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Determinants of membership in Farmers' Organisations in Tanzania

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ABSTRACT
This study aims at identifying factors that determine Farmers' Organisations membership in Tanzania. The study was conducted in Mbeya and Kilimanjaro regions. It is based on Farmer Organisations (FOs) members and expert informants interviews in which both qualitative and quantitative cross sectional data were collected. The method used was a mixed one for data collection in which interviews; questionnaire, FGDs and case studies were employed. Descriptive analysis was used to identify factors influencing membership in FOs. The results reveal that individual characteristics, FOs internal and external factors are significant in influencing FOs membership. The study recommends that FOs facilitators should identify strategies that encourage the youth and women in membership. It argues that member identification and recognition is vital in FOs sustainability. The research further recommends that FOs facilitators, and leaders facilitate and adhere to member self-selection strategies and value quality instead of quantity in membership in order to increase membership in FOs.

Key Words: Farmer Organisations (FOs), Membership, Producer Groups (PGs)

Background Information

Farmer Organisations (FOs) are believed to be the only type of institutions that have brought so many people together for a common cause (Cooperative Societies Act of Tanzania Mainland, 2006). It is important however, to bear in mind that FOs cannot fill all the gaps in the agricultural service market left by the state and which have not been filled by the private sector, after market liberalization. FOs may be able to narrow the gap and make it easier and cheaper for the state and other actors to provide services to small-scale producers. However, if collectivism costs are high or when similar benefits can be accessed from other service providers at lower costs little

incentive remains for farmers to join (Shiferaw et al. 2011). Many producers are not organised and linked to providers of essential services such as finance, inputs and markets for a variety of reasons: remoteness, low production, low farm-gate prices, and lack of information, to name just a few (Wiggins & Sharada, 2013).

Identifying membership-influencing factors in FOs was not an easy task, considering the diversity of producers and their organisations located in the two distinct regions with a diversity of member backgrounds. Therefore it calls for a diverse set of approaches to identify factors that influence their membership. In order to develop a well-founded case, it was necessary to take a holistic organizational research approach and to consult with several actors working directly with FOs, i.e. ordinary members as recipients and board members as solicitors of FO services plus several facilitating and supporting organisations.

Theoretical review of FO membership

According to Stockbridge, et al., (2003) theoretical literature on organisations is mostly based on the organisation management of private organisations within which key participants are managers and employees. Whereas with FOs members are both the participants and the owners of the organisation to which management is ultimately accountable. FOs with an inactive membership inevitably fail (Stockbridge, et al., 2003). In many cases, the role of the member in a FO is a blend of owner, manager, client and employee. A strong membership base is the foundation of a strong FO enterprise, and building strong membership and human resources, not necessarily capital, is the basis for building FOs that are both economically strong and sustainable (Gicheru, 2012). The more members identify themselves with their FOs the more they are willing to support the sustainability of their organisation.

An assessment of FOs in Tanzania established that there were over 6,000 active FOs with over 250,000 members (Uliwa and Fisher 2004) with varying membership types from individual producers to PGs. The modern FOs, which are semi independent from the political influence that are taking advantages of the cooperative dismays, mostly have PGs as members while the conventional, (government linked) ones still follow the cooperative structure of individual membership, which results in member cohesion challenges for the FOs.

According to Sabates (2006) and Towo (2004) education levels of the household head, participation in non farm activities, age, gender, household size, distance to tarmac road, farm size and regulations are some of the potential determinants that influence the decision of households or individual producers to participate and become members. The following issues influence producers to join a FO : the degree of the farmer's dependence on the end product of the organized activity and certainty of the availability of the outputs; the extent to which the outputs will be available only as a result of collective action and to which the rewards associated with the collective action will be distributed equitably; the availability of rewards within a reasonable time frame and the extent to which the rewards are commensurate with the costs associated with continued participation (FAO, 1998).

