Women in transdisciplinary research: interacting with citizen’s science & innovation

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 Citizen’s science

- Practised and owned by citizens
- Process of experimentation, knowledge creation and innovation in the real world – with or without formal scientists

Farmer in Tigray comparing her locally developed “modern” beehive with introduced one (Photo: Tesfahun Fenta)

Farmer in Tigray with her fuel-saving cooking dish (Photo: Ann Waters-Bayer)
Transdisciplinary research – “Mode 2”

- Knowledge production that involves numerous different social actors
- Context-driven: produced in process of interaction and application in real situations
- Subject to multiple accountabilities
- Transcends barriers between conventional and citizen’s science

Source: Helga Nowotny (2001)

Multi- → Inter- → Transdisciplinary

- Integration: Separated → Integrated → “Become One”
- Perspective: ≥ 2 disciplinary → include stakeholders+
- Team’s Goals: Project → Learning, New Ideas → Problem Oriented
- Leadership: Varied Leadership → Rotating Leadership?

Source: NanoHub
Making the flip

- Students & teachers identify local innovation and engage in farmer-led participatory research
- Provide Local Innovation Support Funds (LISFs): local citizens decide how funds are used and how outsiders are drawn in to support farmer-led experimentation and innovation

Foci for institutions of higher education

1) Create learning opportunities for students to gain the attitudes and skills needed for gender-responsive transdisciplinary research:
   - ability to facilitate communication
   - openness
   - sensitivity
   - creativity and flexibility
   - courage
   - commitment

2) Encourage especially women in social & technical disciplines to gain these attitudes and skills and to engage in such research
Some key activities to pursue

① Give priority to students wanting to engage in transdisciplinary research – especially female students

② Create spaces for female citizen scientists to present and discuss their work with students

③ Facilitate networks among people engaged in gender-responsive transdisciplinary research

④ Provide Local Innovation Support Funds for women innovators and become their research partners

Overall objective of combining conventional and male and female citizen’s science: to enhance system capacity to innovate

Thank you, Mekelle University!