

GENDER AND THE COFFEE VALUE CHAIN IN KANUNGU, UGANDA



This project is
co-funded by the
European Union and
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government

 **FARM AFRICA**

ABOUT FARM AFRICA

Farm Africa is an innovative charity that reduces poverty in rural eastern Africa by helping farmers grow more, sell more and sell for more: we help farmers to not only boost yields, but also gain access to markets, and add value to their produce. We place a high priority on environmental sustainability and develop approaches that help farmers to improve their yields and incomes without degrading their natural resources. Our programmes vary hugely, ranging from helping crop farmers to boost harvests, livestock keepers to improve animal health, and forest coffee growers to reach export markets, but core to all of them is a focus on the financial sustainability of the farmers' businesses and environmental sustainability.

THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Coffee is an important cash crop and source of income for households in Kanungu district, Uganda. There are a number of barriers to successful inclusion of women and youth in the coffee value chain in the district. Previous studies of the coffee value chain in other areas of Uganda have indicated that limited access to land, labour, finance, commercial services and information about coffee production hinders women and youth from forging successful careers in the commercial coffee sector and turning a profit.

Farm Africa conducted a gender analysis study to better understand the role of women in the coffee supply chain in Kanungu district. The study mapped women and men's work and quantified the economic value of women's work at each stage of the coffee value chain.

To achieve this, a gender analysis framework developed by DFID (2001) was used. The framework considered the following research questions:

ABOUT THE PROJECT

Ugandan women and young people are finding it difficult to kick-start a career in one of Uganda's most profitable sectors: the coffee industry. With co-funding from the European Union and UK aid from the UK government, Farm Africa is addressing the economic, agricultural and cultural barriers stopping these groups from forging rewarding careers in the coffee sector.

1. What role do women play in the different stages of the coffee value chain?
 - Input supply: tools, drying beds, coffee trees
 - Fieldwork and harvesting: planting, cultivating, tending
 - Post-harvest handling: picking, drying, sorting
 - Processing and marketing: marketing and transporting
2. What is the economic value of women's work at each stage of the coffee value chain?
3. Across the different stages of the coffee value chain, how much power do women hold in decision making?
4. How much control or influence do women have over the income they generate from coffee?
5. What are the main barriers faced by women attempting to access the coffee value chain? In particular, the higher value parts of the chain.



INTRODUCTION

Around 80% of Ugandans live in rural areas and rely on agriculture to support themselves and their family. Making agriculture more profitable and inclusive is critical to empowering vulnerable groups and lifting people out of poverty.

The Ugandan economy is powered by coffee. Coffee is one of the nation's most profitable and important crops, accounting for 20–30% of Uganda's foreign exchange earnings each year.

Kanungu, in western Uganda, is a major coffee growing area. The high altitude and tropical climate provide the perfect conditions for coffee production. Despite coffee's profit-making potential, many of Kanungu's coffee farmers live in poverty.

Kanungu's farmers lack the tools, training and bargaining power to grow enough coffee and sell it for a fair price. Women suffer the most. Women lack access to the land, coffee trees and finance needed to earn a living from coffee farming, and are under-represented within coffee cooperatives.

In the area, women contribute the bulk of coffee-related labour and generate the majority of the coffee's value. Women provide 58% of labour during the fieldwork and harvest stage, and 72% of labour during the post-harvest handling stage, where the majority of the value and profit is added.

Despite the fact that women undertake the majority of all work, men have a near monopoly over coffee marketing and processing activities, affording them control of the income generated from coffee sales. Men's dominance over this short, relatively unprofitable but capital-intensive segment of the value chain puts them in a position where it is they who receive the coffee profits. Once the sale is complete, men exercise control over these funds, excluding women from feeding into farm and household-level financial decision making.

In Kanungu, decisions over commercial agriculture and household finances are typically seen as the preserve of men. Women's lack of agency stems, in part,

from poor access to and control over land.

In the area, land is seen as a man's asset, the eldest man in the family doesn't like to cede control over land or agricultural decisions to women or younger men.

