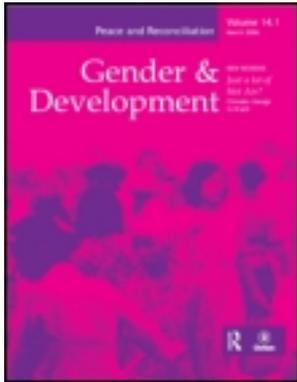


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Deborah Kasente

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Fair Trade and organic certification in value chains: lessons from a gender analysis from coffee exporting in Uganda

Deborah Kasente

Fair Trade and organic certification production of coffee and other commodities is popularly seen as beneficial to producers in many ways. However, gender analysis of Fair Trade is important for assessing the gains and losses for women and men specifically, which result from compliance with globally set codes of conduct. This article presents a case study of coffee production and trade in Uganda, aiming to do this. Producer organisations' experience suggests that there is great need for gender equality issues to be integrated into all stages of coffee production and marketing – referred to as 'value chains' – if women are to realise prosperity from their labour, and to move up the value chain as active participants and decision-makers. Producer organisations need to develop strategies for addressing gender-specific constraints, and to build women's capabilities and confidence to aspire to positions and influence across the whole value chain. They should also seek to dismantle gender discrimination in the design, implementation, and monitoring of the wider certification code in coffee value chains.

La production de café et d'autres produits commerce équitable et certifiés biologiques est communément considérée comme avantageuse pour les producteurs à de nombreux égards. Cependant, une analyse de genre du commerce équitable est importante au moment d'évaluer les gains et les pertes pour les femmes et les hommes de manière précise, gains et pertes qui résultent de l'observation de codes de conduite établis à l'échelle mondiale. Cet article présente une étude de cas de la production et du commerce du café en Ouganda qui cherche à effectuer cette analyse. L'expérience des organisations de producteurs suggère qu'il y a un besoin important d'intégrer les questions relatives à l'égalité des sexes dans toutes les étapes de la production et de la commercialisation du café – ce que l'on appelle les filières – si l'on veut que les femmes puissent prospérer grâce à leur travail et progresser dans la filière comme participantes et décideuses actives. Les organisations de producteurs doivent mettre en œuvre des stratégies pour aborder les contraintes propres à chaque sexe et pour renforcer les capacités et l'assurance des femmes afin qu'elles aspirent à des positions et à une influence dans l'ensemble de la filière. Elles devraient aussi chercher à éliminer la

discrimination fondée sur le genre dans la conception, la mise en œuvre et le suivi du code général de certification dans les filières du café.

El comercio justo, así como la producción orgánica y certificada de café y otros productos, comúnmente se cree que reporta muchos beneficios para los productores. Sin embargo, es importante analizar el comercio justo desde el género para evaluar qué ganan y qué pierden tanto las mujeres como los hombres al acomodarse a los códigos de conducta establecidos. Este artículo presenta un estudio de caso sobre producción y comercio de café en Uganda. Las experiencias de las organizaciones de productores muestran que es urgente incluir la equidad de género en todas las etapas de producción y comercialización del café – las llamadas “cadenas de valor” – para que las mujeres obtengan más beneficios de su trabajo y a la vez aumenten la cadena de valor como participantes activas y agentes decisorios. Las organizaciones de productores necesitan desarrollar estrategias para afrontar las limitantes de género y para fortalecer las capacidades y la confianza de las mujeres para que ocupen puestos e incidan en toda la cadena de valor. También se deberá eliminar la discriminación de género en el diseño, la implementación y el monitoreo de las normas de certificación en las cadenas de valor del café.

Key words: gender and value chains; gender equality; global certification; women's position; producer groups

Introduction

This article focuses on the interrelated issues of poverty, prosperity, and entrepreneurship opportunities among rural communities that are central to the attainment of a better future, in terms not only of daily life for all, but in terms of improvements to gender roles and relations – and in particular to the status and position of women. These issues are explored from a gender perspective, using coffee production and marketing (referred to in the article as coffee value chains) in Uganda as a case study.

