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TH1.1: A mixed-methods research tool for improving measurement and understanding of intra-household decision making

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# Introduction

- A key aspect of women's empowerment is the **participation of women in important intra-household decisions**
- Quantitative assessments often rely on questions on the **identity of the decision maker(s)** to determine women's participation
- And less focus on understanding **why** women make decisions, **how** decisions get made, or on **women's roles** in decision-making processes
- Furthermore, questions are often developed using **etic (outsider) perspectives**, when **emic (insider) perspectives** are a critical source of information
- **The methodological challenge:** develop new research tools to overcome the shortcomings of standard decision-making questions



# Research objective and questions

## Research objective

- To set up a transdisciplinary process to **develop a mixed-methods research tool** for improving the measurement and understanding of important decisions dyads make on agricultural- and expenditure-related matters within the household, and how these decisions influence specific development outcomes
- Pilot the tool in **Tanzania** within the **smallholder cassava value chain**

## Key research questions

1. How do dyads (two spouses) make cassava production, processing, trading, and expenditure-related decisions within the household?
2. Who makes these decisions?
3. Why are these decisions made solely or jointly?
4. How do decision-making processes influence specific food and nutrition security and economic outcomes at household level?



# Overview of the mixed-methods research tool

## Qualitative interview guide

- How are different intra-household decisions made, who makes such decisions and why do they get made jointly or alone

## Vignettes

- Short stories modelled on scenarios described by dyads during qualitative interviews

## Quantitative survey instrument

- Comprising questions on intra-household decision making
- Vignettes to help study participants focus on key aspects of decision-making processes and more accurately respond to survey questions

# Qualitative interview guide

## Mixed-methods study

Qualitative interview guide to explore intra-household decision making on cassava value chain activities

### Contents

Informed consent.....	2
Interview information.....	3
Demographic characteristics of both participants in the dyad.....	3
1. Individual-level information .....	3
2. Headship status .....	3
3. Household information.....	3
Participation in cassava value chain activities and to what extent.....	4
Livelihood status .....	5
Part A. Intra-household decision making (who and why) .....	6
1. Determining who within the household carries out cassava value chain activities, who makes the decisions on cassava value chain related matters and why .....	6
2. Expenditure-related roles, responsibilities, and decision making within the household.....	7
Part B. Intra-household decision making (the process and the use of cognitive labor) .....	10
1. The process dyads use to make important decisions on cassava production and post-harvest related matters and the cognitive labor they use .....	10
2. The process dyads use to make important decisions on expenditure of cash/income from cassava sales OR decisions on other types of expenditure-related matters and the cognitive labor they use..	12
Post-interview questions.....	14
Annex A. Task cards and associated decision-making questions .....	15
Production-related task cards and associated decision-making questions.....	15
Processing and storage-related task cards and associated decision-making questions.....	18
Transportation and marketing-related task cards and associated decision-making questions.....	19
Expenditure-related task cards and associated decision-making questions .....	20

Shughuli: Kupata mbegu (vipando) kwa ajili ya kupanda muhogo

Nani hufanya maamuzi ya mwisho kuhusu aina gani ya mbegu ya muhogo itapandwa?

Shughuli: Kupanda muhogo

Nani hufanya maamuzi ya mwisho kuhusu wakati gani muhogo upandwe?

Shughuli: Kuvuna muhogo

Nani hufanya maamuzi ya mwisho kuhusu wakati sahihi wa kuvuna muhogo?