Land ownership enables individuals to access institutions and opportunities. Cooperatives are farmers' primary bridge to markets and buyers. Coffee cooperatives normally require members to own land. Women's lack of land deeds, as well as other internal cooperative policies, cultures, structures and procedures, denies them entry to cooperatives and powerful positions within them. Excluding women from these arenas entrenches men's control over marketing activities.

In 2018, with co-funding from the European Union, Farm Africa started supporting 4,800 farmers in Kanungu to improve the local coffee industry. The project is delivering training in coffee production, strengthening the capacity of agribusinesses and cooperatives to support coffee farmers and cultivating young farming leaders.

In September 2019, with funding from UK Aid from the UK Government, Farm Africa launched a complementary project, which focuses on providing women in Kanungu with the support they need to increase their incomes and earn a fair share of the profits from coffee.

This document demonstrates that women serve as the backbone of the coffee industry yet have little access to the rewards generated by it.

A growing body of literature demonstrates that farming systems underperform when women do not have equal access to the resources and opportunities they need to be productive. Greater equality can unleash Kanungu's coffee potential.

Women who are able to decide how to spend their income see improvements in their social and economic status and the level of resources allocated to their children. Women's economic empowerment is beneficial for individual women but also their children, household and communities.

1. WHAT ROLE DO WOMEN PLAY IN THE DIFFERENT STAGES OF THE COFFEE VALUE CHAIN?

FIELDWORK AND HARVESTING

Division of labour

Women provide the majority of labour (58%) during this stage.

Main activities

Planning and seed sourcing; land preparation; nursery management; planting, weed and pest management; fertiliser application and pruning.

Gender norms

Women spend much of their time clearing land, planting, weeding, applying manure, mulching, harvesting, drying and sorting coffee berries.

Main groups involved in the production phase

Small-scale and medium-scale individual farmers, mainly organised into farmer groups.

Men perform tasks that require physical strength, access to capital or technical knowledge, whereas women perform more tedious and time-consuming tasks. They are more involved in land preparation, pesticide application, pruning and marketing.

PROCESSING AND MARKETING

Division of labour

Men carry out virtually all processing and marketing activities.

Main activities

Transportation, collection, milling and selling.

Gender norms

In male-headed households, women are not engaged in production planning or marketing because of the interests the men have in the income generated.

Main groups involved in the production phase

Individual male farmers, cooperatives, transporters, processors and middlemen.

POST-HARVEST HANDLING

Division of labour

Women provide the vast majority of all labour (72%) at this stage.

