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## Introduction

Women and children are the focus of most nutrition programmes though mobilization of both, men and women, is essential for a sustainable impact of those. This is because men are most often the main decision maker in the household. Therefore it is necessary to find out how men perceive nutrition programs and how their participation can be improved.



Fig. 1,2: Men participating in workshops (EaTSANE)

## Methods

- Women from 50 Households in Kapchorwa, Uganda took part in a trials of improved practices (TIPs) on dietary diversity and food preservation
- The trials included several steps (see Fig. 3)
- Husbands were invited to participate in a solar dryer construction workshop and in the final evaluation workshop
- No incentives were paid, but travel allowance was provided for joining the final evaluation workshop
- Analysis of the data was performed through structured content analysis

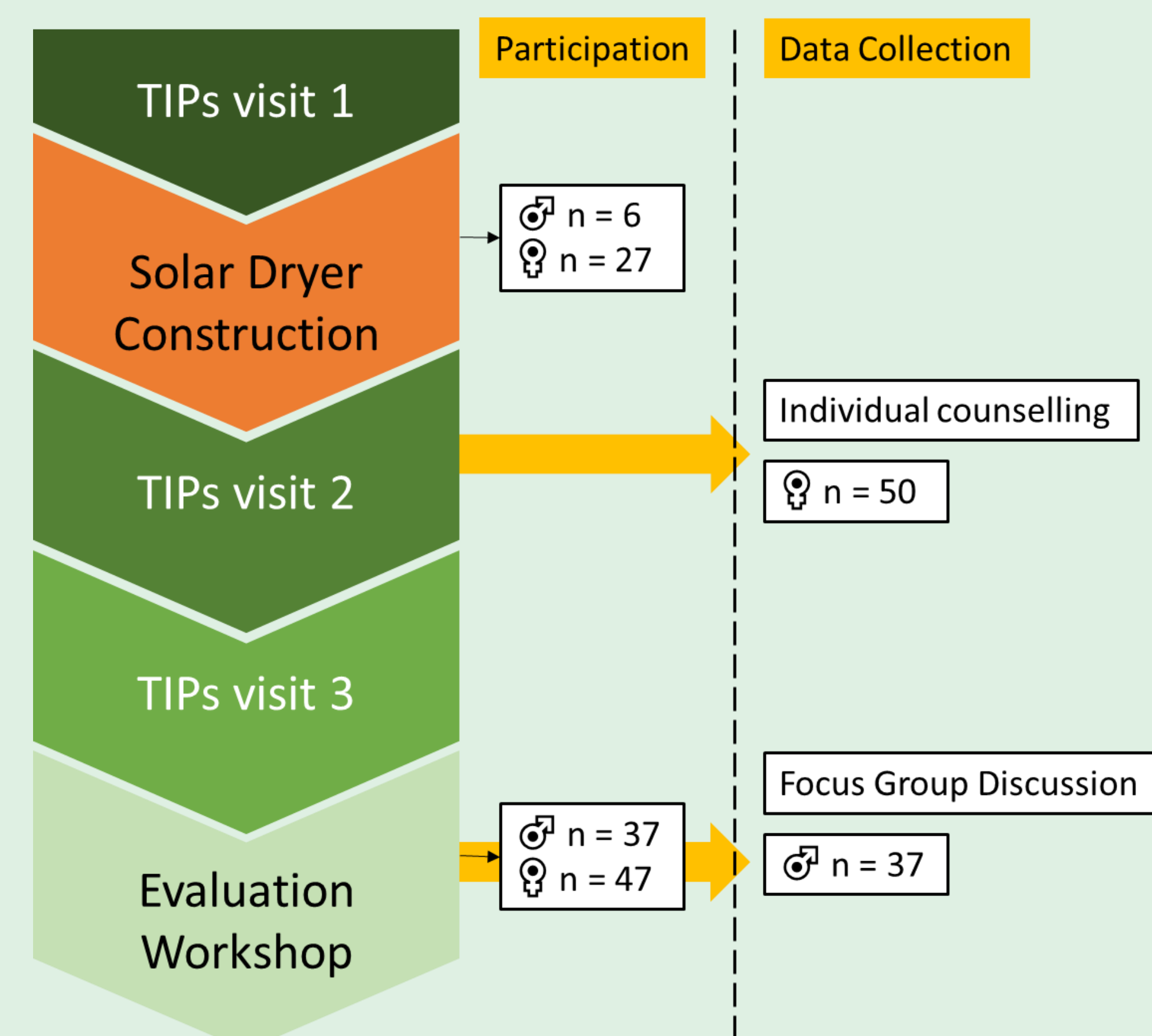


Fig. 3: Timeline of activities for TIPs in Kapchorwa with number of participants in the workshops

## Results

37 men participated in the evaluation workshop whereas only 6 out 47 households were represented by a husband at the construction workshop. Reasons for **nonparticipation** and **participation** of men were given by men and women separately.