FO Membership: empirical point of view

Sabates, (2006) and Towo, (2004) identified education levels of the household head, participation in non farm activities, age, gender, household size, distance to tarmac road, farm

size and regulations as some of the potential determinants to influence the decision of households or individual producers to participate and become members. Collective actions outputs are highly considered as pull factors in FOs membership. However, studies from Burkina Faso, Senegal, and Ethiopia have shown that the poorest of the poor are sometimes left out of collective action arrangements because of their inability to meet the cost or pay the membership fee (Bernard et al. 2008; Bernard and Spielman, 2009). In most cases there is often little motivation for prosperous farmers to join groups because either the scale of their farm enterprises is sufficiently large to be profitable on its own or they feel reluctant to cooperate with farmers who are less endowed. The degree of the farmer's dependence on the end product of the organized activity and certainty of the availability of the outputs; the extent to which the outputs will be available only as a result of collective action and to which the rewards associated with will be distributed equitably; the extent of availability of rewards within a reasonable time frame and to which the rewards are commensurate with the costs associated with continued participation, contributes tremendously in determining membership in FOs (FAO, 1998). However, if collectivism costs are high or when similar benefits can be accessed from other service providers at lower costs little incentive remains to join (Shiferaw et al. 2011).

Membership literature shows that strong leadership is a pivotal element for influencing FOs direction and engineering the initiation, protection and defending of policies that guide its operations (Fulton, 2001). It also motivates members and improves interpersonal relationships to act towards common goals (Banaszak and Bechmann, 2006). If Leadership governs well and in a transparent manner, it will fosters development and ensure that the FO is run in the best long-term interest of its members.

A survey conducted by Banaszak (2008), with 62 Polish FOs identified four factors that contributed to their success: leadership strength; group size; business relationship amongst members and the member selection process during formation. Cook and Burress (2009) defines success factors in terms of financial performance, such as net margins, member commodity prices, return on equity and sales growth. Asibey-Bonsu (2012), argued that financial and market linkages were factors that determined FO membership. What is coming out in all cases is that economic and social benefits must be real and directly linked to participation in the group for producers to join and remain members.

When members appreciate the benefits they are getting from their FO, they contribute to its success. A case study by CLUSA, (2012), showed that members were able to improve their livelihood through organisational internal and external business activities hence success factors of FOs are embedded in their external and internal environment activities.

Research methodology

Design and Strategy

A mixed research strategy was used employing such tools as surveys using structured questionnaire, FGDs and unstructured questionnaire interviews plus document reviews for data collection in which both qualitative and quantitative data where collected. This strategy was used because researchers needed to better evaluate the extent to which the research findings will be trusted and inferences made from the same. The combination of methods and tools facilitated triangulation of data collected and ensured the provision of more pragmatic results.

FGDs, interviews and case studies were used because researchers wanted to collect a lot of information through different means and be able to effectively validate the findings from these different data collection categories. This combination also allowed the researchers to analyze within and across settings (Saunders, et al., 2009). However, researchers were aware that a multiple use of methods could result in a trade-off with the depth of the study, due to limited time and resources.

Sampling, data type and collection methods

A total of 2 regions, 2 FOs and 10 PGs were purposely selected for the current research. An additional 62 farmer respondents with a beneficiary background at FO level in both regions were selected at an average of 6 members per PG, 8 board members as solicitors of FOs and PGs essential services were purposely selected and 17 key expert informants with an operational background at FO and district level (i.e. agriculture and CDOs), an implementing background on local level (i.e. NGO staff - HRNS), and a business-oriented background (i.e. private sector representatives) were selected using a snowball method. Policy and training experts from training and government institutions were selected through a snowball methods starting from the district through to the MAFSC headquarters in Dar-es-salaam. The average membership per PG from the two FOs was 35 hence an estimated total of 350 prospective respondents from the 10 PGs in 2 FOs were at the disposal of this investigation. At a Confidence Level of 95%, Confidence Interval of 10 and a total population of 350, the sample required was 76 FO members that were complimented by 8 executive board members, 29 conviniently selected FGD participants and 17 key informants.

Primary data: Questionnaire, interviews and focus groups were used for collecting Primary data. Structured questionnaire were used for the face-to-face interviews with FO members (separated from their board members in order to ensure freedom of expression). All discussions and interviews were conducted in Kiswahili and sometimes probing was done in local “directs” just to ensure that producers were “saying what they were really saying”. Producers’ perspectives on factors that contribute to sustainability of their FOs were vital for researchers hence face-to-face interviews were used in collecting primary data.

Secondary data was collected through document reviews, workshops and forum minutes review. The reviewing of documents was done in several places including government offices (DAICOs, DCOs, TCB and the MAFSC). Literature on Cooperatives provided by the Principal Cooperative Officer and the Registrar of Cooperatives played a vital role as sources of secondary data. Presentations and academic papers from MoCU in Moshi were made use of to consolidate the document reviews on FOs and PGs with respect to cooperatives. Researchers made use of the Google search engine as a source of data with caution. The local libraries and research papers from NGOs with vast experiences in working with FOs such as CLUSA, HRNS and Technorseve were made use of too.

