



---

## Gendered Analysis of the Governance in the Rice and Sisal Value Chains in the Lake Zone, Tanzania

**Jeckoniah, J. N.**

Senior Lecturer, Department of Development Studies  
Sokoine University of Agriculture  
P.O. Box 3024, Morogoro  
Email: [jjeckoniah@sua.ac.tz](mailto:jjeckoniah@sua.ac.tz)

**Abstract:** Integrating gender issues and concerns in the development projects has potential impact on project success. This paper analyzes the gendered differentials and impacts on smallholder farmers engaged in rice and sisal value chains in the lake zone, Tanzania. The study adopted a qualitative approach whereby documentary review, Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and Focused Group Discussions (FGDs) were the main methods for data collection. Data were analyzed using ethnographic content analysis with constant comparisons techniques. It was found that the patriarchal system has strong impact and influence on the livelihood choices, ownership and use of household and community resource's including land, and assets for production and processing of crops is skewed towards men. Men's attitudes towards women participation in benefit sharing of the livelihood outcomes hamper women empowerment efforts. It is concluded that women get less benefits in the value chains engagements due to poor access to and control of productive resources and benefits, women economic empowerment has increased with increased workloads, the transformation of the empowerment outcome obtained in group levels is compromised by the rigid structure of the household institutions, changes in power relations at household levels have potential to improve household wellbeing but may also increases intra - household conflicts. It is recommended to the local government authorities and development practitioners and NGOs to: device gender sensitive strategic efforts to transform gender relations at household and community levels and support women with more entrepreneurship education.

**Keywords:** *Gender analysis, Governance, Value chain, Kilabha, Women empowerment*

### 1.0 Introduction

The importance of integrating gender in the development projects cannot be over emphasized. Gender mainstreaming in the development policies, projects and programmes have been given an amplified attention in recent years. However, the practitioners of many development projects espoused to empower men and women involved in agricultural based livelihood lack knowledge of the potential benefits of integrating gender in value chain activities (Mutua *et al.*, 2014). It is argued that a gender sensitive value chain is important in showing the visibility of men and women roles in various nodes of the value chains as well as showing a gender specific barrier to entry and opportunities for growth. Some of the frequently cited barriers for entry in the value chain or value chain nodes include: low access to markets owing to cultural seclusion of women (Farnworth, 2011; Waithanji *et al.*, 2013); Lack of or low level of income and control by women with increased commercialization (Njuki *et al.*, 2011) and women's lower access to technology (FAO, 2011). Due to lack of knowledge on the potential of integrating gender in value chain projects and activities, many development projects usually integrate gender in the ongoing value



chain activities as an add on objective or activity. Hence, gender analyses is also done in an ad-hock basis and lack the intended comprehensive analysis that would show its potential benefit to the livelihood of men and women involved in the project.

This paper explores the status and role of women in the value chain in terms of participation and leadership in the marketing associations of the two value chains, identify and analyze emerging gender issues that may impact the livelihood of smallholder farmers engaged in the rice and sisal value chains and identify and examine the barriers to women`s ownership and control of benefits arising from rice and sisal value chains. The paper also explored how small holder`s farmer`s men and women access value chain services such as credit, input, information and technology in order to produce market focused product in the sisal and rice value chain. The paper analyses the contribution and impact of the project that was undertaken to improve governance, food security, and gender equity and income security for small holder farmers engaged in the rice and sisal value chains in the lake zone. The paper provides empirical evidence on gender issues, needs and concerns across the sisal and rice value chain and the role of institutions that govern power relations, such as household, market and the local government authorities in the context of the study area.

## **2.0 Methodology**

The study was conducted in three Regions in the lake zone namely, Shinyanga (Shinyanga, Kishapu and Kahama Districts), Simiyu (Maswa and Meatu Districts) and Geita (Mbogwe District). The districts in the regions covered were selected purposively following an intervention in the area by a development organization (Oxfam in Tanzania). A total of eight villages were selected to participate in the study, the villages selected had a big number of value chain participants as well as many producer and marketing groups formed as part of the rice and sisal value chain interventions.