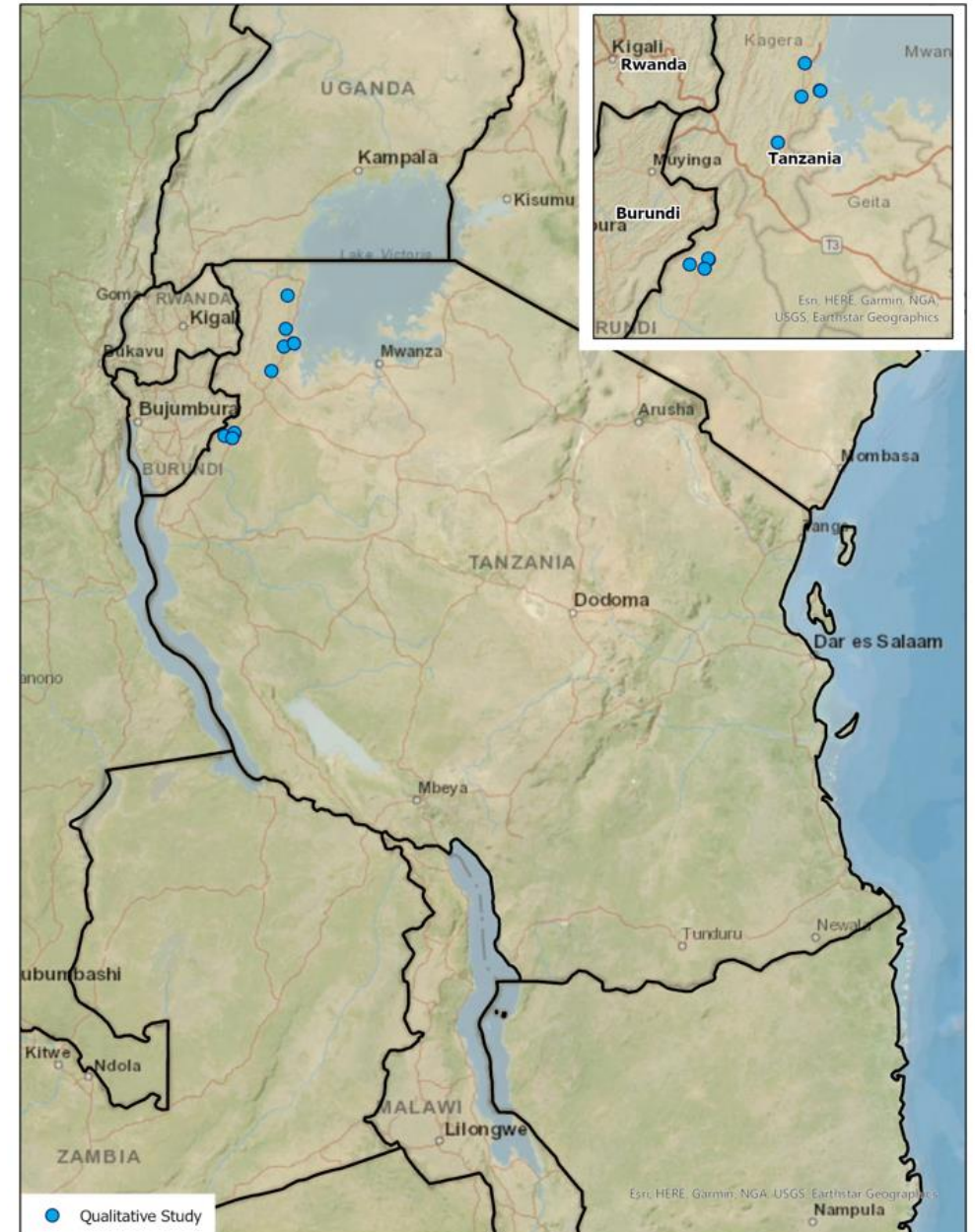
Shughuli: Kusafirisha muhogo kwa ajili ya kuuza kwenye masoko nje wa jamii yako

Nani hufanya maamuzi ya mwisho kuhusu usafirishaji wa muhogo kwenda kwenye masoko nje wa jamii yako?

