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Pathways for Addressing Gender-Based Constraints for Effective Participation in Profitable Crop Value Chains

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Abstract

Gender-specific constraints in crop value chains are important to be looked upon for an equitable participation of men, women and youth in agriculture. Women and youth make vital contributions to the agricultural sector and rural enterprises, despite many constraints (GBC) they face in accessing resources and opportunities, they have often been left-out as important players in the value chain discussion. This paper aims at analysing constraints that men, women and youth face which hinders their participation in crop value chains. Specifically, it aimed to analyse intra-household decision making, assets associated with gender based constraints, socio-economic factors influencing participation in profitable crop value chains and pathways of addressing gender based constraints. A sample size of 150 households was selected from 4 villages to make a total of 600 households from Kilosa and Chamwino districts Tanzania. Study results show lack of asset ownership such as land, fertiliser, wage labour significantly constraint participation in the food value chain ($p = 0.001$), results also shows that women use more time (6 and above hours) in performing agricultural activities such as planting, harvesting and post harvesting activities compared to men. The pathways for addressing GBC are divided into gender continuum of three categories of gender strategies namely gender exploitative, gender accommodating and gender transformative. In the gender continuum categories towards reducing gender based constraints, the study notes the pathway to be workload reduction for women through the reducing multiple-responsibilities in the household, introducing user friendly technologies which benefits both men and women, policy assessment (for example a review of the current national gender and the agriculture policies) and empowering women through introduction of income generating activities upgrading strategies which involve the crops they produce. In conclusion, pathways for addressing gender based constraints should be based on three major aspects; the division of labour, household decision-making and access to and control of productive resources to enable a better positioning of women in the crop value chains.

Keywords: Crop value chain, gender, gender-based constraints, participation, pathways