Uganda's economy is predominantly agricultural, with about 90 per cent of the population dependent on subsistence farming, despite increased production of some export crops like coffee, following liberalisation efforts. Uganda is the second largest producer of coffee in Africa, after Ethiopia, and is the tenth largest in the world. Two species of coffee are grown: production comprises 85 per cent Robusta, mainly growing in the Lake Victoria basin, and 15 per cent Arabica, mainly growing on the slopes of Mount Rwenzori and Mount Elgon.¹ The country has a large coffee production system, with 1.321 million smallholder farmers – with farms varying

between 0.5 and 2.5 hectares in size – and about 3.5 million families are employed in coffee-related activities countrywide (Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) 2005, 75).

Coffee is Uganda's principal export, earning over US\$290 million per year (UBOS 2005, 76). As such, it has immense potential to improve the status and income of women and men in farming families. Most studies that have looked at gender roles in agriculture agree that women in Uganda perform the bulk of agricultural labour, being responsible for up to 80 per cent of food crop production, and more than 50 per cent of cash crop production (Kasente *et al.* 2002).

Though specific statistics on how much of Uganda's coffee is fair traded and certified could not be established, it is known that most of the coffee produced is organic. However, all organic coffee produced is not necessarily fair traded. Certification and Fair Trade share the common concept of corporate social responsibility as a basis. This denotes more humane, more ethical and more transparent ways of doing business. Both fair traded and certified coffee are purchased directly from farming co-operatives, eliminating the middlemen, and making it possible for farmers to earn a fair price. In practice, farmers cannot tell any difference between fair and certified trade. What the farmers care about is that they can sell their coffee at pre-defined and guaranteed minimum prices, and receive an additional premium for deliveries to market outlets. The code for production for fair and certified trade is that to be eligible for certification, farmers must be small growers, depending mainly on family labour and organised in co-operatives operating along democratic lines. Certification goes further to spell out the standards that must be complied with, covering issues like commitment to poverty alleviation, non-use of child labour, no corruption, and environmentally sound practices.

Because Fair Trade and organic certification are focusing on socially progressive issues, there may be an assumption that everyone participating in the process benefits from it. However, experience shows that often if gender roles and power relations are overlooked, life can actually become more challenging for women, and sometimes results in losses for them.

This article is based on a study whose main objective was to assess whether involvement in certified coffee production and marketing helps women to improve their status in society, as well as improving their daily well-being. In particular, the research focused on whether involvement created possibilities for women to move up the value chain, through increasing their income as well as their ability to put their skills and choices into action. In order to be certified, coffee producers and sellers need to conform to particular guidelines. Some of these affect, and are affected by, gender issues. This gives a rationale to integrate a concern for gender into the activities of producers and the firms and organisations which want to gain certified status. For example, it is important to establish whether both women and men have equal opportunities to participate and benefit from their contribution.

This requirement that gender issues receive attention if certification is to be granted is a very interesting one from a gender and development perspective. Over the years, experience has shown that gender concerns have commonly been overlooked in development interventions, especially in practice, despite existing evidence that considering gender roles and power relations have implications for women and men with regard to access to and control of benefits from their efforts (Economic Commission for Africa 2009), and for assisting female and male smallholders to cope with challenges, and to secure market access and better incomes (KIT *et al.* 2006).

As we discuss in this article, our research revealed that there are a number of challenges, especially in existing gender relations among coffee-producing households. Before analysing what these challenges are, the next sections look briefly at the research method and aims, and at the meaning and importance of gender relations and roles in connection with the production of coffee in particular, and value chains in agricultural production more generally.

The research

Our research, supported by 4 C Association,² was carried out by the author with two research assistants, between August and September 2010. It involved four groups of women and four groups of men coffee producers, producing coffee for a coffee-exporting firm, which we will refer to as Firm 1. Firm 1 is also a membership-based organisation whose main role is to develop member coffee farmers and their associations into business units that will eventually implement the required code of conduct and achieve certification. The coffee exporting firm is wholly commercial and is part of a larger group that exports coffee from other countries in East Africa and beyond. It is a member of the 4 C association with a commitment to support small-scale farmers to comply with the 4 C code of conduct so that they can qualify to be certified.

