

**AFRICA CENTRE FOR GENDER, SOCIAL RESEARCH AND
IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

**QUALITATIVE ASSESSMENT OF THE EFFECTIVENESS
OF A GENDER TRANSFORMATIVE PROGRAMMING ON
CHANGING GENDER AND SOCIAL NORMS AND
WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT**

Report Prepared for CARE International, Burundi



12/1/2018

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The “Win-Win for Gender, Agriculture and Nutrition: Testing a Gender-Transformative Approach from Asia in Africa” is a project aimed at establishing a comparison between a gender-transformative model to achieve gender equality (the “EKATA” model), and a gender-mainstreamed approach in the agriculture sector (“Gender-Light model”), in which basic activities around gender are integrated into a program whose principle focus and measures of success are women’s economic empowerment through agriculture and micro-enterprise development.

The qualitative research is using in-depth interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) of a subset of women and their spouses who are participating in the program. For the in-depth interviews, 30 people (22 women and their spouses) were selected and are followed every year to document different pathways to empowerment. They were randomly selected from a strata of all women interviewed at baseline to reflect different social economic and marital status. On the other hand, 106 people (45 men and 61 women) participated in a total of ten FGDs.

Data was collected on gender division of labour, decision making in the household, control over income, ownership of assets, nutrition, production, general life satisfaction, empowerment, autonomy, leadership and collective action, couple conflict and gender based violence and men’s care giving practices.

There were distinct differences in a number of variables across the women in the EKATA, Gender Light and the Control groups. Men and women from EKATA group reported the highest diversity of extension information sources and types of information, whereas women from control only reported one source of information. Men and women in EKATA have had more trainings than those in the Gender Light and Control groups. The EKATA members had up to five trainings while those in the Gender Light group mentioned five trainings for women and two trainings for men. Women from the Control group had one training and men from the control group did not report being trained on any topic. Adoption of good agricultural practices also varied across the treatment groups. Among the women, those from gender light reported four GAPs, those from EKATA three and from the control group two. In terms of access to food, households in the Control and the Gender Light groups indicated they had food shortages an average of 2.1 months while those in the EKATA group seemed to be the most food secure with food shortages for 1.4 months of the year. In some of the households especially in the EKATA group there seemed to be more mixed sharing of roles but marketing remained mainly a role for men.

There were shifts in decision making in the EKATA groups from men making all decisions to them consulting with their wives and deciding jointly with them. From FGDs, it was however clear men often made the key suggestions on use of income and often had the last say in the event of a disagreement. Women in the EKATA groups were more satisfied with the level of decision making that they had on household finances with the women in the Control and in the Gender Light group being at the same level. The most commonly owned household assets were land, livestock (cows, goats, pigs, guinea pigs and chicken), houses, solar panels, bicycles. Of these assets, married women only mentioned owning chickens and guinea pigs individually. Most of the other assets were either owned by men or jointly by men and women.

Women in the control group were more likely to define empowerment from very practical perspectives of being self-sufficient by for example having enough food for their families and not working in other people's fields and being able to take care of their families. In the EKATA sites, women were more likely to define empowerment as women's agency and ability to inspire other women, their families and communities. On whether the women interviewed had experienced any form of violence, the most common form of violence experienced by women was the use of humiliating language. Fewer women had experiences violence in the EKATA groups and what is most illustrative though of the differences across treatments was how women would deal with the abuse. All the women in the EKATA Group indicated they would report the matter to someone, community leaders, the police, women's rights organizations or the Abatangamucho while a lot of the women in the Control and Gender Light group reported to other family members or tolerated the violence. During FGDs men mentioned some solutions to reduce gender based violence including avoiding alcohol. Men indicated they were less likely to report if they were abused unless the abuse was alcohol related.

The most common groups that women belonged to were VSLAs with most of the women in the Gender Light and EKATA being members of a VSLA. Women viewed VSLAs as the most important group for women due to their ability to save money, borrow for their needs and to start businesses, as well as gain some independence from their husbands. All the women in the EKATA group considered themselves leaders while only about half of the women in the other groups considered themselves as leaders. Across treatments, men were generally supportive of women being members of VSLAs due to benefits and often supported in terms of sharing household tasks and contributing to payments.

Women in the Control Group had the lowest scores for their level of satisfaction in life while women in both the EKATA and Gender Light groups had a similar but higher score for general satisfaction with live. Consequently, more women in the Control group wanted to change their lives.

1 INTRODUCTION

Although the role of women in agriculture varies widely, across the developing world, women farmers share a common set of gender-based disadvantages. They tend to have less access than men to productive resources like land, livestock, and labour; less access to credit and limited control over household income; and less access than men to agriculture extension services and markets (FAO, 2011). In Burundi, where 80 percent of women depend on agriculture for their livelihoods, deeply rooted gender discrimination and gender-based violence contribute significantly to low productivity and profitability of women's economic enterprises, which in turn exacerbates poverty and food insecurity and poor nutrition.

It is widely recognized that “the gender gap” imposes costs on the agriculture sector and that “closing the gender gap” would generate a significant gain for that sector and for global food security and well-being. This current state of affairs begs the question: How do these staggering gaps persist despite several decades of gender mainstreaming in development interventions, along with microfinance and other economic empowerment programs focused exclusively on women? This mainstream development approach to gender that focuses mainly on women's economic empowerment sees gender inequality as a technical fix, or as a challenge that individuals can address on their own (Kabeer, 2012). This view allows development agencies to edit out the key words – power, injustice, collective action, consciousness-raising – that recognize gender inequality as an inherently political struggle and a structural issue, not a technical problem or simply a question of unequal resources. Deeply unequal gender stereotypes, norms and values can be drivers in the systemic violation of women and girls' rights in Burundi, including their unequal resource and opportunity access. An approach that starts with developing critical consciousness and challenging discriminatory beliefs and social norms, through a Freirian model of critical reflection, community dialogue and collective action is needed to change these unequal relations (Freire 1970). CARE hypothesizes that a gender-transformative approach that focuses on power relations and social norms will not only yield deeper, more lasting gender equality outcomes, but also more profound and more sustainable effects on sectoral outcomes, specifically household food security and economic well-being.

The “Win-Win for Gender, Agriculture and Nutrition: Testing a Gender-Transformative Approach from Asia in Africa” is a project aimed at establishing a comparison between a gender-transformative model to achieve gender equality (the “EKATA” model), and a gender-mainstreamed approach in the agriculture sector (“Gender-Light model”), in which basic activities around gender are integrated into a program whose principle focus and measures of success are women's economic empowerment through agriculture and micro-enterprise development.

The key question in the project is “What is the added value and what are the associated costs of applying a gender-transformative approach within an agriculture intervention, in terms of accelerating lasting transformations in gender equality, food security and economic well-being?”

The project builds off a concept of proof from CARE's successful implementation of the gender-transformative “EKATA” approach, which has been shown to bring significant changes in social

norms as well as amplify positive outcomes of large-scale food security projects in South Asia. The EKATA approach was developed in Bangladesh to promote education, empowerment and social change to attain women's empowerment through improved gender equality, economic well-being and food and nutrition security. EKATA is a version of the Reflect approach (developed by ActionAid), which is based on the work of Paulo Freire, whose writings emphasize the importance of enabling oppressed people to develop the skills and critical consciousness to challenge existing power inequalities and claim basic rights and drive social change.

CARE's EKATA model is premised on the notion that meaningful and sustainable gender transformation occurs when women focus directly on the underlying and political dimensions of gender inequality to challenge relations through the development of critical consciousness and reflection skills. EKATA assumes that transformation occurs when women receive skills and peer collective action which support their on-going strategies for gaining dignity, respect and a change in their households and communities. EKATA positions women as the drivers of change, creating secure and trusted spaces to collectively prioritize pressing social constraints. The EKATA model is successful not only because it helps create a safe space for women to build self-confidence, but also to build a sense of solidarity and support for one another to collectively work to create change. Collective action is used to directly challenge and change gender norms which affect both women and men in the community.

