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Gender Dynamics and Food Security in the Kenyan African Indigenous Vegetables Supply Chain

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Abstract

In Sub Saharan Africa, producing and selling food crops, such as African Indigenous Vegetables, has traditionally been under the control of women. However, in the last decade food crop production has become more commercialised. The process of commercialisation generally results in an increasing engagement of male farmers. At the same time, the bargaining power of women within households may change with commercialisation. This paper aims at analysing the distribution of work among gender in the African Indigenous Vegetables value chain and the intra-household decision-making and bargaining dynamics of small-scale farming, rural households. The analyses are based on 570 small-scale producers of African Indigenous Vegetables in rural and peri-urban Kenya. We investigate factors that are influencing the female intra-household bargaining power and evaluate its impact on household welfare and food security, including numerous indicators. Our results show that most of the work in the African Indigenous Vegetables value chain is still done by women, irrespective of the degree of commercialisation. The multidimensional logit regression reveals that female bargaining power is negatively influenced by an increasing farm size, a higher asset score of the household and female off-farm work. A positive impact was observed by tertiary female education, female landownership, male off-farm work, a high share of female income in the overall household income and the location of a household in Nakuru. With Propensity Score Matching, we find that increased female intra-household bargaining power has no significant influence on household expenditure, but some inconsistent influence on the food security of a household.

Keywords: Decision-making, food security, gender inequality, intra-household dynamics, welfare