Main activities

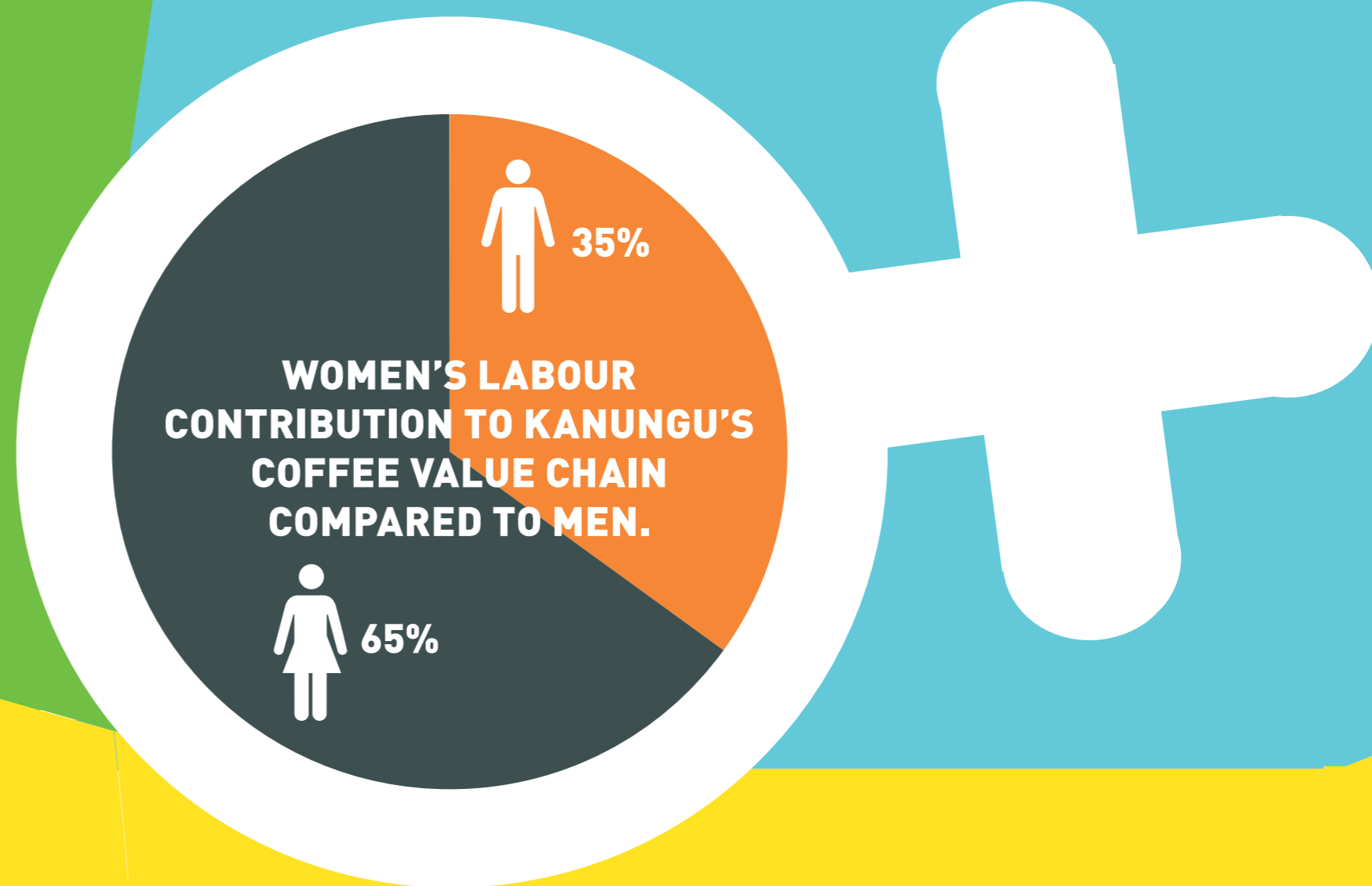
Harvesting, sorting, fermentation, washing, drying and bagging.

Gender norms

Women predominantly carry out the sorting, drying and bagging, regardless of whether it is done at a household or group level.

Main groups involved in the production phase

Women at farmer, cooperative and household levels.