Firm 1

The research into Firm 1 used focus groups, carried out between 15 and 30 August 2010. The women and men who were involved in this process work in seven districts of Uganda, with operations in 40 sub-counties. The producer group selected for the study had been granted Fair Trade and organic certification, and was currently the only producer group working with Firm 1 that had activities which were specifically aiming to incorporate gender issues. This was the basis for selecting it for gender analysis, and assessment of the effects of certification.

Data were collected on Firm 1 producers at two levels: the coffee-farming households and producer group level. At the household level, four women-only and four men-only focus group discussions were held with a total number of

44 individuals involved. Because the project had been running for less than a year, the gender-based assessment was supplemented with information from producers that are contracted by another coffee exporting firm (Firm 2) which had undertaken activities aiming to address gender issues, but with producer groups that are not yet certified.

At the producer-group level, for Firm 1, data were collected from three employees – two men and one woman – who were directly involved with the gender-based intervention in the firm.

Firm 2

In addition, this article draws on the findings of a study of a second coffee-exporting firm, which we will call Firm 2. Firm 2 works in seven districts of Uganda, with operations in 40 sub-counties. This study was carried out in the same period, between August and September 2010. Firm 2 was selected because it serves producers who comply with the organic standard, and because it has producer groups that are implementing a specific code of conduct and a verification system aiming to stimulate continuous improvement towards sustainable coffee production practices, with the help of an exporter. Implementation of this code of conduct and verification system results in the producers' coffee qualifying for certified status.

The meaning and importance of gender and value chains

Defining value chains

Growing attention is being paid to value chains in international discussions of development, particularly in relation to the effects of globalisation on employment and poverty reduction in developing countries (Risgaard *et al.* 2010). The value chains concept describes the full range of activities that firms, farms, and workers undertake to bring a product from its conception to its end use and beyond. The activities that comprise a value chain can be contained within a single firm or distributed among different firms within a single geographical location, or spread over wider areas. In their discussion of value chain analysis as a methodology, Louise Risgaard *et al.* (2010) point out that from the 1990s, it has emerged as a tool for understanding the dynamics of economic globalisation and international trade. The approach focuses on vertical relationships between supplier, buyers, and the movement of goods or services from producer to consumer.

Scholars at KIT, Faida Market Link, and the International Institute of Rural Reconstruction (IIRR) distinguish between a supply chain and a value chain (KIT *et al.* 2006). They define a supply chain as a set of linkages between actors where there are no binding or sought-after formal or informal relationships when goods are transacted. On the other hand, a value chain is defined as a specific type of supply chain, where actors actively seek to support each other so that they can increase their efficiency and

competitiveness. They invest time, effort, and money, and build relationships with other actors to reach a common goal of satisfying consumer needs so that they can increase their profits.

Current issues in gender and value chains

Gender concerns can be consciously integrated into development interventions which focus on production and marketing activities at different points on a value chain. The rationale for doing so is that it is vital to ensure that involvement in the production and marketing activities which take place at different parts of value chains benefit both women and men.

Among the key concerns raised by scholars who have assessed the gender responsiveness of value chain interventions, particularly among African farmers, is the danger that women and vulnerable groups will be excluded by default from new and potentially profitable opportunities (KIT *et al.* 2006). This worry stems from the difficulties in overcoming the inherent gender biases in society, in culture, and in institutions. These scholars recommend that interventions should deliberately provide opportunities for the excluded. Yet knowledge among development practitioners and policymakers on how best to ensure value chains support the realisation of gender equality, and the empowerment of women producers in particular, remains limited.