The study adopted a qualitative approach whereby documentary review, Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and Focused Group Discussions (FGDs) were the main methods for data collection. The following documents were reviewed to establish a better understanding of the value chain interventions undertaken in the study area: Baseline Survey Reports, project progress and midterm reports, value chain training curriculum, farmers groups training manuals, rice and sisal multi-stakeholders workshop/platforms reports.

The study adopted a descriptive cross-sectional study design in which data were collected only once from a variety of value chain actors and stakeholders involved in the sisal and rice value chains. Data were collected from men and women operating in different nodes of sisal and rice value chains. In each village two focused group discussion were conducted one for men and another for women, hence a total of 16 FGDs. Participants to FGDs were randomly selected among the value chain participants and as well as from the producer and marketing groups. The number of FGD participants ranged from 8 to 16. The FGDs were used to generate information on value chain participants own assessment on the status and role of women participation in the value chain activities as well as benefits they obtain by participating into the value chain activities, the challenges and benefits encountered due to their participation in the value chain activities and, change in power relations between men and women as they participate in the value chain activities.



The participants to Key Informant's Interview (KIIs) were purposively selected to include those who had specific knowledge and functions in the rice and sisal value chains such as owners of productive assets such as land, processing machines, community leaders, famous elders and leaders of producer and marketing organizations and officials from local government authority. A total of 31 key informants (20 males and 11 females) were interviewed in this survey and included: Ward extension officers and Ward and or Village Executive Officers (WEO/VEO), District Agricultural Irrigation and Cooperative (DAICO), District Community Development Officer (DCDO), District land officer and district trade officer. Others were: Leaders of farmer groups, cooperatives and their networks/ organizations, leaders of development organization working in the area, leaders of rice and sisal farmer groups and leaders of microfinance institutions in the area (SILC and VICOBA). The information from key informants enabled the study to gather information on the status of gender issues in the area, emerging gender issues and obstacles that exist in the communities regarding women economic empowerment and to explore the behaviour and trend in providing productive assets to women and men in the study area.

Data analysis employed the ethnographic content analysis with the constant comparison technique. This is the most commonly used technique for analyzing qualitative data (Reeves *et al.*, 2013). Data analysis using this technique involve breaking down and organizing the bulk of qualitative data into emerging themes consistent with the study objectives, thereafter comparison of the emerging themes from the discussion was done to enable the researcher to draw conclusion from the documents reviewed, individual and group responses from the key informants interviews and focus group discussions. The information from the KIIs and FGDS were transcribed verbatim and were letter organized into different themes consistent with the objectives for the study and compared.

### **3.0 Findings and Discussion**

The status and role of women in sisal and rice value chain.

#### **3.1 Production Level**

In the study area (Sukuma land), women hardly own the land (especially married ones) and therefore they do not own the sisal farms. Women lack of land ownership is contributed by many factors. Despite the fact that the laws and acts (e.g. Village Land Act, 1999) allow for equal rights to own land by both men and women, traditional land ownership that is also recognized by the government do recognize the traditional land ownership rights in which women are generally marginalized. These practices do continue due to cultural values through inheritance where son are preferred to daughters who are also denied some inheritance rights including land ownership. Similar trend of findings has also been reported in literature (Mutua *et al.*, 2014). Nevertheless, women who live as singles or those who are able to buy land they may acquire and legally own land. Therefore, constraints to land ownership affect mostly those in marital unions and those who do not have enough resources to buy a piece of land for their own use. Land is generally owned by men who also act as the head of household although women have access to use the land.



In the FGDs women acknowledged the difficulties they face in owning land. During woman FDG in Negezi village they revealed that:

*“...it is very hard for women in marriage to own land and or to be allowed to plant cash crop in the family farm....”* (Women FGD, Negezi village).

Despite men’s dominance in land ownership for crop production, this study also revealed that there are few women (especially those living as singles, separated and widows) who have managed to purchase land and they are managing all the production and marketing decisions of their crops. Being single or married per se do not determine whether one will have resources required to engage in crop production, rather both men and women endowed with resources can make big contribution to crop production.

