

## **“Gender, Family and Peasant Farming: North-South Perspectives”**

### **Dialogs between academic, development and teaching worlds**

Call for articles

#### **INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE**

UMR Dynamiques Rurales, ENFA, Toulouse,  
UMR CNRS 5600, « Environnement, ville, société », Lyon,  
Réseau « Genre en action », Bordeaux

May 22, 23, 24 & 25, 2012

### **Scientific context**

The conference “Gender, Family and Peasant Farming” offers a gendered social and cultural reading of the evolution of agricultural worlds in the North and the South confronted to a certain number of difficulties and impasses. This conference aims at showing how a gendered reading of agriculture throws light on new organizational experiences, but also on new ways of producing, on choices of productive systems, and on particular relationships to the land. Particularly, the conference questions the links between agriculture, community development, and environment by mobilizing the tools of gender analysis.

These broad questions are both of interest to the academic world and the area of development and meet major current societal challenges. Our hope is that the academia, on the occasion of this conference, builds the adequate conditions to strike a dialogue. To that end, we will organize workshops aiming to become fora for exchanges and discussions among researchers, experts and on-field actors. We will encourage different forms of expression including paper presentations, research movies, discussions, etc.

Encouraging a dialogue between research/teaching/development with a significant diversity of actors is a way for the academia to create a proxemics involving new objects, new questions, and new methods. This conference answers the need to bring academia closer to the professional world by paying attention to innovations and male and female actors in rural worlds.

Eligible papers should focus on four different themes:

### **Theme 1 : Family Organizations and Social Forms of Production in Agriculture**

Social forms of production in agriculture are currently experiencing major changes. The conference will provide the opportunity to show how these organizational innovations are linked to changes in the forms of social organizations and, particularly, in the evolving links between the farm, the land and the family. In developed countries, the issue of agricultural celibacy raises questions, in particular in relation to women’s departure from the country. At the same time, women farmers start their operation. The relationships between family and farms are being altered. Together with forms of organizing work which are more and more individualistic, collective organizations (such as the French *Coopérative d’Organisation du Matériel Agricole*) keeps on playing an essential role in the dynamics of farms, communities and territories.

In developing countries, high levels of mobility, in particular concerning men but not only them, change the role of men and women on farms which are being managed by women. The absence of

men and distance management of farms bring specific questions related to gender and generational relations.

In addition, due to different crises, rural women and female peasants have been more involved for the past 30 years in free market economy and have developed new relationships to money. This new mobilization of monetary revenues impacts on social interactions within families between men and women. The resulting changes blur gender identities and modify the involvement of men and women, in particular within the family space of production.

Therefore, in developed as well as in developing countries, several contexts show that women are getting involved in forms of discreet innovations contributing to the economic stability of farms. What knowledge can we derive from the comparison of experiences in developed and developing countries? This theme also focuses both on the training of women and men to encourage participation based on social and family realities and to create new ways of working that reflect transfers and innovations. Studies showing the development of specific training as well as concrete examples questioning systems of training men and women will throw light on this theme.

### **Theme 2: Gender and Social Management of Resources**

A certain number of agricultural practices are leading to the disappearance of knowledge in terms of preservation, conservation and use of wild and cultivated varieties of plants. This theme aims at understanding how women, because of their socially constructed links to food and their particular role in the cooking process, often hold knowledge, skills and unique roles as producers and consumers. From these positions, they can hold powers (economic, cultural, and social) which, today, are being contested. This second theme will present experiences of preservations of this valuable knowledge which should be preserved in today's context of strong environmental constraints and of adaptation to climate change. The context of preserved areas and the specific questions they raise in the struggle between agricultural practices and preservation measures, as well as the contexts of adaptation to risks, particularly climate ones, should be explored in this theme.

This theme aims at discussing the social construction of resources as embedded in gender and generational relations. Our goal here is to overcome a technical approach to discuss conditions of coordination or, by contrast, of opposition between the socially constructed categories of gender, age and class in the promotion, access, distribution, transmission of rights, and the management of resources (land, water, "wild plants," and trees). We also look to discuss the social and symbolic contexts shaping these same resources. The objective is to understand how relations between individuals and resources allow a comprehension of the dynamic of gender relations at the family and the local social life levels. Finally, this conference seeks to include a reflection on the access to productive resources (various forms of capitals and labor force) which often condition a strong differentiation between men and women regarding the success of their projects in agriculture. This particular desire to apprehend the diversity and complementarity of resources can be explained by a global approach of hierarchical organizations and power relations. Therefore, this theme would benefit from articles which point out indicators of gender inequalities in the relationships between individuals and resources.

