

Rural Women Subsistence Farmers, Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Agricultural Research in South Africa

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ABSTRACT The study used secondary sources to make a critical analysis of the issue of rural women farmers, Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) and agricultural research for sustainable livelihood in South Africa. Examples were drawn from the following provinces Eastern Cape, Kwazulu-Natal, Limpopo, Mpumalanga, and North-West. The study argues that a critical understanding of the way these factors impact on agricultural policy and research for a sustainable rural livelihood should be an important challenge for policymakers, researchers, development agencies, and other stakeholders. Women using their IKS played great role in agriculture. These factors tend to be marginalized in agricultural research. They have limited access to and control over agricultural resources. Therefore, a critical understanding of IKS and gender in agricultural research should be taken seriously by researchers, policymakers and other stakeholders. These factors influence the interpretation and use of IKS in agriculture.