| Reasons for nonparticipation of husbands given by |     |       |
|---|-----|-------|
| Reasons   | Men | Women |
| Busy with something else                          | ✓   | ✓     |
| No personal interest                              |     | ✓     |
| Personal issues                                   |     | ✓     |
| No financial allowance                            |     | ✓     |
| Weather (Rain)                                    | ✓   | ✓     |
| Wife forgot to inform him                         |     | ✓     |
| Late invitation                                   |     | ✓     |
| Confusing invitation                              | ✓   | ✓     |
| Thought only wife should go                       | ✓   | ✓     |
| Vegetables are for women                          |     | ✓     |

“the husband said he doesn’t have time for that, it is for women only” (wife) (Q1)

“It is always women coming so we thought only women were invited” (husband) (Q2)

| Reasons for participation of husbands given by |     |       |
|--|-----|-------|
| Reasons  | Men | Women |
| Personal interest                              | ✓   | ✓     |
| Inclusive invitation                           | ✓   |       |

“I wanted to know whether the dryer works. We were told to come and construct the dryer, we received the letter and I wanted to know” (husband) (Q3)

Women articulated more reasons for their husband’s nonparticipation during their TIPs interviews than men did during the FGDs at the evaluation workshops. Moreover, only women described their husband’s **disapproval of the project activities** to the project team.

“he said that the project wasted a lot of time and did not give anything at the end” (wife) (Q5)

Internal factors like personal interests are mentioned as well as external factors like social gender norms.

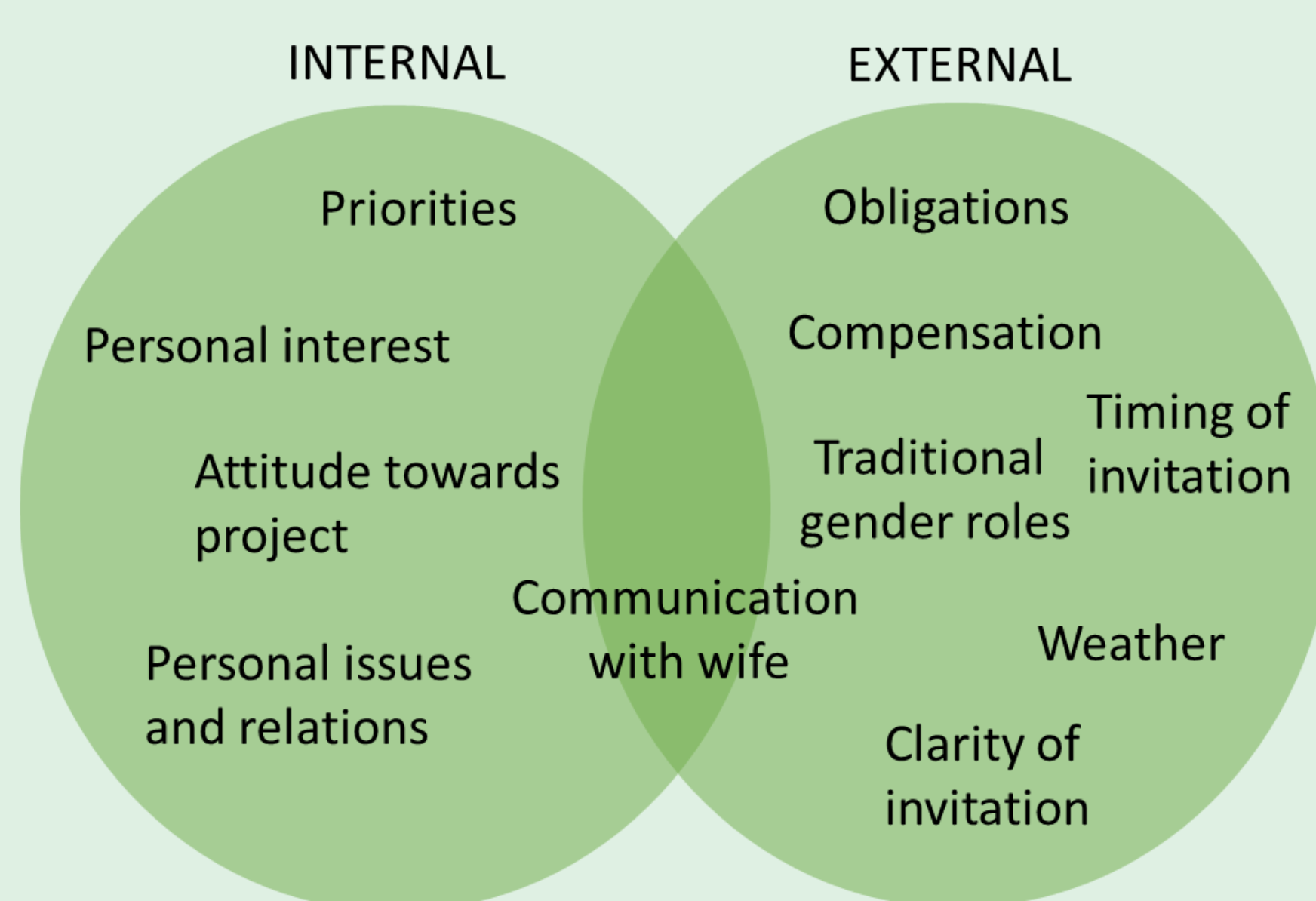


Fig. 4: Internal and external influencers hindering or facilitating male participation in a solar dryer construction workshop in Kapchorwa

Personal priorities can turn an external factor into a barrier e.g. other obligations like work are chosen over workshop participation.