Data processing

Descriptive analysis was used to analyze factors determining FOs membership and how they contribute to FO sustainability. This model specification was adopted due to the fact that, the dependent variable FO membership was a dummy variable and was influenced by FO leadership, service portfolio and governance as independent variables. The independent variables were

hypothesized to influence coffee producers to become FO members hence reasons for joining were cross tabulated with: leadership portfolio, (democratic, autocratic and dictatorship styles of leadership); governance variables (FO constitution, internal control systems and presence of codes of conduct) and the service portfolio variables (market and financial linkages, extension trainings on GAP, social security, business and production capacity building and input loans).

SPSS was used to generate descriptive data analysis, which included the use of frequency and percentage tables. Descriptive analysis involved the use of percentages and tables. Case studies and responses from FGDs were used in qualitative analysis in order to supplement Quantitative data.

Results

Demographic and Geographic Characteristics of Participants

FO Membership distribution by member's age

Table 1: Membership Age distribution

	Frequency	Percent
18-30	6	9.7
30-45	23	37.1
45-55	12	19.4
Above 55	21	33.9
Total	62	100.0

Table 1 revealed that there are fewer youths (10%) in FOs as members compared to the higher percentage (37%) of the aging category of membership on average from the two regions. There are more members above the age of 55 (34%) while the middle aged are trailing at 19% of the total respondents. Based on these findings, it was noted that, 37.1% of the respondents had an age range of 45-55 followed by 33.9% at 55, 19.4% were between 30-45 and only 9.8% were between 18-30. This data suggests that, coffee producers in Moshi - Kilimanjaro and Isuto - Mbeya are aged between 45 and above 55 because this age range occupied a total of 71% of the total respondents. It reveals a diminishing participatory role of young adults (men and women) in coffee production and perhaps in total agricultural production hence endangering sustainable succession of coffee production in the study areas.

Gender of FO Members

Table 2: Respondent gender distribution

	Frequency	Percent
Male	55	88.7
Female	7	11.3
Total	62	100.0

Findings in table 2 indicate that there is a huge imbalance of gender in FOs' membership with 88.7% of males against 11.3% females at a ratio of 55:7 from the two FOs. The results from the FGDs reveal a difference picture with 30% females in the south at a ratio of 7:3 and 34.5% from Moshi rural with a ratio of 19:10 on average. A total of 13 (76.5%) males and 4 (23.5%) females were interviewed while 16 (55.2%) males and 13 (44.8%) females took part in FGDs, which still

portray the dominance of men over women in coffee production hence women take CFOs as a male society and not a household source of livelihood. The dominance of men over women in agriculture ownership has been evidenced by various reports, which have shown that, although women are the major farm workers, farm owners remain men as per African traditions, which guarantees men's ownership of properties at the expense of women.

Marital Status of FO Members

Table 3: Membership marital status distribution

	Frequency	Percent
Married	62	100.0

All the interviewed producers by default were married. The findings in table 3 partly show a trend in early marriages since all 6 producers between the age of 18 and 30 were also married. They were several polygamies especially in Mbeya although this research did not factor this as one of its research variables; male couples in these kinds of marriages (polygamies) are active FO members. Similar studies conducted by ICC (2015) discovered that, effective coffee production requires strong family ties although in a number of cases it was only the men that were considered to be coffee farmers.

Gender, Age and Marital Status

As indicated in table 1, 2 and 3 above these three characteristics of individual producers play vital roles in modeling and driving their decision path on joining FOs and contributing to their sustainability. The study done by Javan, et al., (2014) on influence of Gender, Age and Marital Status indicated that coffee farmers are elderly averaging 51 years and a few youth; this has had an influence in the adoption of new technologies and reduced coffee production from 130,000MT in 1989 to 50,000MT in 2012 despite its profitability. With limited succession avenues to aquiring entry to coffee production, FOs stand a slim chance of effectively surviving. The world coffee fact sheet report (2012) claims that, coffee production globally is below demand due to lack of interest from the next generation of coffee growers.