While the EKATA model has proved successful in transforming women's critical consciousness and collective action in South Asia, CARE Burundi has also pioneered an innovative and successful approach to working with men for transformation of harmful social norms. Leveraging and supporting a men's movement called "Abantagamuco" groups, CARE Burundi supports male change agents who travel throughout their communities, sharing personal stories of positive change and encouraging others to reflect on and question the beliefs and practices that prevent women's empowerment and consider a better way of life. This approach is coupled with men's reflection groups that, with support from CARE and partner staff, will use power and gender socialization analyses, and other tools, to reflect on how their deeply held beliefs and attitudes negatively impact the well-being not only of women but of their own families. The reflection groups also identify practical ways in which they can be more supportive of the autonomy and rights of the women around them.

The project seeks to adapt and replicate the South Asian EKATA model for CARE Burundi's important agriculture programming, while integrating Burundi's critical, synergistic component of engaging men in a process of critical reflection.

The three objectives of the project are:

1. To contextually adapt EKATA, a proven and impactful gender-transformative approach, for use in a multi-sectoral agricultural intervention in Burundi
2. To evaluate the differences in outcomes and processes of the gender-transformative EKATA approach compared against a standard Gender Light approach in the outcome areas of gender equality, and food security and economic well-being.
3. To determine the differential costs and capacities required to support lasting transformations in gender equality and improved sectoral outcomes through a gender-transformative approach, as compared with the standard Gender Light model.

2 METHODOLOGY

The overall research design is based on a two-arm quasi-experimental study design with reasonably matched comparison groups receiving the EKATA or the Gender Light interventions, respectively. The two groups are compared against a typical VSLA intervention as a control group to isolate the impacts of VSLA activities. Groups in both intervention arms receive identical packages of livelihood support, with a focus on introduction of new agricultural technologies (such as improved rice varieties) through training and field demonstrations, market-based agriculture extension support, market linkages, access to microfinance, as well as nutrition information and home garden support. The unique difference between the two arms is the extent and the level of intensity of their respective gender components.

A cluster sampling technique was used to randomly select “collines” or villages. The two gender models and a control were randomly allocated at the level of the colline, with all VSLA’s in a colline implementing one approach to avoid spillover effects. A before and after, and with and without model (the double difference), was designed to isolate the impacts of the models and analyze the additional impacts of implementing the EKATA model, compared to the Gender Light and the control.

The qualitative research reported here uses in-depth interviews of a subset of women and their spouses. For the in-depth interviews, 6 women per commune and their spouses (two each from the EKATA, the Gender Light and the control arms of the study) were selected and are followed every year to document different pathways to empowerment. They were selected from a strata of all women interviewed at baseline to reflect different social economic and marital status. A total of ten Focus Group Discussions were carried out. Four FGDs were carried out in the Control areas, two with women and two with men. In the EKATA sites, three FGDs were carried out, two with men and one with women. In the Gender Light sites, three FGDs were done, two with women and one with men.

The qualitative data collection is conducted by Africa Gender Centre staff and implemented in collaboration with the CARE International team in Burundi. Key topics covered in the data collection include gender division of labour, decision making in the household, control over income, ownership of assets, nutrition, production, general life satisfaction, empowerment, autonomy, leadership and collective action, couple conflict and gender based violence and men’s care giving practices.

Data is compared across the EKATA, Gender Light and Control respondents, between married and unmarried women, and between men and women within and across treatments. This is complemented with data from the Focus Group Discussions.

Data for the 2018 round was collected in July and August.

3 RESULTS

3.1 CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS IN THE SAMPLE

A total of 22 women and nine men were interviewed. Thirteen of the women were married while nine were not married. Selection of women was based on age, with half of the women being under 30 years and the other half being over 45 years old. This was aimed at observing patterns of whether married and unmarried women, older and younger women followed different empowerment paths. The sampled women were well distributed across the treatments with seven women being in the EKATA Group, seven in the Gender Light and eight in the Control Group.

Table 1: Characteristics of women in the Sample

| Age | Marital Status | Treatment |
|-------------------------------|----------------|------------------|
| Average age of women =39.8 | Married = 13 | EKATA = 7 |
| Average age of spouses = 44.5 | Not Married =9 | Gender Light = 7 |
| | | Control = 8 |

A total of nine men were interviewed, three each from each of the treatment groups. All the men were spouses of the women VSLA members.

For the Focus Group Discussions, 106 people participated, 45 men and 61 women.

3.2 LIVELIHOODS

3.2.1 Key agricultural tasks

According to women, most (n=15) households conducted five main agricultural tasks: clearing the bush, cultivation, planting, weeding and harvesting. Seven households did not clear the bush and, therefore, had four activities because there was no bush to clear. Most men indicated that they engaged in all five cropping activities, bush clearing, cultivation, planting, weeding and harvesting. There did not see to be a difference between them men and the women in terms of carrying out these cropping activities.

Table 2: Number of cropping activities by gender and test group

| Test | Control | | EKATA | | Gender light | |
|---------------------|---------|-----|-------|-----|--------------|-----|
| | Women | Men | Women | Men | Women | Men |
| All five activities | 7 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 2 |
| Four activities | 1 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| Three activities | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |

On probing whether there are some specific activities done by women only and all men only, it appeared that even for agricultural activities, generally there were some tasks that were more likely to be done by men rather than women and vice versa across treatment groups. For example activities such as selling commodities in the market were done by men while activities such as weeding were more likely to be done by women and adult children.

“My wife and I do most activities together, but women do the following more than men - mulching, planting and weeding. If there is something to sell, I am more likely to sell it than my wife. The children help in these activities when they are not studying or herding/ looking for fodder for the cow.” Married Man, Kirundo Commune (C)

“Our children are very young, but I employ people to work with us. My wife, together with workers, weeds and harvests and I sell what we have agreed with my wife to sell” Married Man, Bwambarangwe Commune (GL)

This was also echoed by women especially those in the Control Group.

“My husband and I do all agricultural activities. I am more likely than him to weed, but he helps when he is around. I burn the weeds and he sells produce whenever we sell. Our children are too small (2 and 5yrs) to help.” Married Woman, Mutaho Commune (C)

Women in the Control group also noted the unfair division of labour including of agricultural tasks and the fact that men seemed to enjoy the benefits more.

“We have realized that there is an unfair division of tasks. We are the ones who are much involved in the production, but when it’s time for enjoying the harvest, men do not allow us to take part in decision making. Another problem is that men may sell the produce before the harvest time without letting us know it”. Female FGD participants, Gikuyo Colline (C)

While global statistics show that about 43% of the labour in agriculture is provided by women, Burundi is one of the countries where this labour contribution is over 50% at 55% of the agricultural labour force and women also do 70% of farm work (IFAD, 2008).

In the FGDs, this division of labour was also explicit. Both men and women indicated taking out cattle, planting, weeding, clearing land, harvesting, drying and winnowing were mainly done by women. Activities such as fetching and putting manure, adding fertilizer and carrying produce to the granary and selling produce and livestock were more associated with men. In the Control Groups, men also mentioned “organising things” and “making decisions” on key tasks to be done for the day as their responsibility.

In some of the households especially in the EKATA group there seemed to be more mixed sharing of roles but marketing remained mainly a role for men.

“We do most work with my wife and employees and pays them with part of the harvest. We use fertilizer sometimes because we have enough manure. I take produce to the market with the bike and I buy what the family needs because I have the time.” Married Man, Mbwambarangwe Commune (E)

This was also reflected in the FGDs as one of the results of the EKATA training. As a female FGD participant indicated when asked whether there is sharing of tasks between men and women within a household;

“Yes. In my opinion, VSLA has come to deliver us. Before its introduction, things were different. A woman was in charge of all of them. But with the project implementation, we have gained training lessons on change that also reached men. Now, we give

testimonies that win-win has played a significant role in us. It is not normal for a man to help in those activities. Speaking from my own experience, before when I asked him to join me on farm, he could tell me if you didn't take a hoe and dirty clothes to put on when on the farm for him he could not come. When he accepted to come I felt honored. And I could do it so as to please him and get that chance to have him on the farm." Female FGD participant, Bwambarangwe Commune (E)

3.2.2 Gender division of household tasks

On the surface, available data indicates that all men and all women cook and fetch water (Table 3). Generally, older children helped around the home, but most people interviewed had grown children living away from home and the fewer than 30 year olds' children were too young to help with the chores.

