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## A Gendered Analysis of Small-Scale Cocoa Production in Uganda

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### Abstract

Agriculture is an important accelerator for economic growth, food security, and poverty alleviation in many developing countries. In the specific case of the cocoa sector, which underwent a rapid transformation in recent years due to the steadily increasing demand for cocoa beans, the majority of smallholder cocoa farmers live below the international poverty line. The sector does not exploit its full potential because, amongst others, female farmers, who make up a large proportion of farm managers, provide a notable amount of agricultural labour and contribute to the rural economy, face multifaceted constraints that reduce their productivity. Therefore, female farmers can be identified as the group that is largely missing out on the positive development and empowerment due to cultural, social and, institutional gender-based disparities. This research uses primary cross-sectional survey data of smallholder cocoa farmers in Uganda to investigate a potential gender gap based on a holistic statistical approach. It first draws on empirical evidence to what degree women participate in agriculture. Subsequently, the data analysis reveals that the sample's female farmers are disadvantaged in various key aspects of farming, such as access to land, credit, training, and other productive resources. In addition, there are differences in the role distribution and decision-making between male and female managed farms, where women are generally excluded from input decisions and female farm managers are dependent on a female workforce. Furthermore, regression models confirm a gender gap in cocoa revenue generation for the sample group. A formal bank account, a greater workforce and a larger cocoa area can be identified as the key determinants that significantly influence revenue. These properties represent areas where the female farmers of the sample are at a comparative detriment to their male counterparts.

**Keywords:** Cocoa production, female empowerment, gender, revenue generation, smallholder agriculture, Uganda