Louise Risgaard *et al.* (2010) point out that value chain analysis should emphasise transforming gender relations in order to enhance women's ability to shape their lives. This means moving away from less transformative gender analysis in value chain interventions that confines itself to an analysis of the gender division of labour, and the allocation and control of resources. A gendered understanding of value chain interventions – and an assessment of the potential of interventions to promote women's empowerment – should be a continuum that starts with an awareness of the way interventions may have different impacts on women and men. The next stage should look beyond awareness, to measure the increase in gains for female actors in the chain, and finally, should evaluate the degree to which interventions address gender inequality at the level of the household, in institutions, and in value chain governance (*ibid.*).

In an example where such an analytical framework was applied – to a study of organic-certified pineapple and coffee producers (Bolwig and Odeke 2007) – some of the findings indicated that conversion to organic production had significantly increased women's workload in coffee production, while the effect on male labour was weaker. The same study also found that there was no automatic correlation between participation in value chain interventions and positive change in household decision-making. As one firm worker explained,

the standards are not specifically targeted at women or gender, though there is a clause on non-discrimination in participation. (ibid., 24)

In the next three sections, findings of the research are discussed. First, we examine gender relations among coffee producers and their households; second, we consider gender concerns within the organisations themselves; and in the third section, we look at strategies adopted by the organisations to try to address these issues.

Analysing gender relations in coffee production at smallholder level

In a focus group discussion, women participants raised five concerns. First, they observed that the gender division of labour still dominates decisions on who performs which tasks in coffee production and marketing. While this was said to have a positive side to it, in that it demonstrated that women or men cannot manage the whole coffee production process on their own, and that they needed each other, rewards for women's and men's labour worked in men's favour. As one woman stated,

Working with each other is good because it promotes complementarity, however it would be better if benefits were going to us both. (Women's focus group, Wobulenzi, Luwero, 30 August 2010)

The second concern women raised at the same focus group related to the gendered division of labour. They pointed out that:

Specialisation in tasks limits us. We are only expected to give labour on the farm and as a result, we have no capacity for going up the coffee marketing process. (ibid.)

A third concern was women's low stakes in coffee production demonstrated among coffee-producing households whose male heads die or fall sick. It was noted that most women will switch to other crops if they become owners of the coffee plantations. This was because they strongly feel that coffee is a man's crop and they are more familiar with growing and marketing food crops.

Fourth in the list of concerns for women in this focus group emerged as the group discussed the lack of women's interest in coffee production. In their own words:

Women's presence as coffee producers will remain low because of the link it has to land ownership. We do not and cannot sell land or use it as collateral to get financial resources to meet our needs or to invest in other business. (ibid.)

The fifth, and main concern for the women, was men's domination of coffee marketing, specifically:

As women we are exploited. We neither participate in coffee marketing nor do we get meaningful proceeds from sale of coffee. As a result, we are not motivated, and we have no skill in coffee marketing. (ibid.)

From the data collected in our research into producers working for Firm 1, the overall observation was that gender-based differences affecting coffee production at household level remained very pronounced in all aspects: in patterns of land ownership, the division of labour in production and marketing, and in decision-making about using the proceeds earned from the sale of coffee.

In Firm 1's coffee production at household level, both women and men were involved, but at different levels. There was a distinct level of specialisation in activities. In one of the focus group discussions, women described their tasks in relation to coffee:

We are involved in tending the coffee trees, harvesting, drying, processing and packing of the coffee beans. (Women's focus group, Kalagala, Luwero, 6 September 2010)

On the other hand, men described their tasks thus: 'as men, we are involved in planting, pruning, marketing and utilising the proceeds from the sale of coffee' (men's focus group, Kalagala, Luwero, 6 September 2010).

A quick calculation showed that women were spending roughly eight hours of their daily working time on activities relating to coffee production, especially during the harvesting season, when they worked with children to pick, dry and store the coffee beans. One of the complaints raised by the women from coffee-producing households concerned unpaid labour. As one of them said:

In my family and others around, women and children provided unpaid labour on their husbands' coffee plantations as a duty. We do not own the coffee or participate in decision concerning production or sale of coffee. We continue to do this from year to year for fear of domestic violence. (Women's focus group, Mukono, 8 September 2010)

Women strongly expressed lack of hope about being able to change the terms of their unequal participation in coffee production. To quote one of the women leaders:

Coffee is a perennial cash crop which takes long period to mature and which requires intensive care and this is not about to change. It can only be owned by men who own land and who command household labour at will to take care of the different production processes. (Women's focus group, Mukono, 8 September 2010)

Some earlier studies in Uganda (Sengooba 1996; Tumusiime 1996) have shown that cultural practices in the coffee-producing communities, and in most other areas of Uganda, dictate that women do not own land. Hence the few who do have either purchased it formally, using the civil law, or are one of the few widows whose husbands have bequeathed the land to them in a will. There are a few relatively recent cases in which some women have inherited land, especially in households where fathers are educated, but this is not a common trend.

In the case study focus group discussion with producers producing coffee for Firm 1, examples were given where some women had inherited land, either from their parents or as widows, but as was explained,

Most of the women who are lucky to inherit their husbands' land end up selling it to meet their daily needs. (Women's focus group discussion, Masaka, 24 August 2010)

It was also reported that some widows had passed back the land they inherited to their sons when the sons grew up, because they had been brought up to believe that land must belong to a man. There was strong indication that male-dominated ownership of land had translated into a very limited number of women being direct coffee producers.

Both women's and men's focus group discussions recognised that men dominated coffee marketing. Men had no problem with this, because, as one man explained,

Coffee is equal to money, and since men have the duty to provide money to their household, coffee is rightfully a man's crop. (Men's focus group discussion, Masaka, 24 August 2010)

On the other hand, women blamed their lack of interest in coffee on this male domination of the marketing process. According to one:

most women do not get involved in the marketing of coffee. Most of us never get to see or even to know how much money was made from the sale of coffee and not even where the money was spent. Why should we be interested? (Women's focus group discussion, Masaka, 24 August 2010)

The women gave examples of a very few families where women were involved in marketing and in joint planning over utilisation of coffee proceeds, and they said that such families had become wealthy. The practical experiences shared by the second coffee exporter included the fact that many men were forced to sell coffee berries without adding value to them because their wives and children often stole dry coffee beans and sold these to male traders to raise income for domestic needs. The common phenomenon of women 'stealing coffee' to meet domestic needs was reported to be responsible for rampant domestic violence and family breakdown in coffee-producing households. However, in the same women's focus group discussions at Masaka, women denied that they were 'stealing' the coffee. As one of the women stated, 'Women cannot steal from themselves'.

From the analysis of gender relations in coffee production at smallholder level, it is evident that though both women and men work in the labour-intensive production of coffee, there is a gendered division of activities and resources that does not favour women. The women have to work harder to balance their usual workloads with the

added labour involved in producing coffee to the standard necessary to attain certified coffee status. They do this without sharing in any ownership of the crop, or receiving any of the money that comes from coffee sales. At a women's focus group,³ we were told that many women have devised secret ways of selling coffee at the farm to meet their needs, without the permission of the men, a practice that has earned them the undignified description of being thieves of their own produce.

Men, on the other hand, dominate the marketing of the highly sought-after certified coffee, and a number of them have diversified out of farming altogether, to focus on the more lucrative producer groups that deal directly with exporters. From the qualitative data that were generated by focus group discussions and key informant interviews, it was apparent that coffee production offers more income, and more possibilities for off-farm diversification for men, and while a few women may benefit from it, coffee production increases labour burdens, and strains social relations for women. More attention must be focused on the constraints faced by women in coffee production, especially those that are detrimental to their position in the household. Some responses indicated that many women do not welcome the loss of autonomy – especially resulting from coercive demands for their labour, and that of their children – that they experience in coffee-production processes. While coffee may have the potential to benefit smallholder households, especially by bringing in large chunks of income, unequal gender relations in the marketing and control of proceeds have limited women's interest in participating fully in coffee value chains.

Analysing gender concerns within producer organisations and coffee value chains

Firm 1

The case study of Firm 1 focused on two areas. The first assessed the successes and challenges of measures undertaken by the firm to improve the terms of participation of women and men along the different value chain. The second looked for some qualitative (and quantitative, if any) evidence that indicated whether compliance with a code of conduct, to a level of getting certified, could be linked to positive change in gender relations or otherwise, along different coffee value chains.