Table 3: Household activities by gender and test group

| Test | Control | | EKATA | | Gender light | |
|----------------|--------------|------------|--------------|------------|--------------|------------|
| | Women N=8 | Men N=3 | Women N=7 | Men N=3 | Women N=7 | Men N=3 |
| Cook | 8 | 2 | 7 | 3 | 7 | 3 |
| Fetch water | 8 | 3 | 6 | 3 | 7 | 2 |
| Fetch firewood | 7 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 6 | 2 |
| Wash clothes | 7 | Nr | 7 | 1 | 4 | 1 |
| Wash dishes | 4 | Nr | 5 | 2 | 3 | 2 |

Nr-no response

Women do these chores more frequently than men as both women and men indicated that men did these chores only or mostly when the women were away (all groups) or if they were present but busy doing other things (EKATA). While specific data for Burundi on time use does not exist, data from elsewhere in Africa shows that women spend a disproportionate amount of time on domestic tasks. For example, in Malawi, rural women are spending on average 9.1 hours per week fetching water and firewood, compared to 1.1 hours per week for men. Collectively, rural women in sub-Saharan Africa spend about 40 billion hours a year collecting water (UN Women, 2014). Unpaid care work is both an important aspect of economic activity and an indispensable factor contributing to the well-being of individuals, their families and societies.

Men from the control group and gender light rarely washed clothes and dishes, but those from EKATA group did these chores as well as feed and bathe children.

"I can do household chores only when my wife is not around" Married Man, Mutaho Commune (C)

I do all these roles [household tasks like cooking or cleaning] when my wife is sick or occupied with other things. Married Man, Bugendana Commune (E)

Men in one of the FGDs in the Control sites also indicated they would only carry out domestic tasks if their wives were away or sick, otherwise the wife might take it as "interference" with her duties.

Women were conscious about how other people would view their husbands if they were seen carrying out domestic tasks. When asked whether men carry out domestic tasks;

“Yes. Nevertheless, there are some activities that you would not let him do such as fetching water, sweeping, feeding little children and cooking when you are present because he would look ridiculous” Female FGD participant, Gikuyo Colline (C).

This is most likely due to women’s conditioning and socialization that reinforces the idea that domestic work is women’s work. As girls, women have been taught to prepare food and clothes and everything that is associated with “women’s duties”. With higher participation of women in activities outside the home, domestic tasks pose a double burden for women.

Women in the EKATA groups were more likely to say that men engage in domestic tasks although similar to what men indicated, men often tended to do this when women were either away or unable to do these tasks due to illness. Gender stereotypes are very distinct in the control group and seemed more relaxed in the EKATA groups.

“My husband can cook, wash clothes and fetch water if I am busy and away. He can cook and feed children. He does this often when he is at home. He’s away most of the time.” Married Woman, Bugendana Commune (E)

“I do everything. My husband only does housework when I am away.” Married Woman, Bugendana Commune (GL)

Although the EKATA training is meant to shift some of the roles to more shared tasks between men and women, from the individual interviews, these seem to only happen in the event when women are away or unavailable to perform these tasks.

Men however seemed to be more open to these tasks during the FGDs. In the EKATA sites, men mentioned some domestic tasks when asked when asked the key tasks they perform from when they wake up to when they go to bed.

“We wake up 5.30am in general. Activities include organizing the daily activities, fetching water and firewood, taking out the cattle, breeding livestock, looking for fodder, feeding the cattle, milking, giving water to the cattle, waking up children, cleaning in the cowshed, tethering, making fire, cooking, washing clothes and bed sheets”. Male FGD participants, Bwambarangwe Colline (E)

Some domestic tasks were also mentioned in the second Men FGD in Bwambarangwe implementing the EKATA although this was said to be more common when their wives were not at home.

“When we wake up at 5 a.m, we first of all have sexual intercourses; then we plan the daily work. Next, we take the livestock where they graze; we cut the fodder for them and feed them. When the wife is not at home, we look after children by preparing their breakfast, bathing them, feeding them and making sure they go to school. After, we may clean the house; fetch water; fetch firewood; and we leave for the farm”. Male FGD participants, Bwambarangwe Commune (E).

There were other circumstances when men felt they could do some of the domestic chores such as fetching firewood, and especially if these chores looked more “manly”. For example for firewood, they could get logs from the field and split them, but not collect small firewood.

“A husband can fetch water and firewood. For example, last week I split a log I brought myself from the bush. But it is not about collecting small firewood. It is not possible. They are not even prevalent.” Male FGD participant, Gikuyo Colline (C)

There were some tasks that were considered a no no by men, irrespective of whether their wives were around such as making beds, washing children’s nappies and carrying children on their back.

Some of the reasons men gave for not engaging in domestic chores was public perception. Men were often ridiculed for performing domestic tasks by the public.

“They often laugh at me, but I do what is right without looking back”, Married Man, Mutaho Commune (C).

They were often assigned derogatory labels such as “henpecked”, “bewitched’ and “stupid’. Community perspectives of women whose husbands do domestic chores were also varied and ranged from condemnation to admiration of the women.

“The community wonders how come he does this. They think that I have put a spell on him, but he doesn't care what they think” Married Woman, Bugendana Commune (E).

“They say that I have bewitched him (Married Woman, Bugendana Commune).” “If they ask me, I tell them that we have agreed to share chores this way. They respect me ... [Probe: What would you be doing when your husband is doing chores?] *“Sometimes I am busy at the farm or doing another chore in the house”.*

Men, especially those in the Control sites also gave women disrespecting them, or having a different perception of them as a reason for not carrying out domestic tasks.

“Your wife can despise you. And then when you go out you become a laughing stock. Even when you quarrel, she brings in all what you do’ Male FGD participant, Gakuyo Collin (C).

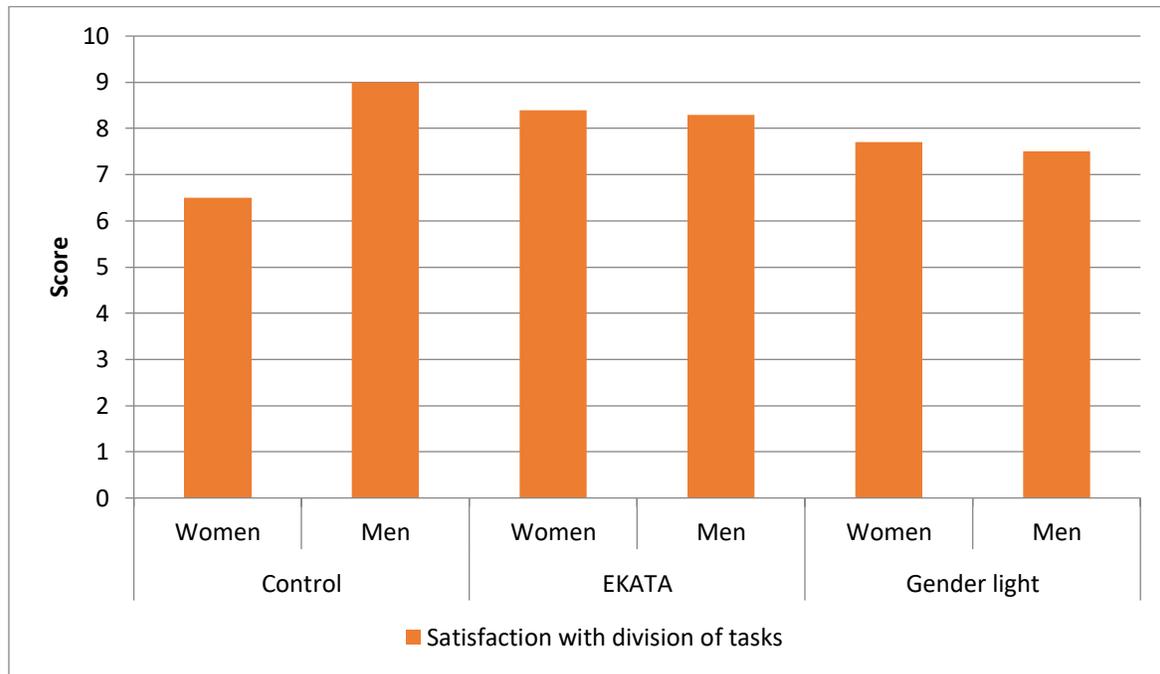
The devaluation of everything coded as ‘feminine’, such as domestic tasks results in ‘male femininities’ that can be seen as threatening to men’s sense of self-worth and their societal recognition (Haile and Siegmann, 2014).