Education level

Table 4: Respondent education levels

	Frequency	Percent
None	1	1.6
Primary education	51	82.3
Secondary education	10	16.1
Total	62	100.0

Findings on education level (table 4) revealed that 1.6% of structured questionnaire respondents did not have any sort of formal education, 82.3% went up to primary level while 16.1% went up to secondary level. Except for the FOs office bearers, the majority of participants were standard seven leavers with a few exceptions who had secondary school certificates; hence this study establishes that most coffee producers in the study areas are mainly standard seven school leavers, few have gone up to form four while the minority do not have any formal education.

This makes technical decision making a challenge for both farm level and in FOs and retards the adoption of improved farming techniques hence service soliciting becomes an issue, as most office bearers are unable to express themselves and negotiate for required services. Coffee marketing needs strong communication skills that low educated folks find it difficult to master. Daniel, (2013) discovered that the level of education for Tanzanian smallholders was occupied by 73% who had attained primary school education, 13% secondary school education, 2% collage education, 2% attended adult learning education program and 10% had not attended any formal school. Due to low levels of education and inadequate communication infrastructure, producers are not well informed about international prices or coffee quality requirements hence raising significant questions on their ability to create and sustain their organisations.

Members Year of Joining FO

Table 5: Member year of joining

	Frequency	Percent
Before 1990	8	12.9
1990-2000	8	12.9
2001-2010	18	29.0
2011-to date	28	45.2
Total	62	100.0

The last aspect in the demographic characteristics looked at the members' year of joining as presented in table 5. Findings revealed that, there were few respondents (12.9%) who had joined prior to 1990, which was similar to those who joined between 1990 and 2000. From 2001 to 2010 the number of members rose to 29% and it went up further to 45.2% between 2011 and 2015. The period of membership shows a dormancy effect within the RPCS and AMCOS before and around 1990s. It was noted that such government programs as "Kilimo Kwanza" enhanced the mushrooming of private PGs around early 2000.

Factors that tribute to member increase in the Tanzania FOs literature include national and regional agriculture supporting programs such as: SAGCOT, which was initiated at the WEF Africa summit in 2010; the ASSP, launched around 2004 with the aim of supporting a broad section of the country's farming population (IFAD, 2005); the TAP program launched in 2005; and the ASDP, which was supported through the donor Basket Fund system. These programs became active within the period that saw membership increase. The other major factor was passage of the Cooperative Development Policy in 2002, which created a favorable environment for the development of FOs by eliminating Government's role in management, while prioritizing commercial motivation over civil service goals that is favorable to the private sector and FOs (Uliwa and Fisher, 2004).

FOs Membership Determinants

The findings reveal significant contributions from internal factors, perceived opportunities in FOs, Service portfolio and member contributions in determining FOs membership. It was shown that: leadership, internal savings, coffee commercialization support, service linkages, and production-increase support are vital factors in encouraging FOs membership. The following sections discuss specific thematic findings other than demographic and geographic characteristics of respondents that have been discussed above.

Internal Factors

Table 6: Factors keeping members in FOs

	Frequency	Percent
Good leadership	17	27.4
Group cohesion	10	16.1
Market and financial linkages	28	45.2
Extension training on GAP	7	11.3
Total	62	100.0

Results in table 6 revealed that among factors keeping members in FOs market and financial linkages are vital with 45.2% of the respondents supporting it, followed by good leadership at 27.4% and group cohesion at 16.1% while the least important was extension training in GAP at 11.3%.

Good leadership

Good leadership is cardinal in attracting membership in FOs hence it was found that members prefer choosing and electing their own leaders and not having them imposed. Although some PGs and RPCSs had qualified retired teachers, accountants and managers, most office bearers had a primary level education. Hence researchers came to learn that, although members agreed on the importance of good leadership in attracting members, most acknowledged that some FO leaders lacked qualities of strong leadership.

Group cohesion

Respondents supported this factor in such a way that they viewed FO membership as its outcome. For instance one member was quoted saying:

> *"Working together as a group and hosting many market and GAP trainings has attracted many none members to join us because we have improved our coffee fields and have easy access to markets and credits for coffee farming through our group".*

Such opinions suggest that, FOs with strong group cohesion tend to attract more farmers to join in the hope of getting benefits that may not be accessible outside. This shows the importance of group cohesion in the enhancement of production.