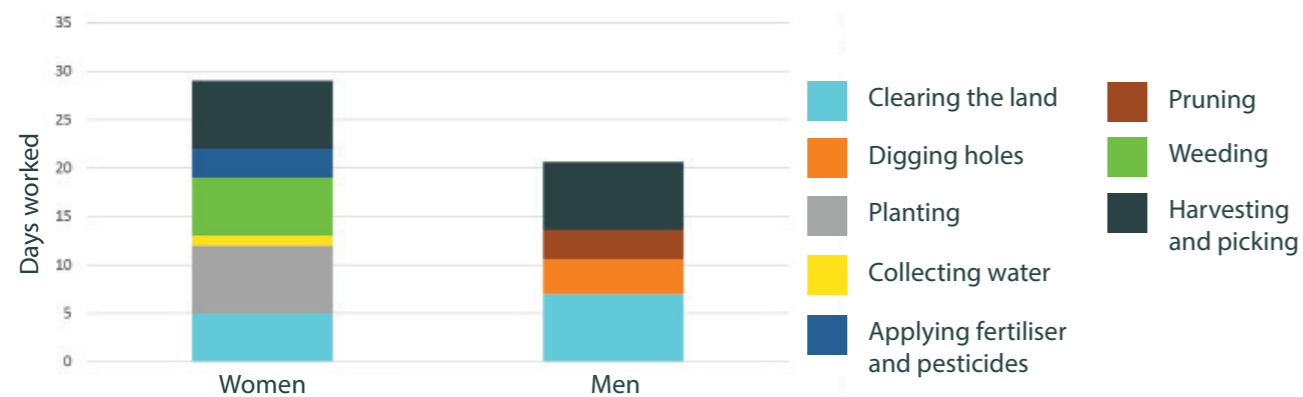
2. THE ECONOMIC VALUE THAT WOMEN BRING TO THE COFFEE VALUE CHAIN

FIELDWORK AND HARVESTING

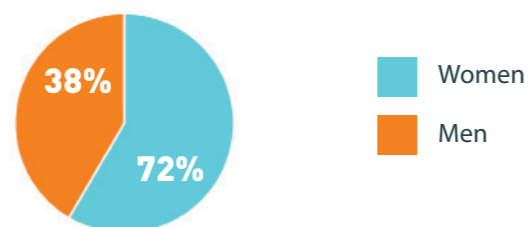
Fieldwork and harvesting activities are primarily carried out by women; women provide 58% of all labour during this stage. In general, tedious and time-consuming tasks are carried out by women: planting, weeding, mulching etc.

Men dominate less time-consuming tasks that require physical strength, technical expertise or access to capital: purchasing inputs, planning, seedling sourcing and land preparation.

DAYS SPENT ON FIELDWORK AND HARVESTING TASK BY GENDER (PER SEASON)



VALUE OF LABOUR CONTRIBUTED AT THE FIELDWORK AND HARVESTING STAGE (7,000 UGX DAY RATE)



POST-HARVEST HANDLING

Women provide almost all of the labour in the post-harvest handling stage. This study demonstrates that 72% of profit is added by women through the post-harvest handling

stage. The activity is, nominally, "overseen" by men but women catalyse the value addition through their own labour.



PROCESSING AND MARKETING

Women are typically excluded from processing and marketing activities. In male-headed households, 100% of the labour is almost always provided by men.

The hulling, transporting, collecting and selling requires capital, on average 107,000 UGX per acre of coffee harvested, but the entire process can be completed in one day.

CROSS-PHASE ANALYSIS

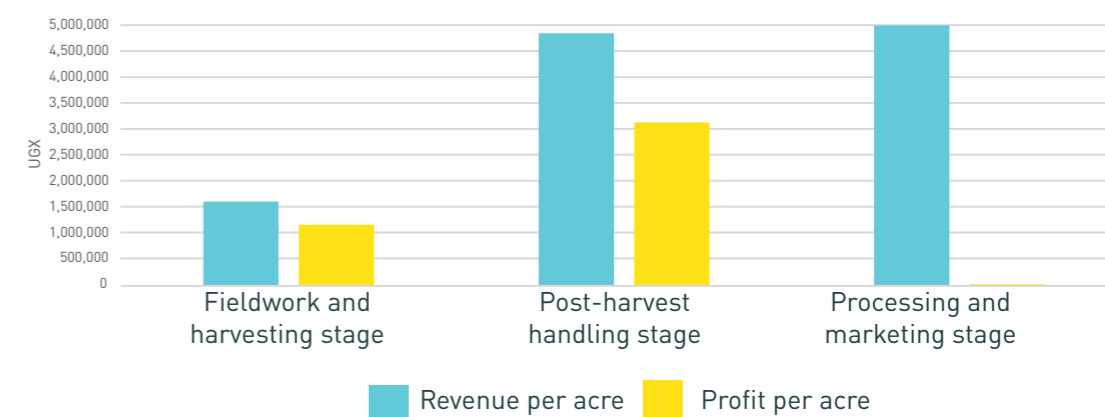
In both of the below graphs, profit was calculated by taking the prospective revenue and subtracting the total cost of production. Prospective revenue is the value of the coffee at specific stages of the production processing: fresh cherries at fieldwork and harvesting stage, dry cherries at post-harvest handling stage and processed beans at processing and marketing stage.