Willingness to carry out domestic tasks was also sometimes related to other circumstances such as what the wife is doing or past experiences and exposure to other men who have done it.

“There is another point to stress here (about me doing domestic tasks). Sometimes, when coming from farming, you may encounter a woman carrying a baby on her back with hoes in her hands and some other stuff on her head while her husband is walking majestically empty handed. This can prove that women do many things. Personally, I do cleaning for I have learnt it from one colonel I have worked for who could clean his room, arrange clothes and other stuff in the room while his wife was in the sitting room doing nothing and both household boy and maid were there. He could ask me to bring him a broom and cloths and he swept his room.” Male FGD participant, Mutaho Commune (GL).

Overall, men were more satisfied than women with current division of domestic chores. Among the women, women from EKATA reported greatest satisfaction in division of both domestic and agricultural chores followed by women from the Gender Light group. Women from the control group were least satisfied and men from the control group most satisfied. It would be correct to conclude that women’s satisfaction with division of chores was higher when men shared in these chores.

Figure 1: Women and men’s satisfaction with division of tasks



During the FGDs, both men and women indicated the unfairness of the gender division of labour and that women seemed to be doing most of the work. In the Control and Gender Light Groups, there was a perception by both men and women that although this division of labour was unfair, women are supposed to do most of the domestic tasks anyway.

Men in the Control sites, while agreeing that most of the household and domestic chores fell on women felt this was natural.

“In my opinion, we complete each other in performing those activities. But the wife has got something additional because she also takes up some household chores. She has got more responsibilities in the household. This is natural. Male FGD participant, Gikuyo Colline (C)

When asked why men do not generally help with domestic chores, men in the control group indicated that’s just how things are.

“Things are naturally like that. You cannot interfere in her tasks unless you have agreed upon this in your household. No interference between men’s tasks and women’s. But if you agree on that you share chores” Male FGD participants, Mutaho Commune (C)

Women on the other hand felt this was a duty probably because they have always done it, their mothers did it and it is expected of them.

“We have realized that there is an unfair division of tasks. But, most of those activities ought to be done by women” Female FGD participants, Mutaho Commune(GL).

What was interesting in the FGDs in the control sites (with men) and the Gender Light sites (with women) is that both groups mentioned sexual relations as a key activity that they do when they wake up. When they however listed the activities by whether they are done by men or by women, the sexual relations was listed as an activity done by men and not women.

In the EKATA groups, there was more appreciation of the benefits of a more shared division of labour in terms of household development. This understanding was mainly attributed to the EKATA training.

“What I have noticed is that if a man does even female activities and the woman as well, you experience a fast development in the household more than those who do not care about this project....For instance, if a husband goes to look for fodder, his wife does something else. If the wife is making bed, her husband may be bathing children.” Male FGD participant, Bwambarangwe Commune (E)

3.2.3 Agriculture production

Men and women from EKATA group reported the highest diversity of extension information sources and types of information, whereas women from control only reported one source of information. The amount of information received was also more varied for the EKATA and Gender Light groups. This is expected given the EKATA and Gender Light groups were receiving extensions services and training through the project.

Table 4: Common sources of information

| Treatment group | Key sources of information | Common types of information |
|-----------------|---|---|
| EKATA | WIN-WIN, government and university extension officers, Tubura, GWEP-GRID and Odedim | Row planting, pit planting, use of fertilizer and seed selection Growing cassava, beans and potatoes |
| Gender light | PAIVA, Tubura, VSLA, CAPAD and MUSO | Row planting, pit planting, rice growing, kitchen gardening and using manure and fertilizer |
| Control | Extension officer | Row planting |

From FGDs, it was clear all the treatment groups were getting information. Men in the Control sites indicated there are extension officers that train them on the use of compost, proper spacing and use of fertilizers. One of the key challenges to using the training was small land sizes and lack of cash.

On being asked what agricultural skills they had acquired, men in the Control group said;

“Digging compost closer to the land you want to cultivate. You put the cleared grass in that compost and you bury them. After you cultivate, you make pits, if you want to plant beans or whatsoever, you uncover the compost and take the rotten grass and use it as manure.” Male FGD participants, Kirundo Commune (C)

Both men and women across the treatment groups were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with access and quality of extension services. In the Control Group, only three women out of the eight rated it above zero. For the other women, they had not received any extension services. On average, the group had a rating of 3.3 out of a potential maximum of 10. For the Gender Light Group, four women out of the eight women rated it zero. However, for those that had received extension services, their rating was quite high with three of them rating it at nine and the other one rating it at 10. Women in the EKATA group were more balanced in their rating with an average score of 6.1. Four of the seven women rated it six and above while one woman had a rating of zero.

Access to inputs varied across the groups. For most women and men across treatment and control groups, the market was the main source of inputs – seeds and fertilizer. Similarly, women and men from treatment and control groups used manure from their livestock but only women composted weeds and used them to fertilize their plots. Only women and men from EKATA reported that they selected seeds from a previous harvest.

Table 5: Common sources of inputs

| Key sources of inputs | Types of inputs | Women | Men |
|--------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Market | Seeds (certified grain/potato and or uncertified) | EKATA, Gender light and Control | EKATA, gender light and control |
| Own selection | Seeds | EKATA | EKATA |
| Exchange with fellow villagers | Cassava and potato vine cuttings. | Control and EKATA | - |
| Own livestock | Manure | EKATA and gender light | Control, EKATA, gender light |
| Extension worker | Fertilizer and rice seeds | EKATA and gender light | Control and EKATA |
| Cooperative | Fertilizer and seeds | Gender light | Gender light |
| Make own | Compost | Control and gender light | - |

Men and women in EKATA have had more trainings than those in the Gender Light and Control groups. The EKATA members had up to five trainings while those in the Gender Light group

mentioned five trainings for women and two trainings for men. Women from the Control group had one training and men from the control group did not report being trained on any topic.

Adoption of good agricultural practices also varied across the treatment groups. Among the women, those from gender light reported four GAPs, those from EKATA three and from the control group two. Among the men, those from EKATA and gender light reported four GAPs each, whereas no one from the control group reported practicing any GAP. Row planting was the most frequently used GAP. Women and men from gender light reported two GAPs in common while women and men from EKATA reported one GAP in common.

Table 6: Adoption of good agricultural practices

| | EKATA | | Gender Light | | Control | |
|--------------------------------------|-------|-----|--------------|-----|---------|-----|
| | Women | Men | Women | Men | Women | Men |
| Row planting | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | No |
| Micro-dosing fertilizer and manure | No | No | No | Yes | Yes | No |
| Growing sweet potatoes in round pits | Yes | No | No | No | No | No |
| Improved rice seeds | Yes | No | No | No | No | No |
| Adding manure | No | Yes | Yes | No | No | No |
| Seed selection | No | Yes | No | No | No | No |
| Mulching | No | No | No | Yes | No | No |
| Seed spacing | No | No | Yes | Yes | No | No |

Across all the groups, row planting was the most commonly practiced GAP. However, this in the absence of other practices such as fertilizer application, good seed spacing and use of improved varieties may not lead to big increases in agricultural productivity.

From FGDs, it was clear that households had started seeing the benefits of the Good Agricultural Practices in terms of yields and total production.