Furthermore, married women suffer from interference in making investment decision by their male partners whereas for those living as singles when they acquire their resources they make the final decision both on the use of the resources as well as on the benefits that accrue from their efforts. During key informant interview with one of the women rice producer and processor she revealed that, although being in marital union may hinder operationalisation of some of the important investment decision or use of the resources, being single does not make one acquire resources’ or an ability to make good investment decisions. It requires, one to be self-motivated, determined, have good plans, work very hard towards achieving the set goals. She emphasized:

*“...the challenges we encounter in production and marketing are not different from those affecting men...if you are married you may fail to enforce some of the best option for investment unless your husband support you... labourers in production obey the commands of men and women in a similar manner as long as they are paid...”* (Woman producer/processor - Kahama District)

Traditionally women especially those in marriage are allowed to have a separate piece of land called `Kilabha` that they can plant crops of their choice. In this piece of land other family members do not interfere with the decision that women make on the crops that are harvested from that piece of land. However, it is usually the head of the household who allocate such piece of land and such piece of land has also traditionally been used to plant crops that are meant for household consumptions such as legumes, vegetables and sweet potatoes. This can also be seen as a way to exploit women labour as the crops are meant for household consumption while only women are responsible for all the works in this plot. Furthermore, women work on that piece of land at their spare time after they have worked on the household farm. This study revealed that there are dramatic changes in the way such piece of land is used by women. Women have started using the same culturally and traditionally acceptance of production in `Kilabha` to produce cash crops or other food crops that have good market value and market demand (see box 1).



---

**Box1: `Kilabha` a strategic shift in land use at household level**

*In Sukuma traditions, women do not own land. However, they can be allocated a separate piece of land (Kilabha) where they can plant the crops of their choice. The crops planted in such piece of land are neither counted in the household total harvest nor can the same be used without the consent of women. Kilabha was also used to prepare the young married couples who usually continue to live in the compound of the head of household for one or two production seasons. As well as preparing and teaching young girls and boys on practicing agriculture. However, most of the crops planted in women's Kilabha were those that are used for household consumption including legumes and vegetables. Also women were expected to work on Kilabha on their spare time after all the household have worked on the family plot. Most of the women who have been empowered through their participation in production and marketing groups have started re-inventing the wheel. They are using the highly valued cultural practices of Kilabha to plant crops meant for market including rice. Such changes have brought a lot of debates especially amongst men.*

While traditional land ownership in rice producing area has been frequently cited as one of the factors that hinder women participation in production of the rice; the discussion with the land officer in all the surveyed districts revealed that it is women's lack of knowledge on their rights to own land that hinder them from demanding for their rights to own land. However, following the efforts by government and non-governmental organization to advocate for equal ownership of land there has been changes in favor of women ownership of land. The discussion with the community development officers revealed that, people are willing to change if appropriate educational campaign and advocacy are used, on the rigidity to traditional values she commented:

*"...Sukuma people who are majority in this district abide to their traditions as it is for most other tribes....one good thing with Sukuma people is that they easily take good advises from government and development partners and are willing to accept change...." (DCDO- Meatu District)*

In the same vein, a land officer from Kahama District revealed how some NGOs have been successful in introducing changes in favour of women and daughter's ownership of land:

*"...in the beginning it was very difficult to ask the Sukuma man to agree on joint ownership of the family plot with their wife or allocate a piece of land for a daughter.... after SHIDEPHA+ and RUDI work in our area things have now changed even daughters are now allocated a piece of family land... (Kahama Land officer and Ag. DCDO)*

The records found in the district councils with regard to acquired Certificate of Customary Right of Occupancy (CCRO) reveal a positive trend and gender dimensions where some certificates are co-owned by husband and wife as well as those owned by women only. However, it was also found that most of the applications for the CCROs are coming from urban areas. The CCROs that are applied by women are also mostly from those living as singles and relatively well-off families.