The vast majority of profits are accrued in the first two stages, where women conduct the bulk of activities. The male-dominated processing and marketing stage generates the highest amount of revenue per acre but the least amount of profit per acre. Although the sale price of processed beans at the processing and marketing stage is higher than that of dry cherries at the post-harvest handling at this stage, the costs incurred during this stage offset profits.

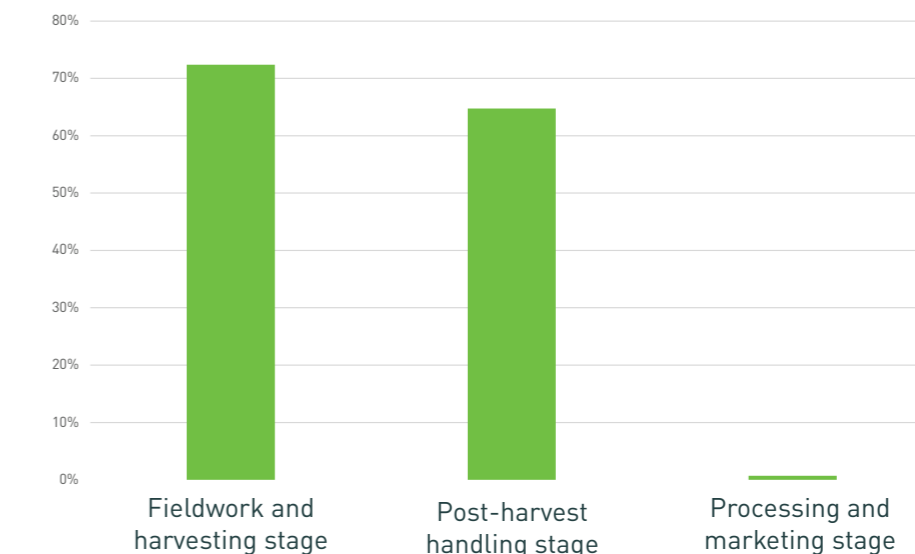
Farmers sell either fresh cherries, dry cherries or processed beans depending on their immediate financial needs, and access to finance and processing facilities.

Irrespective of what state the coffee is sold in, it's predominantly men who sell the produce. Once the sale is complete, men exercise control over these funds.

WHERE IS THE VALUE ADDED IN THE COFFEE PRODUCTION PROCESS?



PROFITABILITY OF EACH PHASE OF COFFEE PRODUCTION



3. DECISION MAKING IN THE COFFEE VALUE CHAIN

It was evident from the study that in the majority of cases, women are not involved in the planning and input supply segment of the chain. As reported, men dominate this segment because they want to plan and make decisions on what land and inputs to use, often having power over financial decision making, they control the coffee plantations and decide on the coffee production processes to be undertaken.

When households and coffee gardens are jointly managed by men and women, there are clear benefits for the households'

female members. In particular, women find sharing roles and responsibilities within the household and in the field — planning, seedling selection, land clearing, ploughing, planting, weeding and harvesting — empowering.

Furthermore, when households jointly plan and manage coffee gardens, findings suggested women are more likely to be involved in the household decision-making processes, and can make decisions on how to use coffee profits.

4. REWARDS REAPED BY WOMEN FROM THE COFFEE VALUE CHAIN

This study found that very few women contribute to coffee farming decisions. Even when women are engaged in commercial coffee production decisions, they aren't generally given access to the profits or a say in decisions on how to spend the proceeds.

However, when asked, women in male-headed households cited the following as gestures that they would consider to be rewards for their input into the coffee production process.

- Being given land user rights to grow their own coffee on a small piece of land
- Being afforded some decision-making powers over how to spend coffee proceeds
- Men using coffee proceeds to purchase household goods and support children's welfare
- Permission to occupy leadership positions, allowing women to have a voice in group decisions

5. MAIN BARRIERS FACED BY WOMEN IN THE COFFEE VALUE CHAIN

COFFEE IS SEEN AS A MAN'S CROP

Coffee is a cash crop. Subsequently, it is seen to be a 'man's crop'.