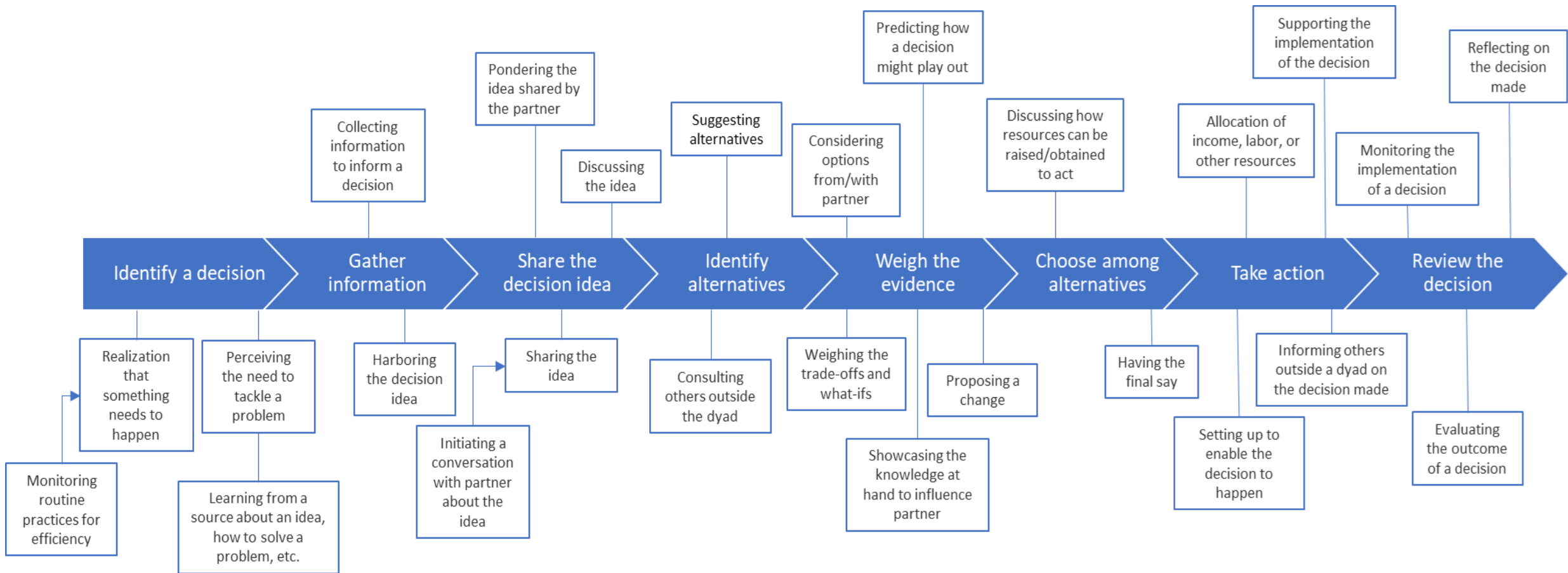


# Qualitative study

- In-depth interviews with dyads
- **40 interviews** across two cassava-producing regions of north-west Tanzania
  - Kagera and Kigoma Regions
- Most interviews (93%) conducted with married or cohabiting couples involved in monogamous or polygynous relationships



# Analysis of the qualitative dyadic interviews



**Fig.** A structure to code the qualitative data to identify decision-making patterns amongst dyads for use when developing the vignettes (parts modified from [source](#))

# Analysis of the qualitative dyadic interviews

- Examples of how decisions get made by couples interviewed in the qualitative study



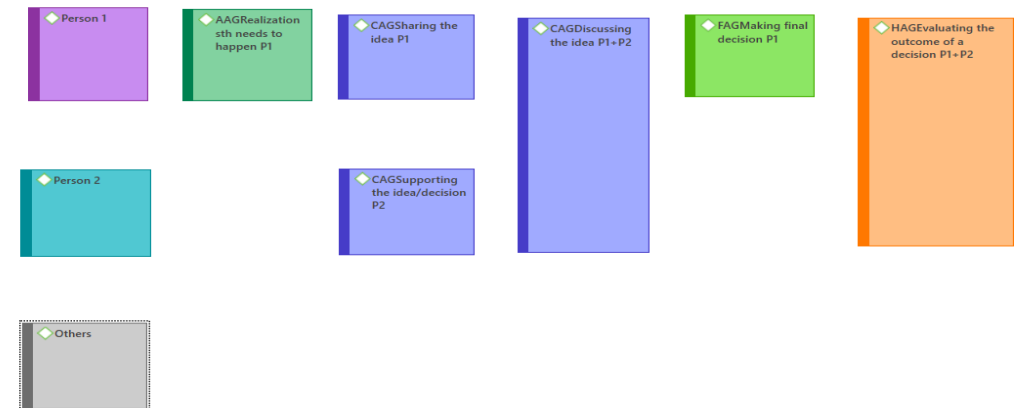
**Fig.** Schematic of a decision-making process whereby the wife conceived the idea to expand cassava production and discussed with her husband before they made a joint final decision