**Table 1: Land ownership rights through CCROs**

District	Men Only	Women Only	Joint	Total
Meatu	0	0	0	0
Kishapu	0	21	26	47
Maswa	44	14	42	100
Msalala	0	0	0	0
Mbogwe	0	0	0	0
Shinyanga Rural	233	53	1	287

### 3.2 Processing in the Sisal Value Chain

Both men and women are involved in the processing of the sisal into different products. Many activities in the processing of the sisal have a gender dimension whereby some activities are undertaken by men and women respectively. Generally, women are less involved in processing activities compared to men. Women are mostly involved in collecting the sisal leaves, washing and in drying the sisal fibers. The nature and design of the processing machines require more energy (masculinity) especially in its operation hence many women do not manage to operate it although some can participate in feeding the leaves into the machine. Apart from women low participation in the processing activities very few women also own the processing machine (e.g. Raspadora) as it requires big startup capital to purchase in which women always lack. Women dominate in some activities such as cleaning and drying of fibres and collecting the wastes. During the key informant discussion with a woman who owns the processing machine it was found that the design of the machine especially on its operation design is not gender sensitive, women find it difficult to operate it without the assistance of the men. Woman owners of the machine insisted:

*“...I own the processing machine but I need a man to start the machine, I also don’t have working knowledge for routine maintenance... women lack of experiences in the mechanical works hinder full utilization of these machine...”* (Woman processor - Unyanyembe village).

Such finding reveal two issues, one is masculinity nature of the design of the machine which can easily be attended by improving the automation of the machine. It also reveals that most women lack basic skills and experience that is required to run minor checkups and troubleshooting that does not require a technical staff.

Women participation in the processing node is an alternative source of employment opportunity. Women play a greater role in collecting leaves, whereas men dominate in the feeding the leaves in the machine, washing and drying the sisal fibers is dominated by women. However, more income goes to the machine owners who benefit by buying the leaves from the producers and through producing sisal fibers that is sold at relatively higher prices. Participation in the processing of the sisal fibers has a gender dimension. While men who usually feed the sisal leaves into the machine are paid on the basis of the kilograms produced (the rate is Tsh. 60/= per Kg, with an average of 300 kgs a day a man working in the sisal processing machine can earn up to Tshs. 18,000/= per day). Conversely, women usually work at the processing machine as laborer who are paid on daily basis at the rate ranging between 1,500/= and 2,000/=. However, women still go for such activities as they are conducted as a part-time/additional activity after their primary activity of selling the leaves to the owner of the machine.



### **3.3 Processing in Rice Value Chain**

Women are less involved in processing activities compared to men. They are mostly involved in sorting and winnowing, they are also involved in grading especially in areas where there are no machines that do grading. Women assist with some activities of processing activities as most of the processing activities are done by machines which are also owned by men. At group level, women participate fully although they are very few. Generally, women are actively participating in the processing activities that have relatively low values.

### **3.4 Marketing in the Sisal Value Chain**

Various products from the sisal value chain exchange many hands before they reach their final destinations. The sisal leaves are sold to processors who are usually the owner of the machine. In this activity women dominate the sale of the leaves, however in this evaluation it was found that men have started selling sisal leaves especially after the scale of production has increased and the prices have improved.

Selling of the processed sisal fibers has two main channels, one channel ends to local producers within the region especially to women groups who use the sisal fibers to manufacture other products including: table mats, door mats and other decorations. Women are the most dominant in this activity both as individuals and as a group. The income received is small although do help a lot in meeting household expenditures. Men's and some women are also involved in making some products from the fibers such as ropes that has big demand in local markets. During the discussion with the group of women processor of the table mats and decorations they emphasized that:

*"... because of lack of technology we produce few pieces of these beautiful decorations (door mats and table mats...we do it on our spare time and therefore make good use of our leisure time...we also get some income to meet our daily expenditure and males usually do not interfere with the saving we make from these activities..."* (Women handcraft processors - Negezi Village).