“Prior to adopting Good Agricultural Practices, we were planting a big quantity of seeds and randomly. The harvest was very small but since we started practising what we were taught in VSLAs by growing improved varieties of rice in marshes, there has been a considerable increase in production. As for maize, we used to be planting 4 seeds per pit and we could find only one corn per stake but now than we plant only 2 spaced seeds, there is an increase in the production. This is the case for beans as well.”
Female FGD participants, Bwambarangwe Commune (C)

Women’s high labour burden were sometimes however cited as a reason why some households were still not practicing Good Agricultural Practices even after they had been taught.

“It is due to the fact that a woman has got to do many household chores. When a child makes pits, the husband adds manure and the wife puts in seeds, it can become easier.”

But the problem is men are most of the time absent in farming activities.” Female FGD participants, Bambarangwe Commune (GL)

3.2.4 Nutrition and access to nutritious food

Two periods were constantly mentioned as periods of food scarcity - February to April and October to December. All the households in the Control Group indicated they had food shortages for at least one month with an average of 2.1 months. Five out of the eight women indicated they had food shortages at least two months of the year, while two had shortages three months a year. For the Gender Light Group, they did not have enough food for 2.1 months with three of the women indicating they did not have enough food for 3 months while another three did not have enough food for three months of the year. The EKATA group seemed to be the most food secure. Of the seven women, three indicated they did not have any food shortages. On average, this group had food shortages for 1.4 months of the year.

The most common strategy for dealing with food shortages was to sell labour, including children’s labour in exchange for food or money. This was followed by reducing food portions and reducing on consumption of certain foods.

Table 7: How women cope with food shortages

| | Control | EKATA | Gender Light | All |
|------------------------------------|---------|-------|--------------|-----|
| Work as labourers for food or cash | 4 | 1 | 4 | 9 |
| Borrow money | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Not eat some foods | 3 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| Reduce portions | 1 | 1 | 2 | 4 |
| Skip meals | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| Sell household assets | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |

This was corroborated by the following quotes;

“When we do not have enough food, we only eat bean leaves, sometimes I could get someone to work for and buy cassava or corn flour to eat with the bean leaves”. Female head of household, Kirundo Commune (C)

“When there is not enough food, I work to be paid with food or I go hungry”. Female head of households, Bugendana Commune (E)

“I went to work in Nothern Tanzania as a farm laborer and remitted money for food” Married man, Mutaho Commune (C)

“We eat small portions. If my husband gets money, he gives some for buying food. I also go and work for people to get some money.” Married Woman, Bwambarangwe Commune (GL)

Across the three groups, women indicated they share the food equally within the household, except for young children who sometimes get priority.

“Children get to eat first and my husband and I share what remain equally”. Married Woman, Bugendana Commune (E)

“I feed children first, then my husband and I share what remains.” Married Woman, Kirundo Commune (C)

Across all the households, women indicated they made decisions on how food was shared. Men also indicated food decisions were mainly made by women.

On men’s roles in the nutrition of their children 0-12 months and 1-5 years, across all the groups, it was clear that for the 0-12 months, both the men and the women felt the actual feeding of the child was the responsibility of the mother, and men only bought what was required. For the 1-5 years, most of the men and women indicated they were also fed by the women, but men could feed them if the mother was away.

“He gives me money to buy food for the infant and I feed it. For the older ones, he can feed then when I am not at home.” Married Woman, Mutaho Commune (C)

“I provide money to buy the things the baby needs. The same thing for older children. I do not feed them. I only feed them when my wife is away”. Married Man, Mutaho Commune (C)

“I breastfeed exclusively up to 6 months. Thereafter, my husband can feed the baby a fruit e.g. a banana. For the older ones, he feeds them when I prepare the food.” Married Woman, Bwambarangwe Commune (E)

“It is hard for me to care for a 0 - 12 month old because they cannot eat. I leave their feeding to their mother. For older ones I do everything with/ for them. I feed them when the mother is away. I take care of all their needs including washing them.” Married Man, Bugendana Commune (E)

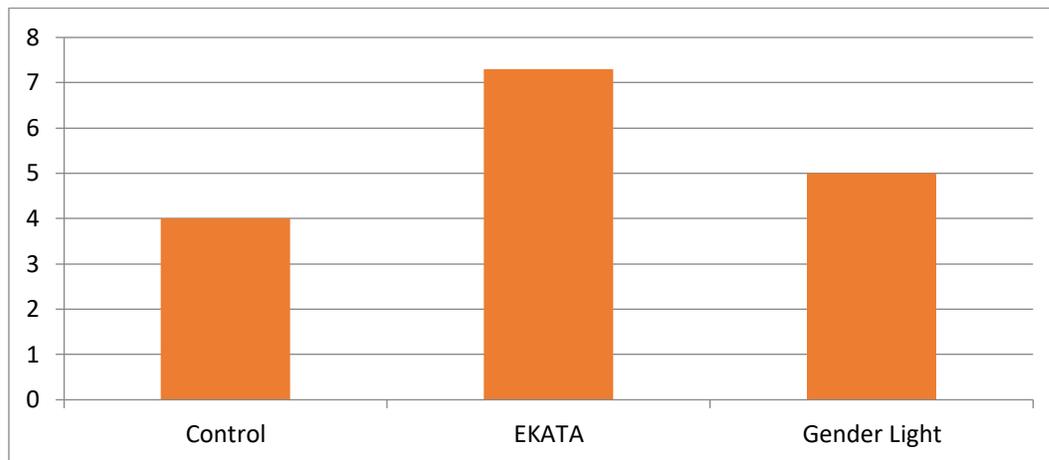
In the event of malnutrition, most women were clear that they would take the children to the hospital. A few women indicated they would prepare nutritious foods for the children while four women (one from the control group and three from the EKATA group said their children have never and would never have malnutrition.

Table 8: What women would do if their children had malnutrition?

| | Control (N=8) | EKATA (N=7) | Gender Light (N=7) |
|---|---------------|-------------|--------------------|
| Take them to the hospital | 4 | 4 | 5 |
| Make for them nutritious foods | 3 | 1 | 1 |
| My children would never have malnutrition | 1 | 3 | 0 |

On a ladder from 0-10, women and men were asked to rate food availability. In the EKATA group five out of the eight households rated their food availability six and above (one woman did not provide a rating). The average rating for the group was 7.3, the highest amongst the three groups. In the Gender Light Group, five women rated their food at six and above with an average rating of four. The Control Group had the lowest rating of their food availability with only three women rating at six and above with an average of five.

Figure 2: Women’s rating of their satisfaction with food availability



From FGDs, there were several cultural beliefs associated with food, most of which affected women and children. For example there was a belief that babbling children and children under 10 should not eat abdominal parts of an animal such as the liver and that lactating women should not eat cow udders for fear of lacking milk to breastfeed their babies with; and women in general cannot eat the chicken’s stomach. Another belief is that women should not eat a rooster’s internal parts or if a child eats meat before five years, he gets his teeth rotten. Some of the men and women believed that these beliefs were untrue and most of them were because men actually want to eat those parts of meat themselves.

3.2.5 Control over incomes

Women from the Control and Gender Light groups had the most diverse activities – five each – compared to women from EKATA group who concentrated on the trade of three types of commodities. Activities included trade in fresh or fermented products such as beers, food produce and even belonging to a VSLA involves lending money at an interest.

Table 9: Mix of income generating activities that women engaged in

| | Control | EKATA | Gender light |
|--|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| Income activity | Women (n=8) | Women (n=7) | Women (n=7) |
| Trade in surplus farm produce | 0 | 6 | 3 |
| Brewing and selling banana beer | 5 | 4 | 1 |
| Sell modern bottled beer | 0 | 2 | 1 |
| Sell banana juice | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Trade in Bananas | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| Work as paid farm labourers | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| trade in beans | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Trade in tomatoes | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| VSLA saving and earning interest | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Sell food products that I buy from farms | 0 | 0 | 1 |

What was also distinct was that women in the Control Group were mainly involved in the brewing and selling of banana beer and selling their labour while those in EKATA and Gender Light groups were selling surplus produces after harvest as the main activity. Of the eight women in the control group, six of them started their businesses by themselves, while the others started with their spouses. In the EKATA and Gender Light groups, four out of the seven women made the decision to start the business themselves.