Market and financial linkages

During FGDs one participants disclosed that *"Some of our friends (non-members), have been struggling to get financial credits as we get through our PG. Recently we have seen most of them beginning to join our group because it is the most accessible and convenient source of coffee market and financial assistance especially from this part of the town".* Hence this study claims that through FOs, members are able to access credits, either as loans partial or full assistance in terms of pesticides, herbicides and farm implements. This is because smallholders lack financial securities individually hence if they aggregate their resources and share risks, lending institutions are more willing to try them out. Better coffee marketing and prices significantly contribute to farmers' decisions to join. Marketing via the auction improves the chances of being paid on reasonable terms based on measures such as grades, prices and security of their crops TaCRI, (2005). Banaszak, (2008) further argues that increasing membership increases frequency of FO

transactions, which lowers the unit transaction costs. A qualitative analysis by Nyoro and Nguyi (2007) on the study conducted in the Central Province of Kenya indicates that CFOs with more members and higher volumes were the successful ones.

Extension training on GAP

Extension training results in table 5 revealed that coffee field management trainings are vital in keeping members. This is because members cannot afford to pay for such services individually nor do service providers risk working with dispersed individual farmers. The cost of providing such services by public, private and individual providers is reduced when offered to an organised group of farmers rather than individuals.

Adong et al., (2012) reported that, extension training is made to promote and strengthen PGs. It empowers them to take advantage of economies of scale in quantity and quality production hence apart from personal decision to join; farmers are advised to join in the hope of benefiting from extension training. Mwaura et al. (2012) disclosed that farmers join FOs because of markets and that FOs facilitates produce transport to markets. Access to credit is very essential for farmers to facilitate their coffee production. Mbowa et al., (2012) supported these findings by emphasizing other importance of credit for farmers. Sabates-Wheeler (2006) in her study on local strategies for survival and growth in Romania and Kyrgyz Republic found that households with less land, labour, arable area and equipment were more likely to join FOs than their counterparts who owned more land, labour and equipment.

Opportunities seen in FOs

Identified opportunities in FOs were descriptively analyzed and graphically presented in figure 1.

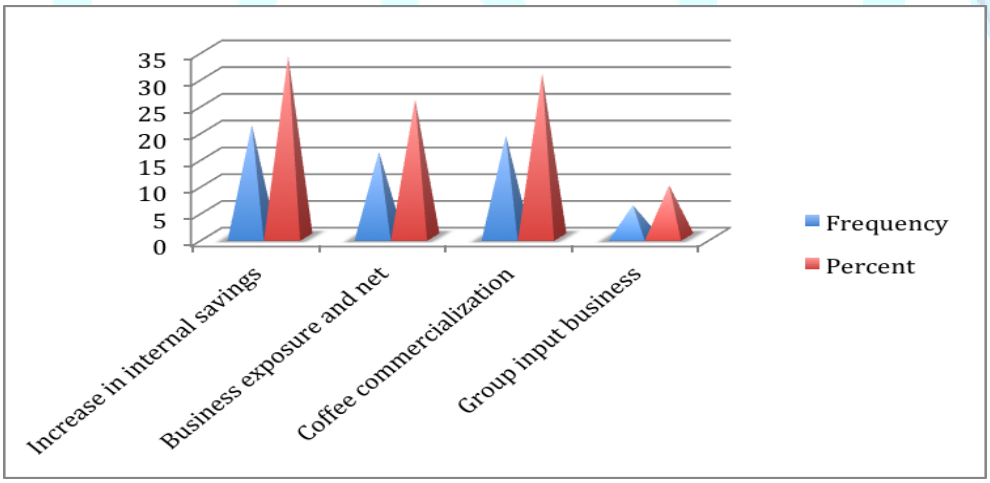

Figure 1: Opportunity seen in FOs

Figure 1 reveals that the highest number of respondents are expecting to increase their internal savings at 33.9%, followed by coffee commercialization (bulk market) at 30.6%. Input business followed at third place with 25.8% and business exposure was the least opportunity expected at 9.7%. These findings exposed that FOs enables the pooling of resources such as credit, information, labour force, and transportation means for selling products or buying inputs and

thus, leads to economies of scale. It is clear that though farmers are working in groups, they all have own individual targets of improving their livelihood through investment increase although at the end of the day they all need to sell their produces in bulk via improved markets. Individuals realize that retail input prices are exorbitant; hence the focus on pooling resources together and make use of the bulk purchase to enhance production increase. In this way, they lower production cost and maximize the little profit that can be earned from their low production.