The other market channel is traders who bulk, sometimes refine the fiber and transport to distant markets in Kenya and in Tanga Region where the refined and semi refined fiber products are usually sold. This marketing channel is dominated by men who usually have the capital to purchase sisal leaves, process and bulk it before marketing.

### **3.5 Marketing in the Rice Value Chain**

Marketing of rice is a male dominated activity, although remarkable changes have happened especially after establishment of marketing groups where farmer's sale their rice collectively. It is a long standing practice across the entire surveyed Districts that men used to sell the rice harvest without consulting their wives. Some men still believe it is their right to do it. During focus group discussion in Ngaya village most men were of the opinion that marketing of the agricultural produces falls under their mandate; as emphasized by one middle aged man who was quoted saying:

*"...I am the head of the household, therefore, I need to consult no body when I want to make decision including sale of crops in my household...otherwise it sound that there is more than one*



---

*boss in my household which I cannot allow it to happen...*” (Men - FGD participant Ngaya Village).

Conversely women from the same village when informed of such male attitude, they were contented with such view: a young married woman reacted by saying that:

*“...that era of men dominance is fading out very fast in our area... it will soon be a thing of the past... we no longer want to be overlooked in making important decision in our household on issues that matters most... we produce together and therefore we must be involved in the sale of our crops...”* (A young married woman from Women - FGD, Ngaya Village).

Such contradictory view across men and women reveal that, women have been empowered to realize their rights and are now able to demand them. On the other hand, it also reveals that, such changes whereby women are more likely to demand for their rights is relatively more accepted for young adults and couples as the relatively older ones would like to maintain their traditional roles in which men have an upper hand in every decision about the resource uses. Such difference in views was evident among young and aged men and women. For example, in a discussion on the same issue in another village an old man was questioned saying:

*“...some of the things you say about women right and mandate in the household are very difficult to conceptualize and adopt them at this age...you may speak to the young one they still have more room to learn and adjust...”* (An elderly man in a men FGD - Masela village)

Further discussion in the group, and as also found in many other focus discussion groups revealed that many women are demanding for their rights to be involved in decision making when it comes to the sales of crops both in the household and through collective marketing. Collective marketing and contract farming has improved women participation in marketing in which women are involved when crops are taken to the storage facilities as co-signatory to the documents, and they can also store and register the crops on their names. However, it was also reported that such changes have also increased tensions and conflicts among married couple in which women are the victims of such harassment and conflict. Such conflicts arise in circumstances where women and men do not come to an agreement over the plan for the use of resources that have been accrued from their production. And, in efforts to enforce such one sided decision making men usually tend to be violent.

### **3.6 Leadership in Sisal Value Chain**

Women engagement in leadership roles in the Sisal value chain is thorough women groups that have formed along the sisal value. Women are the majority in these groups and key activities in such groups are those related with saving and credits. The survey revealed that there is good women participation in many of the leadership roles in the group activities. They make many decisions and plans for the group activities. However, they are not well involved in making decision at the household and community levels. The key challenge that was frequently mentioned to hamper women participation in leadership issues beyond group levels include resistance to changes from their husbands and other male members of the household and community who continue to embrace cultural and traditional values in which women do not actively engaged in decision making about family and community matters. Therefore,





the empowerment outcomes that women achieve in the group setting are hardly translated in the household levels. On the other hand, women who live as singles do not face such barriers at the household levels although they may face same barriers at community levels. Therefore, women who live as singles such as widow, separated or unmarried usually are able to put into practice the empowerment outcome obtained at group levels directly into practice in their own household and stand a better chance of improving their wellbeing. Nevertheless, such transformation into wellbeing depends on improvement of her capability including ownership of productive asset. Women who live in marital union stand a better chance of improving their wellbeing and their family wellbeing only if their empowerment outcome are accepted and supported by their male partners.