“I cannot waste my time [on] things which are for free” (wife quoted her husband) (Q4)

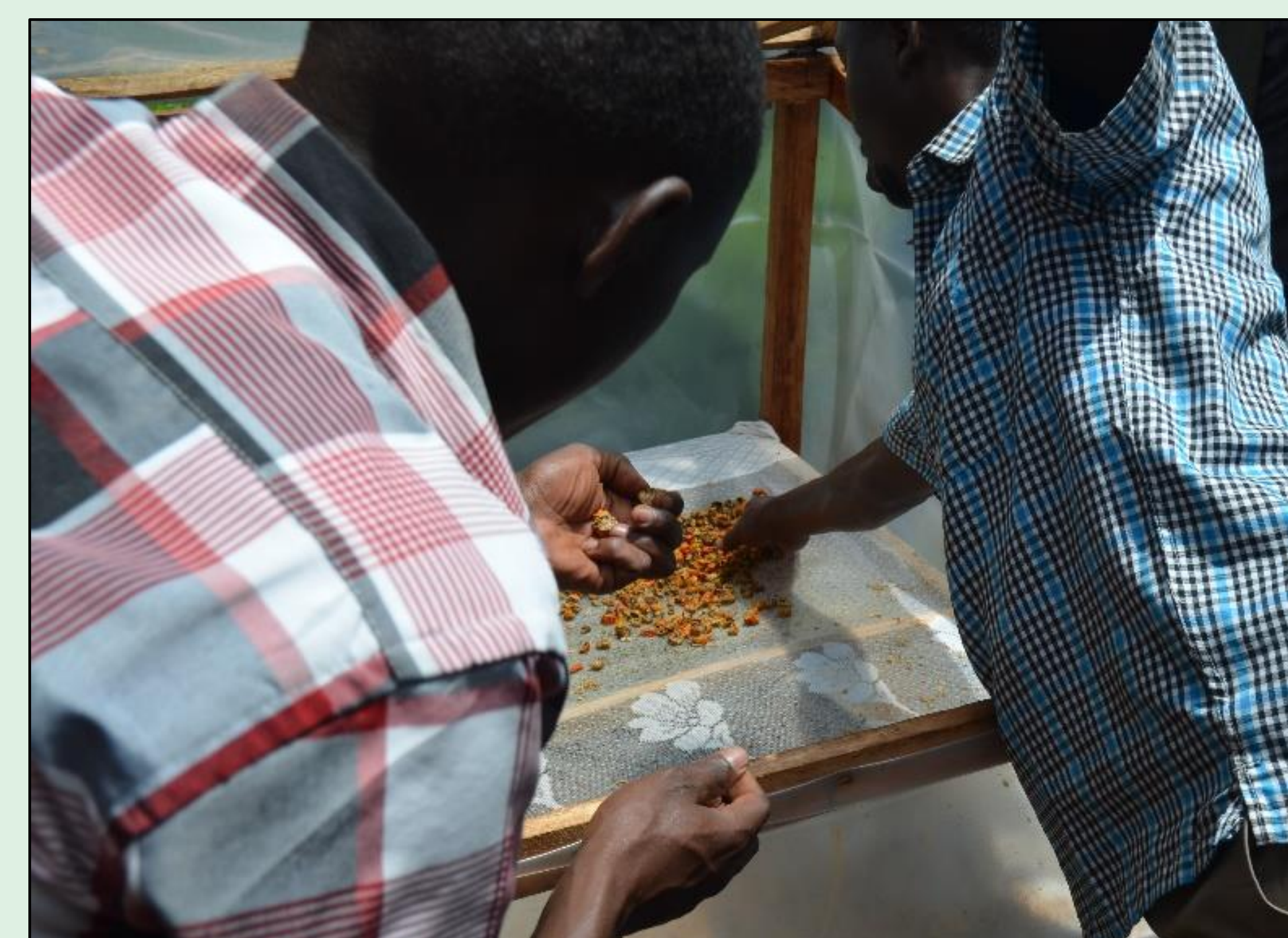


Fig. 5: Men seeing the solar dryer for the first time during the workshops (EaTSANE)

Even though men did not feel the need to follow the invitation for the construction workshop, on seeing the solar dryer, they became interested in learning how to construct it.

“we should make that thing [solar dryer] for drying” (husband) (Q6)

## Conclusion

- **Social norms** need to be addressed when educating men and women on healthy diets including vegetables (Q1,Q2)
- **Alternative motivators** need to be identified to improve participation of both, men and women, to enhance the impact of nutrition-agriculture projects (Q4,Q5)
- Men need to be able to talk about their experiences and attitudes towards the activities in a non-judgemental environment