**Fig.** Schematic of a decision-making process whereby the husband made a unilateral decision to hire casual labor to work on the cassava farm



**Fig.** Schematic of a decision-making process whereby the husband conceived the idea to send a child to secondary school and discussed with his wife before he made the final decision



**Fig.** Schematic of a decision-making process whereby the wife conceived the idea to reduce the size of the cassava farm and discussed with her husband before she made a final decision



# Developing the vignettes on how decisions get made by dyads

- **Seven unique decision-making patterns** emerged from the qualitative analysis
- **Husband makes the final decision**
  - Husband shares idea, discusses with wife, and husband makes the final decision
  - Wife shares idea, discusses with husband, and the husband makes the final decision
  - Husband shares idea with his wife before he makes the final decision
- **Wife makes the final decision**
  - Wife shares idea, discusses with husband, and wife makes the final decision
  - Husband shares idea, discusses with wife, and wife makes the final decision
- **Final decision is made jointly between wife and husband**
  - Husband shares idea, discusses with wife, and they make a joint final decision
  - Wife shares idea, discusses with husband, and they make a joint final decision

# Developing the vignettes on how decisions get made by dyads

- **Examples of the vignettes** on how agriculture and expenditure-related decisions get made by dyads within the household

## Husband shares idea, discusses with wife, and they make a joint final decision

- The husband realizes something needs to happen or a decision needs to be made. The husband shares his idea with his wife, and they discuss jointly about the idea. After discussing, the wife confirms she is supportive of the idea and/or suggests an alternative option that the husband considers before the husband and wife make a joint final decision.

## Husband shares idea with his wife before he makes the final decision

- The husband realizes something needs to happen or a decision needs to be made. After sharing his idea with his wife, he makes the final decision.

## Husband shares idea, discusses with wife, and husband makes the final decision

- The husband realizes something needs to happen or a decision needs to be made. The husband shares his idea with his wife, and they discuss jointly about the idea. After discussing, the wife confirms she is supportive of the idea and/or suggests an alternative option that the husband considers before he makes the final decision.

## Wife shares idea, discusses with husband, and wife makes the final decision

- The wife realizes something needs to happen or a decision needs to be made. The wife shares her idea with her husband, and they discuss jointly about the idea. After discussing, the husband confirms he is supportive of the idea and/or the wife considers an alternative option from her husband before she makes the final decision.

# Validation of the vignettes

## Objective

- To confirm the vignettes represent real-life scenarios of decision-making in the cassava value chain via drama and focus group discussions in and outside the qualitative study area

## Results

- All decision-making patterns exist in the validation areas
- No other decision-making patterns were identified by focus group members
- However, the frequency of use of certain patterns was found to vary across different areas and requires investigation during the quantitative study





# Why decisions get made solely or jointly

- Responses on why final decisions are made by one individual or jointly were grouped based on their similarities
- Groupings for **why decisions get made by one person:**
  - Contributes more resources, income, or labor to the activity
  - Is the head of household
  - Introduced the idea
  - One spouse makes decisions about certain matters, the other spouse about other matters
  - Is the most knowledgeable about the activity
- Groupings for **why decisions get made jointly:**
  - Both agree on/support the decision
  - Both contribute resources, income, or labor to the activity
  - All decisions on the topic are made together