Whatever other challenges were observed, Firm 1's staff appeared aware of the current terms of the ongoing debate on the importance of integrating gender issues into value chains, and had taken a position to develop different action to implement this position. However, the strategy to integrate gender at all levels was still in the formative stage. To their credit, the employees we interviewed demonstrated a good grasp of gender issues at different levels of the coffee value chain, especially at the smallholder level. They were aware that the key traditional values that reinforce gender inequality are deeply embedded, and that it would take a long time to

change them among coffee-producing households and within Firm 1's institutional structures, even when a clear and strategic gender integration programme was finally in place.

For example, the documents we reviewed from Firm 1 had hardly any gender-related information, beyond a disaggregation of the numbers of women and men employed at different levels. The organisation shared basic knowledge about the gender issues it had to contend with in its efforts to integrate gender concerns into its activities. One of the gender experts said: 'we have to find empowering solutions to three key gender issues' (focus group discussion with Firm 1 staff, Kampala, 30 August 2010). The key issue referred to here was the lack of gender-disaggregated statistics that the firm could use as a basis to plan their gender training activities. For example, training of producer groups in clusters of 20–25 people was undertaken at what was referred to as the Depot Committee level. The gender officer told us:

At the Depot Committee level, majority of the participants are men. At the other levels we do not have a clue how many women are participating. (Focus group discussion with Firm 1 staff, Kampala, 30 August 2010)

Firm 2

In contrast, staff from Firm 2 that we interviewed (whose producer groups were not yet certified) had longer experience with integrating gender concerns into activities with the producers, and within their own institution, and had more gender-related results to share. They did not have gender-disaggregated data about women's participation, but admitted that there were very few women involved in associations, as business managers, and on the board of directors. However, there were more women than men among those packing coffee, and those in quality control.

Firm 2 staff were concerned in general about low representation of women, especially in decision-making positions in producer organisations. Women's representation in producer organisations was very limited, and even the few women who attended did not tend to actively participate. Staff attributed this mainly to stereotyping about women's skills. For example, women were seen as appropriate participants in the inspection teams mainly because they were perceived as good at asking questions relating to social and gender indicators. As one of the employees told us:

Even at the producer group level, women are expected to respond to questions concerning gender and social issues, and not necessarily on technical aspects. (Focus group discussion with Firm 2 staff, Kampala, 30 August 2010)

The third issue we encountered in Firm 2 concerned a general negative attitude about women in business within society and in institutions. We were informed that one of the reasons why women are under-represented as business managers is because of

negative attitudes towards shrewd business women who are given abusive names. One of the employees said:

the women who decide to join coffee trade are actually doing well but they get discouraged because they are given the name equivalent to a he-goat. Even our colleagues in the organisation refer to them by such names. Only a few women persist in business, despite the discouragement they face. (Focus group discussion with Firm 2 staff, Kampala, 30 August 2010)

Another challenge women producers linked to Firm 2 reported that they face is the process of transporting coffee to processors. As one of the women traders said, this is seen as inconvenient, with implications for women's roles as minders for children and homes, and also inappropriate in that it challenges stereotypes of men as the main breadwinners for families:

As a married woman I find it inconvenient to leave children at home and travel, and at the same time I feel that transporting and marketing coffee is not really a woman's role. I just have to do it because my husband developed a disability that does not allow him to travel. (Women's focus group discussion, Entebbe, 7 September 2010)

In addition to the three challenges shared, Firm 2 staff said that they had to contend with women's lack of confidence, especially at producer level. We were informed that in the process of preparing producer households for certification, the inspectors went with a checklist to collect some information. From their experience, while women were mainly the ones who did the activities relevant to different parts of the code, they were either too shy to respond to the questions put to them or they were not confident that their knowledge was valid. What one woman said to them was typical of most women producers' attitude:

Please return when my husband is at home. He is the one who can answer your questions because he attended your training sessions. (Focus group discussion with Firm 2 staff, Kampala, 30 August 2010)

The woman provided all the answers after the inspectors convinced her that the information required concerned the activities the women performed on the coffee farm every day. The women often got surprised that what they did was important and useful for inspectors (*ibid.*).

