoption and handling GM varieties
- 3-Women are potential adopters of GM and adjust practices (conversely than men)
- 4-Differences by gender (saving labor vs yield)
- 5-GM varieties have introduced changes in farming practices (spraying/weeds)



Photo Credit:  
P. Zambrano

# Common Threads Across Case Studies

4 Common elements to enhance women farmers' participation:

- ✘ Emphasize methodology development
- ✘ Capacity-building activities
- ✘ Diversity of partnerships and networks
- ✘ Institutionalize participatory methodologies with a gender lens at core ('mainstreaming')

Through PAR methods there is a contribution to capacity development for extension agents, researchers and policy-makers

# Challenges Ahead

Participatory processes take **strong commitment** and time to work along with women farmers

- ✘ Learn to respect cultural norms and values
- ✘ Builds trust while includes long term engagement
- ✘ Need for higher levels of PAR frameworks/menus
- ✘ Need to show and measure impact (Impact Assessment, Social Impact Assessment (SIA), Social Analysis Systems (SAS2), Outcome Mapping; Adaptive Collaborative Management)
- ✘ Systematize PAR Tools and Call for legitimization: policy- academic -research community