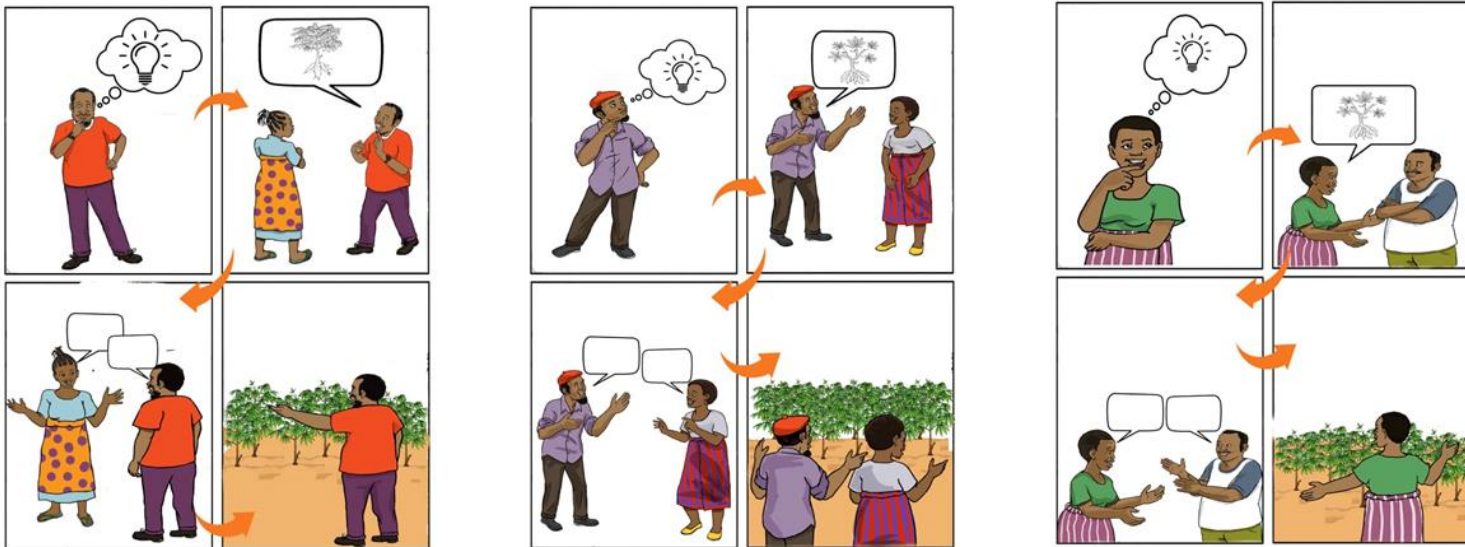
Responses conform to the five explanatory models identified by Bernard et al. (2020) in Senegal:

- Contribution model
- Norms model
- Separate spheres model
- Most informed model
- Unitary model

# Constructing the quantitative survey instrument

## Decision-making module

- Decision-making questions asked about **eight** topics related to: **production (3)**, **processing (1)**, **trading (2)**, and **expenditure (2)**
- Selected based on decisions perceived by respondents to be “important” – established during qualitative study
- Vignette **illustrations** developed to assist respondents when listening to the vignette stories



Other key modules
Housing characteristics
Access to productive assets
Group membership
Access to credit and finance
Access to extension services
Cassava production and processing
Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES)
Minimum Dietary Diversity (MDD)