This perception has affected how women and men's roles in coffee production and management are determined and distributed. In contrast, food crops, such as bananas, beans and groundnuts are considered to be 'women's crops'. Women typically have full control over food crops.

In addition to their role in the coffee value chain, women typically assume a disproportionately large responsibility for a wide variety of important roles, including childcare and attending to food crops.

ACCESS TO LAND AND INPUTS

Amongst the constraints identified, land ownership was established as a major barrier to women's fair engagement in the coffee value chain. The study revealed that, in accordance with cultural norms, women typically do not own land in Kanungu. This affects their ability to access inputs on credit, control production processes and make decisions regarding the proceeds from coffee sales.

The study also revealed that despite different government interventions to make land accessible to women, the majority of women in male-headed households, and some in female-headed households, still have limited land rights. Limitations mainly stem from customary and inheritance factors that favour men, resulting in unbalanced power relations within households.

Other constraints include high costs of inputs, poor access to financial and

extension services and high transportation costs. Women's responsibility over household and childcare activities affects their ability to access land and inputs. These responsibilities hinder women's mobility, the transfer of land to women and their engagement in marketing activities.

ACCESS TO EXTENSION SERVICES AND TRAINING

The study found that women are more dominant at the fieldwork and harvesting, and the post-harvest handling segments of the chain, where they spend more of their time, compared to men, providing labour for coffee production activities.

It is important to note that both of these phases are made up of numerous activities that require lots of information and skill to be conducted effectively. Fieldwork, harvesting and post-harvest handling information can be delivered through extension work.

The study revealed that there aren't sufficient or appropriate extension services in place to address women's information and skills needs. Not only were extension service providers barely accessible but their services were not reaching women.

Lack of proper extension services, therefore, limits women's ability to increase the quality and size of coffee yields.



METHODOLOGY

In December 2018, this study gathered personal case studies of individuals taking part in Farm Africa’s project in Kanungu to explore gender and labour issues in the coffee sector. These included individual smallholders, farmers’ groups and coffee production cooperatives. Hence with the help of the selected study population, the coffee value chain was mapped.

Mapping involved identifying all the actors along the chain, as well as their positions, roles and responsibilities. In addition, the position of the different service providers and the services they offer, in support of the value chain, was determined.

After this data was collected, the activities performed at each segment by the different actors along the chain (including men, women and youth coffee farmers) were identified. This included when the activity was done, how it was done and finding out which group was more dominant within that activity.

Where inputs were needed for a particular activity, the types of inputs were identified and the persons responsible for accessing and controlling them in the household were also identified.

Information about who had the ability to make a decision or absolute decision-making powers over different activities was also generated. In this regard, the roles of women, men and youth, based on the activities they do, were identified. Each group’s ability to access resources, control processes and accrue benefits was determined.

EVALUATING THE MONETARY CONTRIBUTION OF WOMEN IN THE COFFEE VALUE CHAIN

The three main points of sale, or ‘selling points’, across the coffee

value chain were identified and investigated. The three main selling points are as follows:

1. Farmers selling wet coffee to, mainly young and male, middlemen.
2. Middlemen collecting dried coffee cherries from farmers, hulling it then paying off the farmers.
3. Farmers selling hulled coffee to middleman through the mill.

For data processing purposes, the group discussions were used to determine the amount of coffee harvested from one acre, and the cost of one kilogram of coffee at each of the selling points described. The findings of the discussions are as follows:

The amount of wet coffee harvested from one acre of land is around 18 x 100 kg bags. Forty plastic mugs weighing 0.5 kg each filled a basin of wet coffee which is sold for 18,000 UGX. The price of wet coffee per kg was therefore deemed to be 900 UGX.

For the dried coffee, the cost of a kilogram was determined by asking the farmers, middlemen and miller. The price of one kg of hulled coffee is deemed to be 5,000 UGX.

For the activities conducted within the different marketing channels, respondents were asked the cost that it took to carry out an activity to completion (for all the activities) if one was to hire labour, which was the case in most instances.