### **Theme 3: Gender Inequalities in the Definition and Impact of Agricultural and Environmental Policies.**

Not all gender inequalities in agriculture are known, admitted, measured or published. Many women, whether they are peasants or farm workers, endure inequalities which are subtle, qualitative, felt, and, therefore, often considered as subjective. Poverty affecting female peasants is seldom analyzed as stemming from a process where gender relations are among the main explanatory variables. Measuring inequalities can, therefore, become quite complex. However, it appears necessary to do it before setting up policies and actions aiming at correcting or compensating them. In current development policies, "only what is measurable is taken into account." This principle governs current decision-making processes in the public sphere of developed and developing countries and is translated into programs and projects in which the "culture of gaining measurable results" becomes dominant. Public

policies, managed toward concrete results, require baseline indicators as well as indicators measuring processes and impacts. In this context, defining indicators able to measure disparities but also changes in complex social and economic realities using a gender approach is vital. Furthermore, measuring the evolution of these indicators in the context of reliable and trustworthy systems appears essential in overcoming inequalities.

This theme is also concerned with the local impact of agricultural and environmental policies. Governance in the agricultural sector is shaped by the macroeconomic pressures of international trades which decrease a country's sovereignty when dealing with the question of agriculture. Taking into account gender inequalities is completely ostracized. Agricultural policies follow broad macroeconomic directives (in particular, they are submitted to intensive export trade policies). Supporting family and peasant farming, and in particular the essential role of women in this system, is dwindling in these policies where the "anti-poverty" dimension (in particular through the PRSPs program) prevails in the agricultural dimension. Above all, this approach does not allow to analyze sufficiently the essential role of women in food-producing agriculture and its relation to the global market. The approach also offers a simplistic vision of gender relations in the analyses, as well as in the implementation and the evaluation of impacts. On the one hand, this theme provides the opportunity to examine the use of gendered data by public agricultural and environmental policies (both at a national and international level); on the other, it allows examining the impact of these policies on the evolution of gender relations and inequalities—in particular the processes and the actors involved.

Finally, this theme offers the opportunity to analyze the impact of feminist social movements on the setting-up and effects of agricultural and environmental policies. To illustrate this point, we can cite the specific involvement of feminist movements in the construction of an anti-globalization vision of agriculture, the work implemented by several feminist organizations in the fields of cooperation and decision-making in order to curb action programs related to sustainable development, climate change or energy management. The objective is to question the diversity of forms of collective actions and the plurality of strategies displayed to curb the agricultural and/or environmental public actions, at the local, national, and international level.

#### **Theme 4: Men and Women in Territorialized Food Systems**

Interactions between food and territorial dynamics impact the evolution of rural societies. The issues of patrimonialization of resources, of the dividing up of actors on value scales, of consumers' health and of the evolution of food cultures are themes which today are being explored in a set of research works.

The emerging research focusing on territorialized food systems has started to question production systems as well as consumption systems. This shows that habits of consumption foster innovations in individuals' practices, in decision-making processes, and in power relations inherent in innovative forms of agriculture. Consumers (in particular those belonging to territorialized food systems) are now perceived as actors of the current evolutions affecting agriculture.

However, if this research body is located at the intersection of sectorial analyses, territorial analyses and modes of collective organizations, it has often neglected the question of gender relations—which are, nonetheless, pervasive.

Focused on a gender approach, this theme offers a reflection on the new forms of productions in agriculture generated by direct sale (local or nearby distribution systems), the creation of territorialized food systems, and the new "functions" of rural spaces.

We aim at interrogating evolutions of labor in agriculture, the gender division of labor in food production, processing and sale, the role of women in collective forms of organizations and local governance.

New ways of consuming will be apprehended through questioning various elements such as motivations to "eat local," organizations of domestic labor related to food processing, or intersections between food, education and health.

Conference organizers: Anne Marie Granié, Dynamiques Rurales, Toulouse ; H  l  ne Guetat-Bernard, UMR 5600 CNRS « Environnement, ville, soci  t   », Lyon 3

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## **Schedule**

**Abstracts for articles should be sent before January 15, 2012** and should include:

- The name, the position currently held and the institutional affiliation of the author(s), and
- 5 key words

Abstract should be 5000 characters (including spaces) in length. Please, mention the number and the title of the theme of your abstract.

**You will be informed if your proposed article has been selected by the scientific committee from February 15, 2012.**

Selected articles should be sent by April 30, 2012 (Word .rtf format, Times 12, 1.5 line space) and should include a duly completed conference registration form and fees. Articles should incorporate an abstract in French and in English, and should not be more than 45,000 characters (spaces included). Only articles meeting these requirements will be accepted.

**All articles should be sent to the following e-mail addresses:**

<http://blogs.univ-tlse2.fr/genre-et-agricultures/>

Information related to the conference will be available on the conference website (<http://sites.univ-Tlse2> and ENFA website)

Required format for proposed articles

<b>Last name(s) and first name(s) of authors</b>
<b>Position held by author(s) (student, researcher, professor, expert, etc.)</b>
<b>Institutional affiliation (name of the department, research team or research lab):</b>
<b>First author's contact information:</b>  <b>Mailing address:</b>  <b>E-mail address:</b>  <b>Phone number:</b>
<b>Title of article:</b>
<b>Key words:</b>
<b>Specify here the number of the theme of your article, the name of the workshop in which your article is included, as well as the theme of your workshop:</b>

***Article summary/abstract, 6,000 characters (including spaces) maximum:***