# A closer look at the decision-making module

<p><b>MODULE IS ASKED SEPARATELY FOR EIGHT TOPICS:</b></p> <p><b>Production</b>  <b>(1) Which cassava variety to use?</b>  <b>(2) Which plot to use for cassava production?</b>  <b>(3) When to harvest the cassava?</b></p> <p><b>Processing</b>  <b>(4) How to process cassava?</b></p> <p><b>Trading</b>  <b>(5) Where to sell cassava? (6) How much cassava to sell?</b></p> <p><b>Expenditure</b>  <b>(7) Building/refurbishing a house</b>  <b>(8) Paying school fees</b></p>	<p><b>1</b></p> <p>Who in your household generally makes the final decisions about [X]?</p>	<p><b>2</b></p> <p><b>VIGNETTES TO BE READ DETERMINED BY RESPONSE TO Q1.</b></p> <p>HUSBAND ONLY REPORTED IN Q1 ► VIGNETTES A/B/G</p> <p>WIFE ONLY REPORTED IN Q1 ► VIGNETTES E/F</p> <p>BOTH HUSBAND AND WIFE REPORTED IN Q1 ► VIGNETTES C/D</p> <p><b>VIGNETTES A - G</b></p>	<p><b>3</b></p> <p>Among the couples that you resemble, which is the MOST similar to your couple?</p> <p>VIGNETTE A...1  VIGNETTE B...2  VIGNETTE C...3 ►Q6  VIGNETTE D...4 ►Q6  VIGNETTE E...5  VIGNETTE F...6  VIGNETTE G...7</p>	<p><b>4</b></p> <p>Which of these is the MOST important reason why ... make the final decisions about [X]?</p> <p><b>SOLE DECISION RESPONSES</b>  [PERSON] CONTRIBUTES THE MOST RESOURCES, INCOME, OR LABOR TO [X] (SOLE CONTROL OVER RESOURCES).....1  [PERSON] IS THE HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD (NORMS).....2  [PERSON] INTRODUCED THE IDEA.....3  [PERSON] MAKES DECISIONS ABOUT THIS AND I MAKE DECISIONS ABOUT OTHER THINGS (SEPARATE SPHERES).....4  [PERSON] IS THE MOST KNOWLEDGEABLE ABOUT THIS ACTIVITY.....5</p> <p><b>JOINT DECISION RESPONSES</b>  WE BOTH AGREED/SUPPORTED THE DECISION.....1  WE BOTH CONTRIBUTED RESOURCES, INCOME, OR LABOR TO THIS ACTIVITY (JOINT CONTROL OVER FAMILY RESOURCES).....2  WE MAKE ALL DECISIONS ABOUT [X] TOGETHER (COOPERATION).....3</p>
	<p>SELF ONLY.....1  SPOUSE/PARTNER ONLY.....2  SELF &amp; SPOUSE/PARTNER JOINTLY...3</p> <p>IF OTHER HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS REPORTED ► <b>NEXT TOPIC</b></p>			

