

A Study on Gender Dimensions of the Maize Value Chain and Food Security in Dawuro zone, Southern Ethiopia

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(エチオピア南部ダウロ県におけるトウモロコシ・バリューチェーンとフードセキュリティのジェンダー的諸側面に関する研究)

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Thesis Summary

Rural women play a significant role in agricultural value chain and food security in Ethiopia. However, their roles are limited by economic, social and cultural factors. As a result, there is a gender gap, particularly, in major grown crop production and marketing chains and food security in Ethiopia. The gaps are more visible in the southern parts of the country. Therefore, this study analyzes the gender dimensions of the maize value chain and food security in the Dawuro zone, southern Ethiopia. The study specifically focuses on maize productivity, improved maize varieties adoption, market participation, marketing efficiency, marketing channels choice, and food security of the smallholder households in the Dawuro zone.

This study used primary data collected in 2018 from 560 maize farm households in Dawuro zone southern Ethiopia. In addition, study used qualitative data collected through key informant interview and focus group discussion from the Dawuro zone in 2019.

This study examines the impact of gender differences on maize productivity using exogenous switching regression to compare maize productivity gap between male and female headed households. The results show that the existence of gender differences in maize productivity between male-headed households and female-headed households. The maize productivity of male-headed households was overall 44.3 percent higher than that of female-headed households. However, if female-headed households received the same return on their resources as male-headed households, their productivity would increase by 42.3 percent. This suggests agricultural policy should target female-headed households to help reduce the productivity gap between male-headed households and female-headed households in the Dawuro zone.

This study explores the role of gender-based decision-making in the adoption of improved maize varieties, using a double-hurdle model. The results show that the intensity of improved maize varieties adopted on plots managed by male, female, and joint decision-making households are significantly different. The intensity of adoption of improved maize varieties is lower for female-headed households where decisions are made jointly by men and women, compared to the male-headed households where decisions are made jointly. As the economic status is a key driver of adoption of improved maize varieties, it is recommended that the policies and programs that aim at developing and disseminating quality maize seeds in Dawuro zone should emphatically support economically less endowed but more gender egalitarian joint decision-making households, especially female-headed ones.

The study analyzes market participation gaps among male, female, and joint decision-making households, and the factors influencing that gap, using ordered probit,

decomposition models. The ordered probit analysis reveal that female and joint decision-making households were negatively associated with the probability of being a net seller, while being positively associated with being autarchic and net buyers. The decomposition results indicate clear market participation gaps in the net seller and net buyer positions between male and female decision-makers. The gaps in the net seller and autarchic positions indicate that males are better positioned than females and that females are better positioned than joint decision-makers. Both endowment and return effects account for the quantity gaps. Thus, there is a need for policies to secure more equal access to productive resources for female and joint decision-making households and build their capacity to increase their resource returns.

The study examines the effect of gender on marketing efficiency and factors affecting the choice of marketing channels among maize producer households. The results indicate that the patterns of marketing channel choice and associated cost-benefit trajectories among male, female, and joint decision-making households are heterogeneous. Results suggest that the gender of female decision-makers is more likely associated with selling maize to consumers in the local market than selling it to collectors at the farm gate. Meanwhile, the gender of joint decision-makers are more likely associated with selling maize to consumers in the local market than selling it to wholesalers. These results suggest that women are in charge of maize sales in the local market in which maize price is lower than its main market price. Thus, there is a need for policies that help them to access a better output market for their maize sales.

The study also analyzes the gender gaps in food (in)security. The results show significant gender gaps between male and female decision-making households in terms of food-secure, transitory food-insecure, and chronically food-insecure categories. Overall, both the endowment and return effects account for the gaps; however, the magnitude of the effect from the return is higher than from the endowment on significant gaps in the food-secure, transitory, and chronically food-insecure categories. Hence, there is a need for policies that not only ensure more equal levels of productive resources but also help households to build their capacity in order to improve both transitory and chronically food insecure situations.