Table 10: Women’s decision making on income generating activities

| | Control | EKATA | Gender light |
|---|---|----------------|---------------------|
| Decisions to engage or not to engage in other income generating activities that women can make on their own | Women (n=8) | Women (n=7) | Women (n=7) |
| None – I must consult my husband (All women from male headed households) | 4 | 3 | 3 |
| I make the decisions myself | 4 (three fhh and one woman from an over 65 year old HH) | 3 (all fhh) | 2 (fhh) |

Women from female headed households indicated they can make decisions to engage or not to engage in other income generating activities on their own, but married women have to consult their husbands. In terms of crops, farmed bananas and coffee were cash crops mainly under the control of men. In fact women who brewed banana beer said they usually buy the bananas from the market even when their husbands grow and trade in bananas. Married women were not engaged in cattle business.

Asked whether they could individually make the decision or not on whether to engage in a future business, only four out of the eight women in the Control group indicated, yes, they would be able to individually make a decision on the business to engage in. In the EKATA group, three out of the seven women would be able to make decisions individually, while the number in the Gender Light group is also two out of the seven women. Most of the women who made decisions by themselves were heads of households.

When asked what the traditional beliefs are about management of income in households, views were mixed. While women believed that decisions on the management of income should be joint, between husbands and wives, they indicated that strong beliefs still existed about men being the only ones that should be in charge of household finances. These views seem to be consistent across the three treatment groups although in the EKATA group this seemed to be shifting.

“Sometimes people believe that when a woman living with her husband has money, she controls everything and despises him”. For a female headed household, she controls everything.” Female head of household, Kirundo Commune (C)

“Some people still believe that a woman cannot decide to sell a goat or decide on income, but I know my needs and I do what I can although people may disagree with me”. Married Women, Bugendana Commune (E)

FGDs with women in the Control sites showed decision making on income still much in the hands of men. Asked who makes decisions on income, women said;

“It is the man. He is the one who controls and keeps my income. Sometimes, he sells bananas and doesn’t let me know me know the amount of money he got. What he simply does is to buy me a bottle of beer though it was my own capital.” Female FGD participants, Kirundo Commune (C)

This was the same pattern in Gender Light groups. In some instances, men indicated that they sometimes consulted with their wives, but if they thought it was a good decision, and their wives did not agree, they would go ahead and do it anyway. They had the last word on the decisions.

“I think a husband has the last word about income decisions. And it is possible for a husband to say that even though you refuse it I still do it. When a husband consults his wife and probably the wife disagrees with the decision [for example] if it is a plot of land to buy or any other household projects. Sometimes when the husband has already noticed it is something of great value, when she disagrees, he promises her to talk over it later. And then he does it and he informs her that the deal is over: he is about to pay advance money.” Male FGD participants, Mutaho Colline (GL).

In the EKATA treatment, there seemed to be a shift from men making all decisions to them consulting with their wives and deciding jointly with them. All married women from EKATA said that women and men must consult before making decisions. This claim was corroborated by the response to the same question by men from EKATA who said that they made most of the income decisions with their wives.

“Most households make decisions jointly because they have had exposure from the associations. Only a few households still believe that husbands should make these decisions”. Married Woman, Bwambarangwe Commune (E)

“In the past, all household income was controlled by men.” Married Woman, Bwambarangwe Commune (GL). *“This is [now] an era of mutual consultation, there is no room for men to decide everything alone”* Married Woman, Bwambarangwe Commune, (E).

The few men who were interviewed indicated they occasionally consulted their wives on important decisions while they indicated both men and women could make decisions about small purchases without consulting.

“I keep the money but consult her on expenditure. I can buy a pair of trousers without consulting my wife and she too can buy what is needed at home without consulting me”. Married Woman, Bwambarangwe Commune (E).

Despite this, when specifically asked, only two men from EKATA responded that they decide together with their wives, to the question, “Which ones (income sources) does your wife control?” All other men responded “none” to this question.

During FGDs women in EKATA groups indicated there is more consultation between men and women on use of income and especially for large amounts of money.

“We decide jointly. For instance, when we share our savings and get 200000BIF or 300000BIF. My husband can tell me that he knows a plot of land for sale for 150000BIF. He asks me if we can buy it and I accept. And the remaining money like 50000BIF, we decide jointly like we did before and buy a goat so that we can get manure.” Female FGD participants, Bwambarangwe Commune(E)

It however seemed that even in these EKATA groups, men mainly initiated the conversations on the use of money and consulted their wives, rather than the other way around even in the above case where the money is from savings in the VSLA. This was put more explicitly by the men.

“The man suggests what needs to be done and ask wife’s opinion about it and we decide together”. Male FGD participants, Bwambarangwe Commune (E)

Even in instances where both men and women indicated there is joint decision making, further probing showed that men would often make the initial suggestion, consult women and then a joint decision would be made.

Interviewer: Who controls the income?

Participant: *We consult one another. For instance, my husband once earned money and he brought it; we put it together with the income from the VSLA and we were able to buy a pig.*

Interviewer: Who brought the idea?

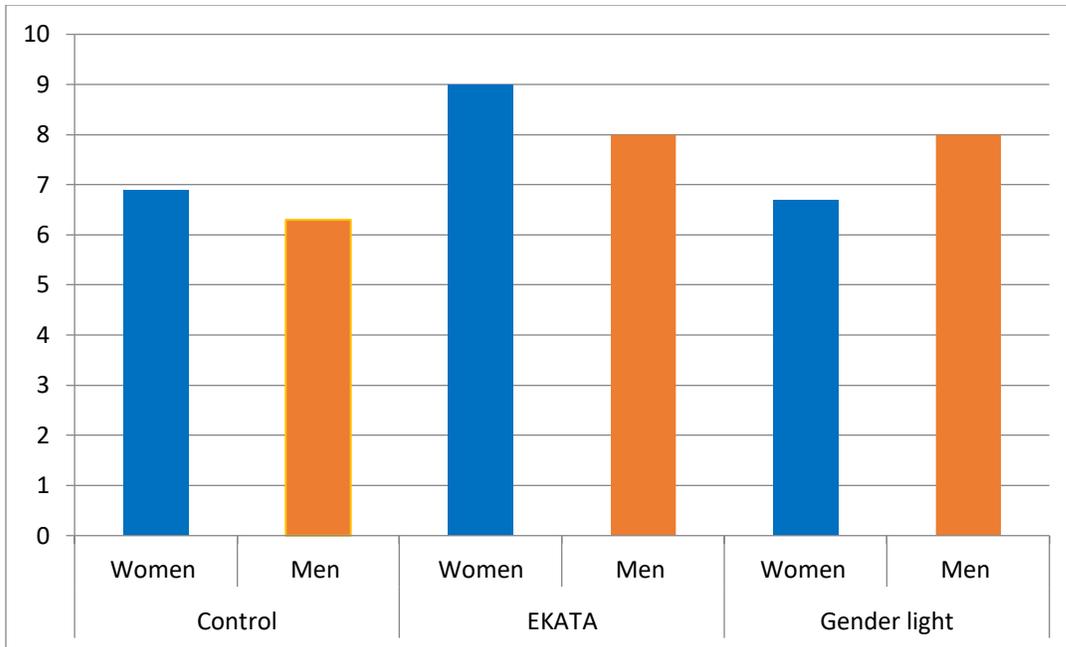
Participant: *It is my husband who suggested that but we decided jointly.*
Female FGD Participants, Mwirure Colline (GL)

What was interesting in the EKATA group discussions is that some men still felt women should not manage the income and that women having income sometime led to conflict. Men used this as a reason for women not controlling income and why they made decisions without involving women. They viewed men who gave their money to women to manage as men who had been given love portions.

“There is a situation you get money and give it to your wife to keep it. But when you ask her to bring the money so that you run a project, it results into conflict. Another thing about woman spot is when she listens to other women who advise her to give love portion to her husband so that he will keep giving her the money he earns to keep it. That is the reason why a man feels he can buy a plot land and informs his wife after having done it.” Male FGP participant, Bwambarangwe Commune (E)

On a rating of 0-10 for their satisfaction with their level of decision making, women in the EKATA group were more satisfied with the level of decision making that they had on household finances with the women in the Control and in the Gender Light group being at the same level.