Business exposure and networking are vital opportunities found in FOs as their application to modern business development is crucial for competition and success. FOs help farmers to get different ideas through networking which enhances making connections and building enduring, mutually beneficial relationships. Networking is a productive, proficient and enduring tactic to build relationships. To succeed farmers must continuously connect with new people, cultivate emerging relationships and leverage networks. A study done by FAO, (2010) on a review of existing organization forms of smallholder farmers' associations revealed that networking is essential for farmers.

Coffee commercialization (Bulk marketing) contributes highly in attracting members to FOs because being members increases chances of commercializing their coffee. These types of opportunities have enticed producers to remain in FOs, while attracting others to join.

Group input business: Coffee FOs construe this as an opportunity to commit members to deliver coffee through the organisation and secure more volumes for the FO. Reports from Mexico, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Honduras, and Costa Rica show that seasonal credits to coffee farmers provided through pre-payments throughout the production cycle support the purchase of inputs, maintenance of the coffee plants, and timely harvesting (Coffee Fact Sheet, 2012). Members have been able to receive input credits including the opportunity to make organic pesticides and fertilizers, which trigger higher yields (Parrish, et al, 2005) hence such opportunities have enticed a number of coffee producers to join FOs.

Support Received (Service Portfolio)

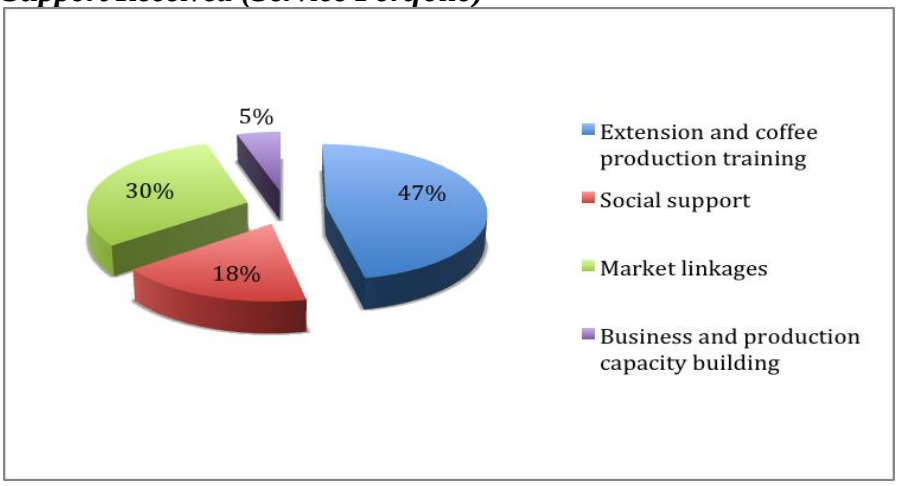

Figure 2: Support Received (Service Portfolio) in FOs

Figure 2 shows that extension and coffee production trainings were considered vital in determining membership at 47% followed by market linkages and coffee marketing at 30% with social support at 18% and the least being business and production capacity building at 5%.

Extension, business and coffee production capacity building trainings

This data indicates that farmers get different types of support from their FOs including extension and coffee production training on fertilizer use, pruning, mulching, pesticides, fungicides and herbicides use; organisation development; savings and credits as well as general farm and coffee business management. Isuto for instance had been trained on loan management by CRDB and NMB and further extended an input loan through bulk marketing system; input use, chemical management and usage and supply of coffee pesticides and fungicides by Balton Tanzania as well as fertilizer usage and supply at demonstration plots by Yara. Government extension officers have provided periodic trainings for the PG member especially on farm management and quality coffee drying methods in collaboration with HRNS. This external support has significantly improved the livelihood of Isuto members through facilitated FOs' access to finance, input and markets.

Social support

The social capital found in FOs includes social networks, social relationships, group social safety and risk sharing. Smallholders normally conduct business with higher risks because they do not have reliable market information. PGs can help minimize these risks by remaining in constant dialogue with buyers and guiding smallholders in responding to market requirements Cook and Burress (2011) note that marketing and risks avoiding are the factors keeping members in groups. It was further discovered that members in the study areas supported each other in social events like funerals, weddings, sickness and cultural matters. Some of the PGs have articles in their constitutions that require compulsory contributions towards social security to address these needs. For example, Ilindi and Ilyala had their constitution established prior to election of the PG leadership, which apart from dealing with coffee production and marketing issues has established how members will be supported when they are socially constrained.

