COMMUNITY RESPONSE TO IMPROVED AGRICULTURAL TECHNOLOGIES: A CASE OF WAKISO DISTRICT IN UGANDA

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Introduction

The concern of low technology adoption has become a subject of interest. Most notably, several agricultural technologies have been demonstrated to have impacted little or not at all at people level. In part, this has been in a consequence of poor technology delivery outlets, and has continuously pondered the agricultural research scientists and their associates the technology providers. To gain insight into this, the Uganda National Cassava programme launched an outreach programme with the main goal to identify and integrate the most pertinent factors that would presumably accelerate ultimate technology adoption.

Fig. 1. Extension Officer meeting a group of farmers on a trial feedback (left) and a group of Socio-economists on a field day tour organised in farmers demonstration field.

Materials and methods

The process involved a needs assessment study to capture the crucial underlying factors to technology adoption; socio-economic, gender, community structural typologies, and general agro-ecosystem analysis. In highlight, the eight parishes were purposely selected in Busukuma subcounty. The study captured a total of 148 individual farmers (disagreggregated into 101 males and 47 females) and 14 extension staff. Participatory research approaches by individual or group discussions and documentations were employed in four meetings conducted.

Fig. 2. The cassava Socio-economist records challenges faced by Ugandan farmers during needs assessment informal meeting

Results and discussion

Results consistently showed that existing farmer groups are more reliable to work with (> 70%), support rapid technology adoption and propagate technology sustainability post intervention. During this study, female farmers demonstrated unrivalled memory and predicative capacity than males, although males often eroded this treasure by interfering with females' freedom of expression. In addition, ideological differences and farmers' dynamics were identified as pertinent in the technology adoption process.

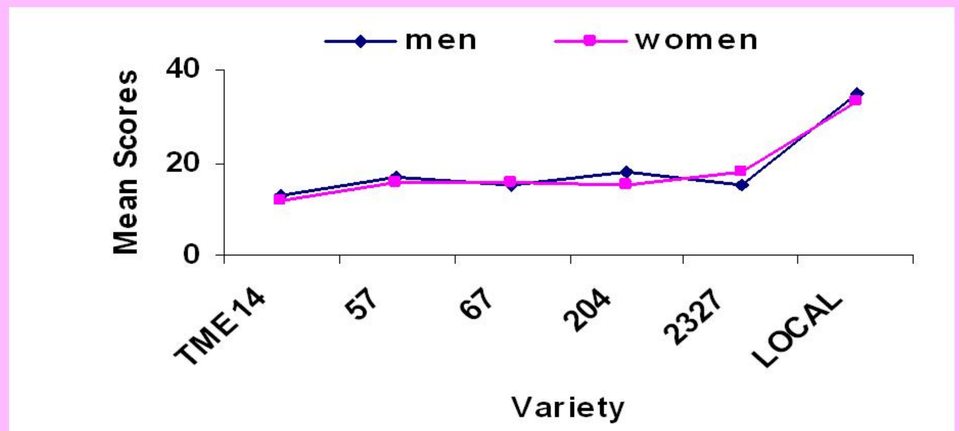

Fig. 3. Mean individual scores of varieties by gender class.

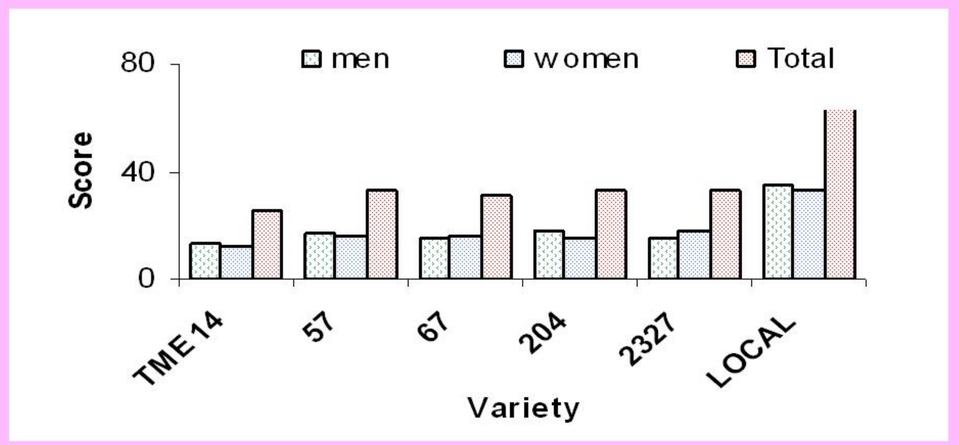

Figure 4. Mean aggregate score of varieties by gender differences

Conclusion and future perspectives

The study clearly demonstrated the need for constant redress of farmers changing priorities to match the dynamic farming systems. Furthermore, the assessment enhanced partnerships between research, service providers and farmers. One of the key findings is that farmers involvement in the design and implementation of the projects achieves significant changes in social and economic conditions at community level. As a result, to transfer technologies to farmers emphasis should address and concentrate on the main limiting factors influencing production, consumption and marketing. Approaches and methods that embrace TOT, FSR and FPR should be adopted to enable farmers to share, enhance and analyze their knowledge of life and conditions to plan, act and adopt different technologies. Consideration should be given to defining the appropriate stage at which both farmers and extensionists are involved in the technology development and transfer.

Reference

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