

Understanding gender relations of smallholder farmers to improve pig feeding in Uganda

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Background

- Pig production is rapidly growing in Uganda, but generally research on pig production systems is just beginning.
- Information lacks particularly on gender-based constraints and benefits experienced by pig-keeping households.

Objectives

- This study focused mainly on smallholder farmers with predominantly 1-3 pigs in rural areas of Masaka and Kamuli counties, Uganda.
- We aimed to understand current gender relations, and how they
 - dictate access to and control of land, labor, purchases and sales of pigs, and
 - influence the pig production system as a whole.

Research approach

- Gender-segregated focus group discussions (FGD) guided by the Feed Assessment Tool (FEAST, <http://www.ilri.org/feast>) and unstructured individual interviews in two sub-counties each of Masaka and Kamuli counties in June and December 2014 were used for information gathering.



Women face challenges

- Land ownership and use**
Men traditionally own the land. Men grant women land for cultivating staples and vegetables for the family's subsistence.
- Planting forages to improve pig feeding**
Pig-keeping women have to negotiate with their husband owners to obtain spaces for planting forages. Our hypothesis is that men may consider planted forages as a crop and could participate more in feeding pigs in the future.

Women

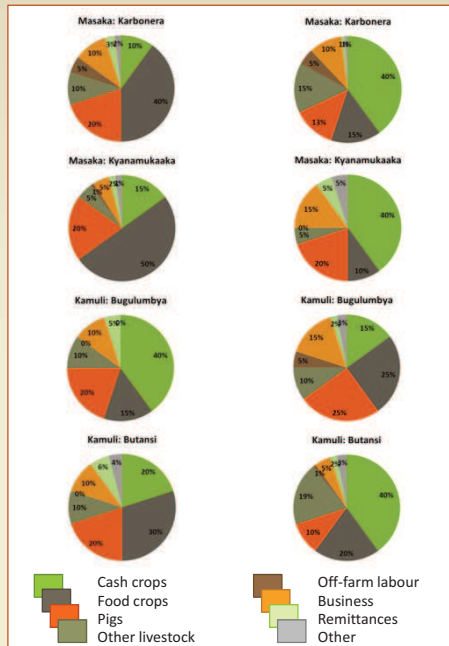


Fig. 1. Relative contribution to livelihoods estimated by women pig farmers in focus group discussions in four sub-counties of Masaka and Kamuli Districts, Uganda (N=88).

Women/family benefit from pigs

- Pig ownership**
In a pig-keeping household, pigs can belong to husband, wife and, at times, teenagers.
- Income**
Whoever owns pigs keeps the income from sales irrespective of gender. Most of women's incomes from pigs go to family expenditures, while men's and young people's incomes more often go to their personal needs.
- Expenditures for family welfare**
The highest expenditure serviced by income from pigs is education in most households, followed by health. Thus, women pig farmers contribute substantially to family welfare. Women attributed pigs' contribution to family incomes to 20% and above, while men estimated lower percentages (Fig. 1).



Pigs can be a burden for women

- Pig management**
Often the wife is in charge of all the pigs' management (feeding, cleaning and ensuring health) in the homestead, irrespective of ownership.
- Feeding**
Mostly, women gather the feeds and, hence, do the feeding. Culturally, men hardly feed pigs, even if they may own one or two, which are fed together with the women's pigs and that of the child/youth if there is any. Pigs typically feed on collected herbs, weeds, and crop and kitchen left overs. In Masaka, women estimated that they collected more forages than men thought (Fig. 2). Time to collect feeds can be as short as 30 minutes in the rainy season when vegetation is abundant; but, it can take up to 4 hours during the dry season.

Women

Men

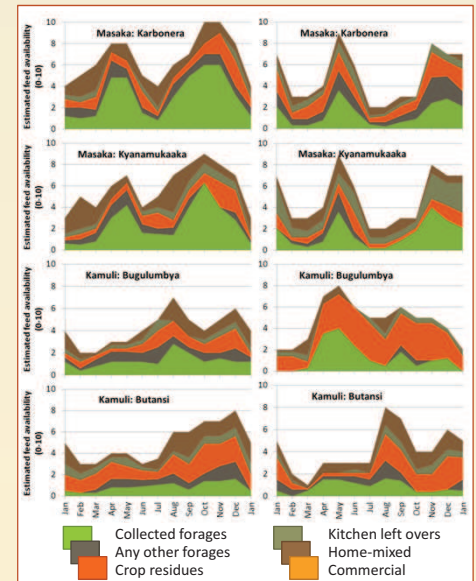


Fig. 2. Relative feed availability throughout the year estimated by women and men pig farmers in focus group discussions in two counties of Uganda (N=88)

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