Market linkages

Information on coffee market linkages such as price, auction and payment dates, and coffee buyer details support members through sharing of information on a daily bases through the TCB mobile system on new prices expected in a particular marketing year. Members receive curing statements, cupping test and cash sale reports, which are then shared during FO meetings for production and management improvements. However, non-members find it hard to comprehend and follow-up on such reports and how to effectively make use of them.

Member Contributions

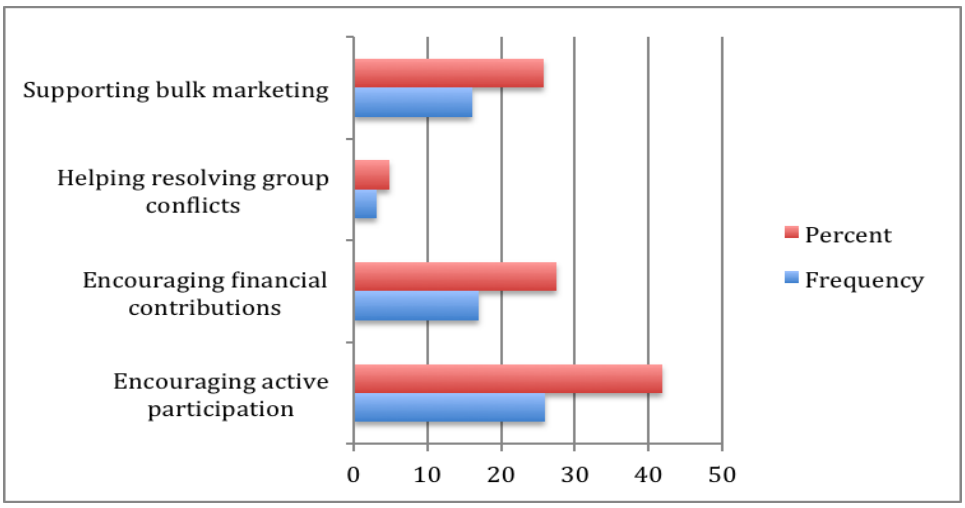

Figure 3: Member contribution in sustaining their FO

Figure 3 reveals that encouraging active participation is vital for membership rated at 41.9% followed by encouraging financial contributions at 27.4%, supporting bulk marketing was third at 25.8% while helping resolving group conflict was the least at 4.8%. The findings revealed diverse member contribution roles in FOs.

Encouraging Financial Contributions

Members usually allocate surpluses for any or all of the following purposes: developing the FO, possibly by setting up reserves (internal savings), part of which at least would be indivisible; benefiting members in proportion to their transactions with the FOs and supporting other activities approved by the members. This makes it clear that members have a responsibility to finance their FO through their initial membership fees as well as pooling funds together, and that by pooling funds they agree to participate in an association that exists for the good of the whole group, not just a few individuals. Through these contributions the possibilities of free riders is minimized. This makes it clear that FOs are not non-profit organizations. However, the profit or surplus generated does not benefit a small group of members, but the entire membership through FO and public service re-investments.

In the opinion of this study, such financial contributions help to hold members and leaders accountable for the development of their FOs through proper financial management and financial report sharing as they become obliged to update members of their financial status. This is because members become owners of the FO rather than just mare members. Report by Mmari (2012) discovered that, in some FOs in Kilimanjaro, famers were obliged to contribute some percent of money (percent of sales), which was deducted at point of sale per kilogram of coffee sold through their FOs. This is vital as it cements members' ownership and supports the sustainability of their organisation by minimizing external financial dependence.

Supporting bulk marketing and Encouraging Active Participation

Figure 3 reveals that the ability of members to encourage colleagues to actively participate in meetings and trainings, engage in voluntary FO work, make financial contributions, respect

punctuality and observe rules and regulations such as codes of conducts are vital. In addition production increase and delivering produces through the PG to the FOs reduces side selling of coffee. Serving on committees, involvement in recruiting others, and patronage are also cardinal aspects in Fos that enhance membership and buid strong sense of ownership. Deliveries made to FOs via PGs aggregates the coffee volume for the FO qualifying commercialization of its marketing system while supporting its members. Collective systems in marketing contribute to the aggregating of smallholders' volumes for bulk sales.

