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“Solidarity in a competing world —
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Gender-Sensitive Stakeholder Characterisation and Analysis of the Pineapple Supply Chain in Uganda

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Abstract

Stakeholder identification and characterisation is an important pre-requisite for effective participatory stakeholder processes integral to transdisciplinary research. In food systems research, applying an actor-oriented, gendered lens for this process is necessary to provide insight into the complex interplay between gender and the socio-ecological context in which actors maneuver. In this study, gendered stakeholder analysis of the pineapple supply chain with regard to roles and activities influencing participation in the chain are compared between two districts in Uganda. Within the frame of a transdisciplinary research project that seeks to reduce losses and add value in small-scale East African food chains (RELOAD), this study aims to investigate how women and men actors experience the supply chain in similar and contrasting ways, regarding several factors including their function, activities, and challenges. Qualitative data was obtained during fieldwork in Ntungamo and Masaka Districts in Uganda between July – September 2015. Identification and characterisation of the actor landscape was carried out through semi-structured interviews (n=112) and a combination of mixed and single-gender group sessions (n=22) in which participatory tools were applied including value chain mapping, focus group discussions and fuzzy cognitive mapping. Pineapple supply chains in Ntungamo and Masaka differ in their structure with gender-divisions established more rigidly in Masaka, yet in both gender is found to be an important organising principle, influencing actors' functions, activities and challenges in the chain. Women are more likely to carry out retail, local trading and on-farm supporting roles, whereby it is more likely that owners of pineapple farms are men, and men are also more likely to be involved as traders, brokers, and transporters. Some actors are better able to negotiate constraints placed upon them by gender-related social norms, because of their endowment with different forms of capital (e.g. financial, physical, human) and by leveraging social capital. Gender is shown to influence actors' participation in pineapple supply chains to differing extents in Ntungamo and Masaka, confirming the importance of addressing gender during the process of initiating and establishing stakeholder processes for collaborative learning.

Keywords: Food systems, gender, small-scale agriculture, transdisciplinary