Analysing interventions aiming to address gender issues in coffee value chains

In our research, we assessed the obstacles and opportunities for efforts to integrate gender concerns into the coffee value chains. Unsurprisingly, Firm 1, which was

already addressing gender concerns with producers in the group we focused on, had chosen to start with an intervention which focused on gender relations at the household level. The organisation had as its objective, 'to enhance women's empowerment at the coffee household level'.

Building awareness at household level

The specific action Firm 1 had taken was to try to build an awareness of gender issues among the families of producers, and among staff, so that they could together identify gender issues that needed to be addressed to facilitate compliance with codes required to get certified.

Having observed that the way women participated in coffee production was greatly affected by their marital status, one of the strategies Firm 1 had developed was to categorise women into groups of widows, single mothers, divorced women, and married women. For the married women category, the firm conducted discussions among the couples, particularly focusing on the fact that women's labour and time devoted to coffee production were not adequately compensated when the coffee was sold. Firm 1's personnel discussed these issues with women and their families, raising them via an analysis of the family 'activity profile', with all household members. During this exercise, farmers (female and male) have come to realise that women worked for much longer hours than men, as much as 15 hours a day during the coffee-harvesting season, while men worked for a maximum of eight hours during the same season. The family members were able to explain that this imbalance happened because women and men all put in the same eight hours for coffee harvesting, but the women had added another seven hours to do their routine household chores.

This gross imbalance in household labour was used as an entry point by the staff of Firm 1 and by women, for negotiating with men to realise that when women do not benefit from the labour they put into coffee production, they will not have sustained motivation and interest in complying with the standard demanded by certification. The aim was to improve equity in decision-making at the household level using a well-thought-out process where each community selects two individuals (a woman and a man) who are considered as motivated and capable of supporting development for their community. These selected individuals are known as *animators* and their role is to act as catalysts for group-level activities as well as being facilitators in their communities. These animators are then trained in gender analysis skills and in sector-specific issues such as gender best practices in the coffee value chain. They are given materials in local languages to guide their participatory gender analysis and they are also given a reporting format for capturing gender and other issues to pass on to other levels. This intervention seems to be working well, though it was too soon to assess its impact.

While it was too soon to prove whether the strategy had yielded positive results, the study found anecdotal information which indicated that in some households, where men started involving women more in decision-making about spending the proceeds from coffee sales, production and sales had gone up noticeably, and standards for certification were met faster. Certification had, in turn, increased the prices of coffee generally, because when middlemen went to households to buy coffee, they asked for the certification papers to see how the farmers' production was rated, and that helped farmers to negotiate for a higher price. The message may not yet be widespread, but a number of households already accepted that when all household members were fully involved in production and when men took decisions that involved other household members, especially their wives, the family realised more output and more benefit.

Coffee producer groups informed us that they were making an effort to convince men to involve all family members in processing, marketing, and recording proceeds from sales. One technique they were employing was to use household heads who involve their wives and children in decision-making over coffee processes to testify that the volume of coffee for sale multiplied as much as threefold when all household members participated in decision-making. However, men in their group discussions confessed that they were making gradual changes in their practices. As one man put it:

I can now inform my wife how much money was made from coffee sales but I still dominate decision-making over utilisation of such proceeds. (Men's focus group discussion, Entebbe, 7 September 2010, translated by the author from local language)

The producer groups doing this household-level awareness-raising have now scaled up the household-based gender analysis of division of labour and control over financial resources to over 1,080 households out of the targeted 2,000. They originally started by involving less than 100 households.