<p><b>5</b></p> <p>How frequently do you generally disagree with your husband/wife on decisions about [X]?</p> <p>NEVER.....1  SOMETIMES...2  ALWAYS.....3</p>	<p><b>6</b></p> <p>How frequently do you generally consult people other than your spouse/partner before final decisions are made about [X]?</p> <p>NEVER.....1  SOMETIMES...2  ALWAYS.....3</p>	<p><b>7</b></p> <p>How frequently do you generally follow up with people other than your spouse/partner after final decisions are made about [X]?</p> <p>NEVER.....1  SOMETIMES...2  ALWAYS.....3</p>	<p><b>8</b></p> <p>How frequently do you generally monitor the outcome(s) from your household's decisions about [X]?</p> <p>NEVER.....1  SOMETIMES...2  ALWAYS.....3</p>	<p><b>9</b></p> <p>How satisfied are you, in general, with the overall outcome(s) from your household's decisions about [X]?</p> <p>NOT AT ALL SATISFIED...1  SOMEWHAT SATISFIED.....2  COMPLETELY SATISFIED...3</p>
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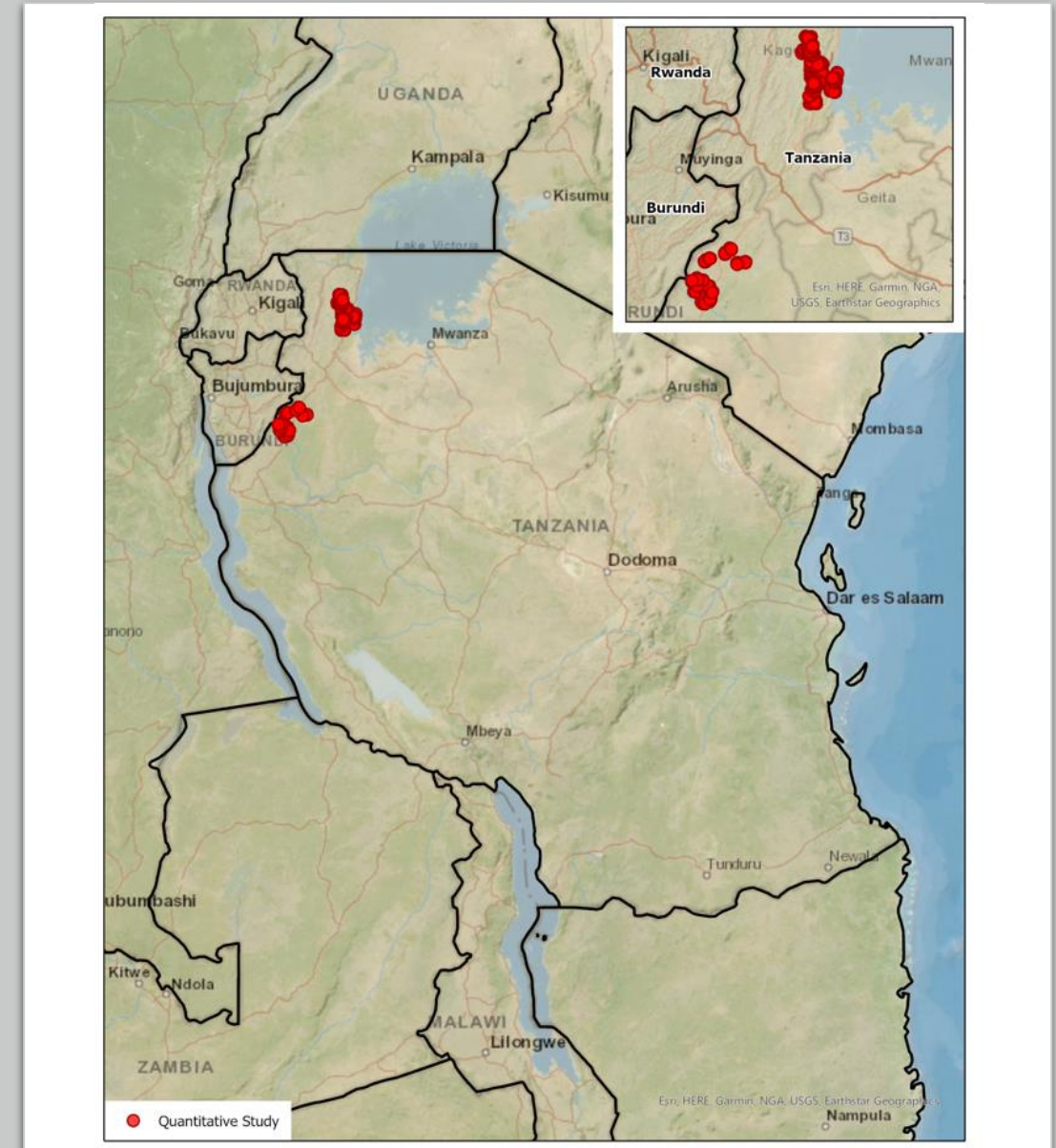
# Piloting of the quantitative survey with the decision-making module

## Enumerator training

- Review and digitization of the quantitative survey
- Survey practice & survey pretest
- Refining the quantitative survey tool

## Household surveys

- Administered to **1352 randomly selected HHs** in Kagera and Kigoma Regions of Tanzania using Survey CTO
- In **676 HHs** - Spouses were interviewed together for each module (including the decision-making module)
- In other **676 HHs** – Spouses were interviewed together except for during the decision-making module



# Quantitative survey data analysis plan

## Research question

## Analysis technique

**How do dyads (two spouses) make cassava production, processing, trading, and expenditure-related decisions within the household?**

- Descriptive statistics using responses from study participants who indicated which scenario (vignette) best describes the process

**Who makes these decisions?**

- Descriptive statistics on who makes decisions on what

**Why are these decisions made solely or jointly**

- Descriptive statistics using the responses from study participants who indicated rationale they use when making a particular decision

**How do decision-making processes influence specific food and nutrition security and economic outcomes at household level?**

- Multivariate regression analysis to assess how the different household decision-making patterns relate to household outcomes

Quantitative data analysis is in progress after which we will be able to determine if the tool has the potential to improve our measurement and understanding of intra-household decision making

# THANKS