### **3.7 Leadership in Rice Value Chain**

Women's participation in leadership in the group formed in rice value chains has been the outcome of the efforts by government and NGOs where women participation in the leadership roles has been emphasized by encouraging and support women to participate in leadership roles and responsibilities. Such effort is also reflected in their group leadership profiles; for example, where the chairperson is a man the vice chair or secretary should be women. In this regard more women participation in leadership position is mainly due to such strategic effort and support in the groups that have been formed. A mixed reaction on the empowerment outcome as the result of women participation in the group leadership roles were reported by men, whereby some were in favor although some find it as a threat. An FGD participant from Welezo village emphasized this by saying:

*“...since my wife started participating in rice farming group and SILC groups, she has made tremendous changes; she is able to support my family with income earned in her group...”* (Men- FGD participant Welezo Village).

On contrary to such observation, some men had different views and considered women participation in group leadership to be problematic for the family. Many men in FGDs agreed that groups have actually spoiled their women, they emphasized:

*“...these groups have spoiled our women...they want now to make even decision used to be made only by men, like they also want to be men...”* (Men- FGD participant Welezo Village).

Such views reveal that some men are afraid of losing autonomy in decision making which imply that women will also have a say in decision making over the use of the resources. Overall, this survey revealed that there is a positive change and multiplier effect emanating from women participating in groups activities in both sisal and rice value chains. Key informants interview revealed that women participating in the groups are relatively more empowered to take up leadership roles both within and beyond their groups. During the key informant interview it was reported that:

*“...women are now daring to contest for political position in elections, we have an experience that in villages where the programme has been implemented, women are now leaders by contesting, compared to areas where the women groups are not effective...”* (Community development officers: Kishapu and Meatu Districts).



---

### **3.8 Barriers to Women Participation and Benefit in the Sisal and Rice Value Chains**

Although women are the main producers at the family level, in Lake Zone they hardly own land. This situation limits them to grow cash crops or other permanent crops including sisal and rice. Women also face entry barriers to some nodes of the value chain, this study revealed that men dominate value chain functions with relatively high returns on investment (processing and marketing) these value chain nodes has also many barriers to entry by women due to lack of capital, skills and knowledge needed to operate in such value chain nodes this give chance to more men to control chain management functions especially in rice value chain.

Women are overburdened by household chores hence generally less able than men to participate in economic opportunities that value chain activities offer. Women are also squeezed by traditions which put emphasis on women and men crops. Traditionally some crops especially those which was meant for household consumption or those that didn't fetch high market prices e.g. chick pea, beans, sweet potato, rice and small animal and animal products were referred to as women crops. In recent years and as a result of value chain interventions most of the crops including rice have acquired better market price and selling arrangement. Hence, more men involvement; men's also control crops produced by women during marketing.

Freedom of movement also hampers women involvement in some nodes of the value chains. In the study area it was found that men restrict women mobility; women have to ask for permission to go to some of the places or group activities. This lowers their ability to access some information and technology as well as limit their potential to engage themselves in production and marketing of their crops.

### **3.9 Emerging Gender Issues in the Rice and Sisal Value Chains**

Men and women participation in the sisal and rice value chains in the study area has resulted in the changes in gender roles and relations especially in areas where there has been a significant change in the division of labor and increased income to the household. Such changes have also resulted in gender imbalances and concerns that affect the lives of men and women in their effort to empower themselves.

#### **3.9.1 Increased work load among women**

Women are the majority in the production node of the rice value chain; they are also the majority in other value chain related activities such as SILC. However, women do most of these activities on top of other household chores which has not changed in responses to their increased involvement in the value chain activities.

#### **3.9.2 Men interfere and control the decision on the use of income**

The study revealed that when women obtain their income from value chain related activities especially the SILC men interfere their expenditure decision and want to dominate it. In most of the FGDs women reported that they fail to realize their plans including loan repayment and reinvestment due to interference from their husbands and male partners. They emphasized that:

*``we work hard but some of husbands control our earning and in some instances they utilize without our approval.``*



### **3.9.3 Change in household land use plans/re-orientation “Kilabha” practices**

Women ownership of land is still a major problem across all districts in the surveyed area. Women have initiated change in the traditional land ownership and distribution at the household level. Women have started re-inventing the application of the “kilabha” practices whereby they now use the piece of land allocated to them to grow cash crops and other crops meant for market. Such changes face high resistance from men, hence more tension to power relation especially on making decisions on land use at the household level.