Encouraging women leaders

The second action Firm 1 was taking was to encourage women to take leadership positions in coffee producer groups, particularly targeting widows and female household heads. The objective for this intervention was to encourage women to break out of thinking that leadership was a male role. This action was perceived as fairly long term by staff of the firm, because, as one of the employees told us:

The very low representation of women in producer organisations implies that influencing women's views and getting their voices is still very limited. (Focus group discussion with Firm 2 staff, Kampala, 30 August 2010)

In line with this, we did not find any evidence to show that this objective had been achieved, implying that it is harder to shift women's participation to more rewarding positions in the value chains than to improve gender relations of production at the household level.

Assessing the effect of compliance with code of conduct for certificate on gender relations

On the basis of the case study, we found no robust evidence at all levels of the coffee value chains that would justify talking about the effect of certification on gender relations at this stage, mainly because the gender-related interventions described here have only been implemented for a short time. However, there is enough indication from anecdotal information that both positive and negative impacts are likely to occur at all levels, suggesting that there is need for carefully targeted strategies in order to maximise the positive impacts, and to stop – or at least reduce – the negative ones. For example, there are indications that coffee-related labour demands at household level have started to go up for women and men while women's workloads have almost doubled because of their additional household chores. The quality of care for tending the coffee plant requires a much higher standard than farmers were used to, as did the rest of the production process. In addition, fertilisers have to be applied, as an added activity that had not been commonly done in traditional coffee production. For this activity, men buy the fertilisers and application of both the purchased chemicals and organic fertilisers is generally left to women. The rest of the division of labour has not changed from what was described under the section on gender relations in coffee production.

Concluding remarks

The results of analysing producer organisations' experience of attempting to integrate gender into coffee value chains, and the effect of their efforts to earn, and then comply, with codes of conduct, has clear implications for gender relations in the coffee producers' households and producer groups. There is clearly a great need for gender equality issues to be integrated into all stages of the coffee value chains, if women are to realise prosperity from their labour at the household level, and to move up the value chain as active participants and decision-makers.

Further research is needed into specific cases in different contexts. However, this study of Ugandan coffee production suggests that currently, women are almost exclusively positioned at the bottom of the coffee value chain, providing labour for production without realising benefits from their labour. In trying to increase women's presence in the value chains, Firm 1 was currently focusing challenging attitudes and beliefs through raising awareness of inequality and its relationship to the workloads of women and men in the household; and of the impact on household well-being of

involving both women and men equally in decision-making. It is attempting to convince men that the work women do on the farms is as valuable as that of the men, and that women should therefore share in decision-making over the production and marketing of coffee, as well as how to use the money that comes from sales. The organisation does not currently have a clear strategy for strengthening women's own bargaining power.

Male advantage across the complete coffee value chain means that men will benefit by default from all the interventions that intend to enhance entrepreneurship in poor rural communities through certified coffee exports. We conclude that producer organisations need an explicit two-pronged strategy to integrate gender concerns effectively. First, they should continue their existing efforts to address women's gender-specific constraints and take this through the complete coffee value chain. This may include women-specific interventions, aiming especially to build their capabilities and confidence to aspire to leadership positions and influence across the whole value chain. But they should also focus on the institutionalisation of gender issues within the organisations themselves, seeking to dismantle gender discrimination in the design, implementation, and monitoring of the wider coffee value chains.

Deborah Kasente is an Associate Professor at the School of Women and Gender Studies of Makerere University. Postal address: Makerere University, P.O. Box 7062, Kampala, Uganda. Email: dhkasente@gmail.com

Notes

- 1 Robusta and Arabica refer to the types of coffee produced in Uganda. Robusta is produced in the Lake Victoria basin. In Uganda it is grown in the central, eastern, western and south-western areas up to 1,200m above sea level. Arabica was introduced into Uganda from Ethiopia. It is grown on the slopes of Mount Rwenzori, Mount Elgon, Mount Muhabura and West Nile region, between 1,300 and 2,300m above sea level.
- 2 4 C Association (Common Code for the Coffee Community) is a global association that collectively engages producers, trade, industry, and civil society responsible for the economic, social, and environmental concerns of the coffee sector to continuously increase the sustainability of coffee.
- 3 We have withheld the identity of this focus group due to the sensitivity of this information.

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