Figure 3: Men and women’s satisfaction with their input in decision making on use of income



3.2.6 Women's ownership of assets

The most commonly owned household assets were land, livestock (cows, goats, pigs, guinea pigs and chicken), houses, solar panels, bicycles. Of these assets, married women only mentioned owning chickens and guinea pigs individually. Most of the other assets were either owned by men or jointly by men and women.

During FGDs, men in the Control group indicated assets are mainly owned by men. Even if, a woman looked after land, the land would not belong to her. However, men could not sell the land without their wives as any sale of land required both husband and wife to sign off on the sale.

Women in the Control groups were also emphatic that the assets in the household belong to men. Asked whether they individually own any assets, women in the FGD in the Control sites indicated;

"No. Even though we are legally married and supposed to share everything which belongs to the household, the man is the one who controls every asset that is in the household including even what we have bought with our own money" Female FGD participant, Kirundo Commune (C).

Even for assets such as livestock that women felt they owned, the responsibility of selling them was with the men in these Control sites.

"I own some livestock but when it comes to selling them, it is the man who has total control over it. It is generally a traditional belief that the woman is unable to decide how to spend the income from assets even they are the real owners" Female FGD participants Kidasha Colline (C).

During the group discussions especially in the EKATA groups, it emerged that women had actually bought assets and could even sell these assets. This was however associated with household conflict and men indicated that when women bought livestock, some men would refuse for the livestock to be kept in their homes or women would hide it in other people's homes.

Asked if women could own assets, men in the EKATA treatment indicated;

“Yes, especially livestock. And when she runs business and makes profit she can even buy a plot of land. In addition to that a woman can take a loan and buy herself a goat. It is her own goat” Male FGD participants, Bwambarangwe Colline (E).

Asked if such a woman could then sell her goat /other livestock and keep the money, the response was not so straight forward.

“Yes. She can even sell it without our prior permission. And she can herself decide on the money. And if a husband wants to decide on it and she objects it, her husband can refuse her to keep the goat or cattle in their household. Thus, she decides to keep the cattle in the other households. This can be the source of hiding your riches from each.” Male FGD participants, Bwambarangwe Colline (E).

How far women would go to own some individual assets was corroborated by women in the Gender Light groups.

“The case of women who are in VSLA, when your husband gives you 2000BIF to buy food, you can keep 500BIF or more to make savings. In the end, you can buy a goat and keep it in another household in case there is no common understanding in your household. You do not need to inform him. You keep it as a secret otherwise he would ask you where you have got the money from.” Female FGD participants, Bukahunga Colline (GL)

They however indicated that this was not ideal and they hoped that the training from the project would enlighten men that women can own assets and it is all for the development of the household.

There was a lot of reference to joint ownership of assets during FGDs. Men in the EKATA groups indicated that even when either men or women bought assets, once these assets came to the household, they were joint assets. Joint ownership can however mean that one spouse owns the asset and the other feels they are part of it, even though there is no agreement that they own them jointly. We asked both men and women what would happen with the assets in the event of a separation.

In the event of separation, women in the Control Group said they would opt to leave the few assets they own as individuals behind to cater for the children or go with them. Men, on the other hand, may opt to share or not share assets they own individually with the wife. Both men and women acknowledged the likelihood of an acrimonious separation accompanied by lack of cooperation when sharing assets and hence the need to involve authorities.

In the EKATA group, there were mixed views albeit more progressive. Women said they would keep the individually owed assets especially if they were movable, or they would demand that these be shared equally. Views ranged from “ *I would go with my goat if we were separated*” to “*We would share equally and if he refused, I would go to court for arbitration*”.

The sentiments in the EKATA group were echoed by the Gender Light group although a few women in this group also felt that men would keep the assets.

“My husband would keep it because we women do not have sufficient rights over joint asset claims.”
Married Woman, Bugendana Commune (GL)

People interviewed across the test and control groups stated that they would most likely not want to sell their assets.

In the EKATA groups, there was mention of the positive benefits of joint ownership because assets were more likely to be used for the benefit of the household. Each person claiming individual assets could break down the household.

“We are moving from the traditional belief to modernity where somebody could claim the ownership of an asset. In this situation, you need to understand easily that assets are owned jointly. If you claim the ownership of an asset, the household collapses”
Male FGD participants, Bwambarangwe Commune (E)

3.3 EMPOWERMENT

3.3.1 Meanings of empowerment

Women described the meanings of empowerment from multiple perspectives, their ability to be self-sufficient, take care of their families, their own behaviour (in this case women used terms such as decent, with integrity), their ability to influence others (for example influencing other women to speak up), and how others perceive her (respected by others, not beaten by her husband).

Women in the control group were more likely to define empowerment from very practical perspectives of being self-sufficient by for example having enough food for their families and not working in other people’s fields and being able to take care of their families.

Married women in this group saw empowerment from a perspective of how women behaved towards their husbands and their families. *‘An empowered woman has a good relationship with her husband, she’s well behaved and does not frequent bars or get drunk and does not come home late in the night,* Married Woman, Kirundo Commune (C) Female heads of households especially saw empowered women as those who were self-sufficient and able to look after their families. *‘An empowered woman does not work for other people, she is self-sufficient and her children have enough food’,* Female head of household, Kirundo commune (C).

They also attributed empowerment to women’s own behaviours such as integrity, not loitering around or not getting drunk. Empowered women, according to this group are women who know and take their responsibilities.

“An empowered woman is morally responsible (faithful to her husband and does not idle or loiter in the night), has a good relationship with neighbours and is responsible at home where she knows what is needed and necessary for the family”. Female head of household, Mutaho Commune (C)

Men in the control villages also saw empowerment from the perspective of their individual ability to take care of their families without needing support from others. *“An empowered man is a self-sufficient man who does not depend on anyone. (He is)..committed to working for the benefit of his family, and is a role model”,* Married Man, Kirundo Commune. *“An empowered man is well dressed,*

with a good relationship with others and fulfils all basic needs in the family” Married Man, Mutaho Commune (C).

During FGDs, men in the Control group indicated they associated their empowerment with having a piece of land and fields, one who is honest, fair, respectful, unselfish, clean, household owner, hardworking, livestock owner, and advisor. An empowered man assists others in solving their problems, and is accountable in his household and neighborhood. They did not think there were many men like this in the community around and when asked to name, they could only name two.

In the EKATA sites, women were more likely to define empowerment as women’s agency and ability to inspire other women, their families and communities. They used a different language from women’s ability to look after their families. For them, empowered women could speak publicly about things that affected them. Most of them related their definitions of empowerment to trainings they have received on the topic.

“{An empowered woman}..can give advice to women and men to speak up; she can speak about things that concern her as they have learned in EKATA trainings”. Married Women, Bugendana Commune (E).

“{An empowered woman}... respects her husband and does not waste household wealth; cares for her children; does not visit bars;. She can make household decisions and her husband does not contradict or oppose her. She can help resolve a conflict by giving the right advice”. Married Women, Bugendana Commune (E).

Women related empowered women to their relationships with their husbands. An empowered woman had good relations with her husband and managed her household efficiently. In FGDs, women in EKATA groups saw an empowered woman as one who does not cheat on her husband, respects others and her husband, is not drunkard, and does not cheat on the wealth of the family. Women felt there were many women like this in their community, although when asked to name them, they mentioned their group leaders and Colline administrator, implying they also associated empowerment with leadership.

Men in the EKATA groups mainly associated empowerment of men with respect to their relationships with their wives and not just their individual ability and ability to look after their families. Empowered men live in harmony with their wives and work for the benefits of their families.

“..he has a good relationship with his wife and his neighbours. He provides productive advice to improve situations. Does not get drunk and is not unfaithful to his wife. He has integrity”. Married Man, Bugendana Commune (E).

When asked when they felt most empowered, women in the control sites related this to what their definitions of empowerment were. They felt most empowered when they had children, when they were able to tolerate mistreatment from relatives and neighbours, or when they were able to do things in the absence of their husbands. For female heads of households, they felt most empowered and respected by others when their husbands were alive.