### **3.9.4 Men’s withdraw their contribution to household expenditures**

This survey has revealed that as women income has improved due to their involvement in the value chain activities; men are demanding for their contribution to the household maintenance cost and expenditures. Most of the expenditure that women are supporting their family with their income accrued from value chain activities include: school related costs e.g. uniforms and purchase of food the household especially when harvest have been depleted in the off production season. This increases the care burden to women and impact negatively on the women’s effort to empower themselves economically.

### **3.9.5 Family conflicts due to poor management of loan**

The survey revealed that some women fail to pay back the loan from SILC groups. Some women lend money from groups just for buying clothes and household utensils as the result they fail to pay back the loan. This situation has made some men to restrict their wives joining SILC groups. Also conflicts arise because women in groups have been empowered and they now demand and or question the use of family incomes which are normally controlled by men.

### **3.9.6 Men reluctance to support women involvement in value chain activities**

In some villages covered during this survey man were mentioned to be the barrier for women empowerment, this is partly due to the programme overemphasis on women. Hence many men perceive some of the project activities especially group activities as women activities, thus less involvement and support. For example, programme has been sensitizing women in leadership; such effort has empowered women in leadership and many other aspects. However, men have continued to be reluctant in accepting changes advocated by women leading to conflicts at household. This situation is because; men are not actively involved in programme activities that led into some levels of women empowerment as emphasized in the men FGD in Nyasato village:

*“...we, men in value chain groups, are happy since our wives are now very active in advising us and generate income for the family, and they are really good for household development. The problems and misunderstanding usually occur among men who are not involved in the groups as they consider women being in the groups are making effort to dominate them.”* (Men- FGD participant Nyasato Village).



---

## 4.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

### 4.1 Conclusion

On the basis of the empirical findings presented in this paper the following conclusions are made: There is a gender differential in access to and control of productive resources and benefits. Women in rice value chain are actively participating in production, harvesting, and storage and processing. However, marketing is still dominated by men. Women in sisal value chain have recently started to engage themselves in the production and processing of sisal into many other products and marketing. There is an increase of women participation in the sisal and rice value chains and the production and productivity has increased. However, this has also increased women workload.

There has been an increase in women participation in leadership roles in the rice and sisal value chains through their participation in the groups that has been formed for the production, and marketing of the rice and sisal. As the impact of their engagement in leadership roles in the group level; women have been empowered with some leadership skills and practice. However, there is still a limited application of such skills and practices beyond group level into household and community levels. Women participation in leadership roles in the value chains is hampered by barriers they face in accessing some functions in the value chain such as processing and marketing mainly due to capital and cultural constraints.

The transformation of the empowerment outcome obtained in group levels such as leadership and decision making skills is compromised by the rigid structure of the household institutions which is attributable to project and development partner's less focus on men in their effort to empower women.

The constraints for women participation in processing are technology used which is gender insensitive hence hampering more women participation especially in the sisal value chain. In the rice value chain women participation is mainly hampered by lack of capital to acquire the processing machines and equipment as well as gender stereotype in which working and operating processing machines is seen and or believed to be men work.

Marketing in the rice value chain is still dominated by men although there is an increased women participation in marketing especially after the introduction of collective marketing which has resulted from NGOs intervention in the area.

Men and women participation in the rice and sisal value chain has improved some gender roles and relation as well as exacerbating other gender issues and relations at household levels. Women participation in value chain activities has resulted in increased women workload due to lack of changes in gender roles and relations especially at the household levels. Traditional land ownership and its use have been impacted. Women have been empowered on their rights to own land hence they are placing more demand for the right including transforming traditional land use arrangement at household level "kilabha".

There is little change and or transformation in gender roles at household level that would increase women benefits as they participate in the value chain activities. Women income accrued



from value chain activities especially loans and credit contribute to household expenditure, hence less direct benefit to women.