Helping Resolving Group Conflicts

This is another contribution in which members volunteer to solve individual and FO conflicts such as fund embezzlement / mismanagement, side selling, poor input loan management and internal PG issues like delay in election of leaders and lack of trust in leaders. Mmari (2012) concluded that TCB was consulted and assisted in further discussions and resolving of FOs issues. This is similar to what was indicated in Isuto DC that the local village leaders are part of their governing support and help in resolving conflicts.

Conclusion

The study concluded that factors determining FO membership range from demographic and geographical aspects of coffee producers to organizational internal and external factors. These factors were grouped into four categories namely; (i) factors keeping members in FOs (good leadership, group cohesion, market and financial linkages and extension training on GAP); (ii) opportunities foreseen in FOs (increase in internal savings, business exposure and networking, bulk marketing, group input business); (iii) support received (service portfolio, extension and conservation agriculture production training, social support, market linkages and business and coffee production capacity building training) and (iv) member contributions and recognition (encouraging active participation, encouraging financial contributions, helping resolving group conflicts and supporting bulk marketing). These factors have significance influence on members' decisions to join a particular PG.

The probability of a coffee farmer joining a PG and FO increases with the lower level of education attainment as well as above 45 years of age and with family responsibilities while male domination was seen as a single factor affecting FO sustainability, which needs a holistic approach to address. This is probably because males are said to be providers for their families. Farmers with coffee as their only cash generating crop were more likely to join PGs than those with other economic activities such as local retailing business or public transport; they also farmed larger coffee fields compare to the average farmer.

It is important that appropriate recruitment efforts are used during the process of member identification to attract different education and age levels to promote adoption of new farming technologies. This calls for member self-selection and self-assessment training during the initial stages of establishment.

Member self selection and assessment workshops play greater parts in fostering develop a senses of ownership for their organisation. Individual member recognition by other FO members plays a great part too. Producers enjoy status hence they will stay in-groups that recognize this aspect well. It is vital to note that membership is developed and not picked automatically hence the

need for facilitators and FO leaders to consider this aspect. Membership should not be imposed but optional to enhance sense of ownership. FO activities that increase member identity should be applied. FO facilitators should incorporate methods that encourage the youth and women to join and take active roles. Producers should instill a culture of saving and business planning which will enhance their financial management skills. The adoption of new technologies has been negatively affected by the reluctance of older farmers changing their farming practices. The inclusion of youths would enhance adoption rates and facilitate production increase, which would contribute to sustaining the organisation.

Recommendations

Taking into account individual characteristics of producers during members' identification warrants a better approach that will enrich the group composition with mixed characteristics to enhance adoption of new technologies and facilitate production increase. Particularly important is the inclusion of women given that they are good leaders and financial manager (UCFA, 2012). Production and quality improves with the inclusion of women in CFOs and sustainability is guaranteed right from formation. Otherwise, women's labor and contribution in CFOs will remain less visible and permit the invisibility and inequality to be justified as 'natural' (Lyon et al 2009) if less effort is taken. A better methodology on strategies that encourage and inspire youth and women taking active roles should be developed.

The identification of appropriate leadership skills trainings that should be offered at zonal or district level for identified poor performing FOs in order to enhance skills, which will improve their management ability and facilitate sustainability. Leadership empowerment can contribute to reducing costs and improving services identified and implemented in the FO. Members' empowerment contributes to strengthening their ability to: monitor fellow members' production, respond rapidly to management, production and market problems as well as to improve input provision and usage. Factors keeping members in FOs include; opportunities foreseen in FOs; support received (service portfolio); and member contributions and recognition. Specific practices that enhance these factors include: the non provision of handouts when identifying members, avoiding the outlining of unfulfilled promises, not being tempted by the need for quick lists of members and avoiding emphasizing such activities as financial linkages that lure members into joining not because of felt need but because of the dangling carrot (financial assistance expectations). The effect of these aspects on the sustaining of membership in FOs deserves an investigation.

The methodology used looked at different structured FOs i.e. DCs and RPCSs from two wide regions and involved several CFO players, another survey could be executed within the same areas with a different method in order to compare the findings and enrich the missing membership determining factors in literature. Identifying viable options for determining membership in less time and with fewer external resources will require new thinking about how to organize FOs, support them over the long term, and improve the overall business environment in which they operate.

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