DATA COLLECTION METHODS

The methods that were used to generate the information needed for the study included: document review, individual household interviews, focus group discussions, key informant interviews, direct observation and participant observation.

DOCUMENT REVIEW

A desk review and analysis of various institutional documents and other documents relating to women’s and youth participation along different value chains was carried out.

HOUSEHOLD INTERVIEWS

To gain an understanding of relationships within household coffee enterprises, individual male, female and young coffee farmers were interviewed. The interviews shed light on the nature of coffee fieldwork and harvesting, post-harvest handling and processing and marketing activities, including whether the processes were done jointly or individually but supervised. These interviews helped determine the nature of women’s access to land, profit and business opportunities.

The interviews also helped determine the specific roles and responsibilities of the youth, women and men. Namely, the activities conducted, costs of the activities and inputs utilised. They also helped identify the challenges faced by women and youth in engaging in the coffee value chain at a household level.

An open-ended interview checklist and gender analysis tools were used to guide the interviews. The checklist was comprehensively used during the fieldwork and harvesting segment to elicit information on roles and responsibilities, decision-making abilities, access to and control over resources, including finance and extension services.

Information about access to and use of inputs such as chemicals, organic fertilisers, seedlings, land, labour and finances was also sought to determine the costs women and youth incur during the production segment at the household level.

Interviews were also carried out with the young women and men at the marketing segment of the chain to get their perceptions about their participation as middlemen/intermediaries in coffee marketing and to determine the challenges they face at this stage of the chain.

Through the interviews, costs incurred along the chain by both women and men in male and female-headed households were also obtained to determine the costs of production at the different segments.

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Focus group discussions were mainly carried out with farmer groups and the coffee growers’ cooperatives. Respondents participating in all segments of the chain were identified from the groups.

Particular emphasis was made to bring women — including widows, single women, married women and those in leadership positions — into the discussions.

Similar to the household interviews, the focus group discussions were used to explore:

- The activities along the value chain
- The activity specific roles and responsibilities of the young people, women and men

- The costs of labour for the activities if done by women or men
- Types of inputs and, if utilised, the challenges faced by women and youth in trying to engage in the value chain

Discussions also enabled the exploration of gender-related concerns arising from coffee marketing and household dynamics, as well as discussions regarding the use of the profits from the sale of coffee.

Other important issues covered included:

- The use of revenue from coffee sales
- Women’s interests
- The potential implications of women occupying leadership positions
- Social agency
- Power relations
- Women’s decision-making abilities within cooperatives
- Access to market information
- Women’s bargaining power
- How coffee production affects land use, household welfare and food security

A variety of participatory and gender analysis tools were used for eliciting perceptions. Limitations such as poor access to participants were anticipated and planned for. Mitigating actions, like planning meetings well in advance and at times when different social groups would be available, were taken.

The groups included:

- Women in households jointly headed by men and women
- Women in female-headed households
- Women in male-headed households
- Men’s groups and youth groups comprising of young men and women

The participation of these different groups was deliberately sought to ensure that their voices were appropriately captured.

A female facilitator who has experience in using gender analysis tools guided the discussions. To address the language limitations, a translator from within the cooperative was identified.

Open-ended questions were used to allow for detailed probing. The facilitator allowed participants to discuss until a consensus was reached before moving to the next question.

KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS

The majority of the key informants were identified from local government, community leadership, input dealers, processors and coffee dealers.

The selection process paid special attention to those working closely with the community and the coffee value chain actors, specifically those addressing women and youth concerns to ensure that all the necessary information was captured.

A semi-structured checklist, which included opened-ended questions, was used. The checklist generated information about the nature of the key informants’ engagement with the coffee value chain actors, their roles and responsibilities (including the nature of the services they provide) and their impression of the activities as well as the relationships between actors along the chain.

In addition, key informants’ perceptions on women’s decision-making abilities, power relations, value chain engagement and cultural barriers preventing women and youth from accessing effectively benefiting from the value chain at household and community levels were sought.





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