#### **4.2 Recommendations**

In order to address the challenges and gender issues, needs and concerns that women and men actors face in the sisal and rice value chains it is recommended to development partners engaged in promoting the value chains and the local government authority:

The local government authorities and development partners should increase and expand on making strategic efforts to transform gender relations at household levels to improve women involvement in the decision making at household level, this will help in ensuring that the empowerment outcome gained in the group levels are also valued by men at household and community levels. This could be attained through enhancing dialogue between men and women on decision making at household levels. Such efforts should also target more men especially the influential ones in the community for more acceptances of women empowerment outcomes in order to improve acceptance of such development initiative at household and community levels

The local government and development partners should assist women through training on re-investing the return from the value chain activities to increase their capital base in the value chain activities which will enable them to participate in the more lucrative nodes of the value chain and to overcome the problem of inadequate capital

The local government and development partners should lobby and advocate for the use of gender sensitive technology to be used in processing so that the machines can save women labour and time to increase production and quality of the produced products e.g. the table mats and door mats which are of the poor quality to compete with the imported synthetic and plastic ones. The machines used for extracting fibers can be automated for easy use by women as well.

Development partners should continue to lobby against traditional land ownership that deny women rights to own land. There is a need to empower more women on their rights to own land, including placing more demand for the transforming traditional land use arrangement at household level "kilabha."

The local government and development partners should expand its educative campaign, lobbying and advocacy for women ownership of land through CCRO, as findings of this study indicated that where sensitization of ownership of land have been done there are positive changes in favor of women ownership of land. Oxfam and partners should also focus on campaign, advocacy and lobbying to the local government authorities, so that the issues of women ownership of resources' and asset including land be the permanent agenda as it is supported by laws and regulations.

The local government and development partners should continue to advocate on improving the customary land law not to marginalized women in accessing land by incorporating useful policy guidelines from the village land act of 1999 best practices into customary land law to accommodate women needs and benefits



---

## References

Match Maker Associates. (2016). Collating Baseline Information to Inform Oxfam's Rice and Sisal Value Chain Project in Tanzania. 68pp.

Oxfam. (2016). Governance and Innovation for Strengthening Rice Value Chains in Tanzania. Project proposal. 8pp.

Oxfam. (2008). Social- Economic Gaps Study for Agriculture Scale up Programme (Shinyanga Rural, Kahama, Bukombe, Kishapu Districts). Gender Relations Cooperatives HIV and AIDS 54pp.

Waithanji, E., Njuki, J. and Bagalwa, N. (2013). Gendered participation in livestock markets. Chapter 5: In: Njuki, J. and Sanginga, P. (eds), Women, livestock ownership and markets: Bridging the gender gap in eastern and southern Africa. New York, USA: Routledge. (Available from [<http://www.routledge.com/books/details/9780415639286/>]. Site accessed 11.6.2018.

Mutua, E., Njuki, J. and Waithanji, E. (2014). *Review of gender and value chain analysis, development and evaluation toolkits*. Nairobi, Kenya: International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI). 37pp.

FAO. 2011. State of food and agriculture on women and agriculture. FAO Publications Catalogue, Rome, Italy. Retrieved from [[www.fao.org/icalog/inter-e.htm](http://www.fao.org/icalog/inter-e.htm)]. Site accessed 11.6.2018.

Farnworth, R. C. (2011). Gender-aware value chain development. Accra, Ghana: UN Women. 10pp.

Njuki, J., Kaaria, S., Chamunorwa, A. and Chiuri, W. (2011). Linking smallholder farmers to markets, gender and intra-household dynamics: Does the choice of commodity matter? *European Journal of Development Research* 23(3): 426-443.

Reeves, S., Peller, J., Goldman, J. and Kitto, S. (2013). Ethnography in qualitative educational research: AMEE Guide No. 80. *Medical Teacher* 35(8): e1365-e1379, DOI: 10.3109/0142159X.2013.804977.