“When my husband was alive, I was empowered. Now everyone speaks about me - women despise me and accuse me of stealing their husbands. This never happened when my husband was alive”. Female head of household, Kirundo Commune (C).

Women in both the EKATA and Gender Light sites also indicated they felt most empowered when they got children, or got married. A few women talked about other incidences when they felt empowered especially related to helping other women or joining groups and associations.

“When I became part of Nawenuze association, I felt most empowered because I had hope and my worth as a person increased”. Married woman, Bugendana Commune (GL)

What was different between men and women is that while women felt empowered based on their ability to do something, look after family, have a husband etc, some men felt empowered just for being men.

“In his convictions, every man feels empowered despite his mistakes. Personally, I feel I am an empowered man even though others have not yet testified it. This is because I feel without boasting there is no concern in my family as a result of which I can be a laughing stock. I do even advise others depending upon their concern and they are thankful. And they do trust me.” Male FGD participants, Mutaho Commune (C)

Not having children, disagreements with spouses, inability to provide for their families were the most commonly cited incidences across all the treatment groups of when women felt most disempowered. Most of the women mentioned the status of their relationships as when they felt most disempowered.

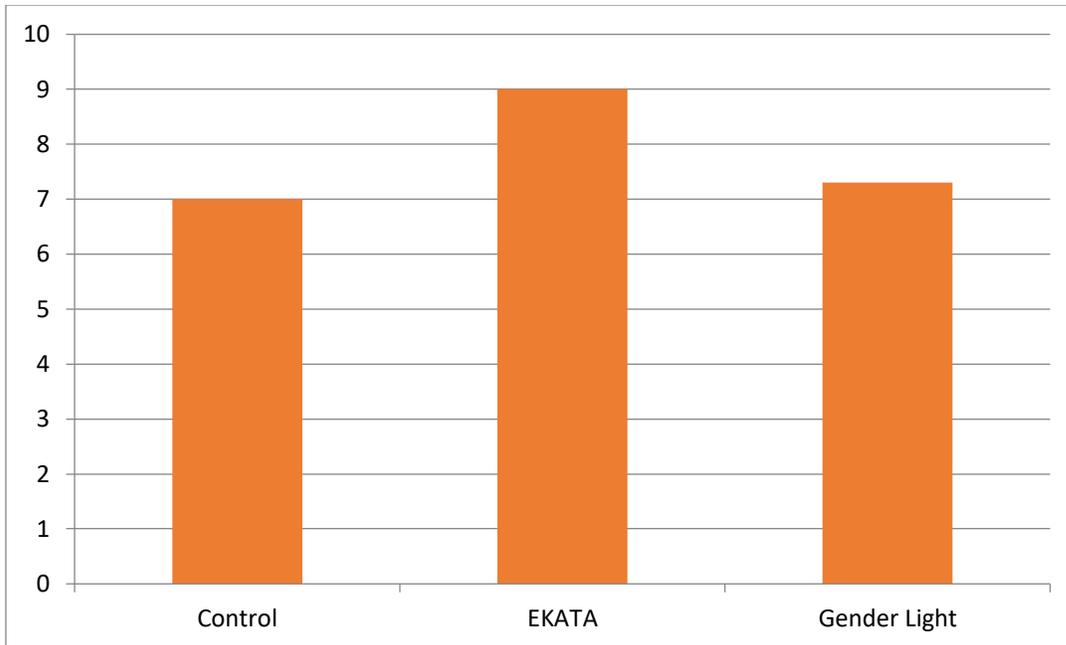
“When my husband and I were younger, he used to get drunk and was very quarrelsome. Now we are born again Christians and we no longer fight. I changed 27 years ago when I got saved but my husband stopped drinking 3 years ago”. Married woman, Bwambarangwe Commune (GL).

During FGDs, women also associated their feelings of disempowerment with difficulties with their spouses especially before they joined groups. Others associated periods of disempowerment with their inability to have basic needs without having to ask their husbands.

“...we were least empowered before we integrated VSLAs but now it is no longer the case. Regarding households, if you wanted an avocado, doughnut, or rice, it was not easy in absence of your husband. But currently, even when you do not have money and you need to hire an employee, you take a loan from VSLA and you pay it back later”. Female FGD participants, Bwambarangwe Commune (GL).

When asked to score on a ladder from 0-10 on where they were on the ladder in terms of empowerment, women in the control group scored an average of 7.0, those in the Gender Light scored 7.3 while those in EKATA scored 9. The lowest score of 3 was in the Gender Light. Three women gave themselves a maximum score of 10, 2 in the Control Group and one in the EKATA group. These scores need to be understood in the context that women had their own interpretation of empowerment and the scores are not based on a common understanding of the characteristics of an empowered woman. For example women who defined empowerment as ability to look after their families would give themselves a high score if they believe that they do a good job of doing that.

Figure 4: Women's scores of their own empowerment



3.3.2 Women's autonomy

We measured women's autonomy by their ability to speak out in public over the issues that concern them, what action they would take if they had ideas that others disagreed with, their freedom to speak and their mobility.

All the women interviewed indicated they speak about the things that concern them in their household. Upon further probing though, most of these concerns were about children and expressed to children. Only in two instances in the Control and Gender Light groups did women indicate they had confronted their husbands about coming home late and about their drunkenness.

There was more variation in women's confidence in speaking out in public beyond their homes.

Six out of the 8 women in the control group had spoken out in public about issues that concern them. What is illustrative though is what they had spoken about. While four of them spoke as members of their groups or as leaders of Nyumba Kumi (Ten Household Cells) to give reports of their activities, those that spoke voluntarily spoke to give advice to other women on nutrition or on how to behave so that they live in harmony with their spouses.

"Yes, [..I speak up in ...]in informal meetings. I tell women they are very lucky that they have husbands who can bring them soap. I have never been invited to formal meetings".
Female head of household, Kirundo Commune (C)

"Yes [..I speak in public..]: At a women's meeting. I said it is good for women to respect their husbands in order to live in harmony". Married woman, Kirundo Commune (C).

During FGDs women in the Control group indicated they could speak in public. They indicated before joining VSLAs, they indicated they could stand in an assembly to express ideas and people

would look at them as if they are violating the norms; but now we they have the freedom to express whatever concern.

A similar number of women in the EKATA treatment group (out of the total seven) had spoken in public about issues that concerned them. The key difference between the women in the EKATA and those in the Control Group was what they spoke about. Similar to the Control Group, two of the women spoke as members and leaders of their village savings groups or the Nyumba Kumi reporting on group activities while three of the women spoke about public services to the community including roads, theft in their community and employment the community in the government public works program.

“Yes [...I have spoken in public..], I once advocated for employment of all community members to build canals to prevent erosion rather than just “the poor” because I consider all of us villagers to be poor”. Married woman, Bugendana Commune (E)

In the Gender Light Group, five out of the seven women had spoken in public on similar topics as those in the Control Group with four of the women speaking to present results of their groups to members, while one had spoken outside the scope of the groups to advice women to make sure they ‘quarrel’ in private if they have disputes with their spouses.

All the men in the sample, other than two (one in the Gender Light and one in the Control Group) had spoken in public on issues that concern them. The issues they talked about ranged from issues of gender based violence, security in the community, asking for accountability of funds. On issues of gender and gender based violence, there seems a clear distinction between what men talked about from what women talked about. Whereas women were more likely to be giving advice to other women, men reported issues of gender based violence concerning their neighbours to leaders so that they could be reconciled.

“Yes [...I speak in public..] For example, I report when my and other neighbours’ relationships are bad. When there is tension that could lead to a conflict”. Married man, Bwambarange Commune (E)

“Yes [...I have spoken in public..]. At a meeting discussing GBV, I asked what should be done about women who go home drunk and cheat on their husbands”. Married man, Kirundo Commune (C)

What is interesting is that men also had the fear of speaking in public. As one man in the Gender Light Group indicated *“No, I have never spoken in public. I am afraid I will be laughed at. If encouraged, I would speak”.*

Another measure of autonomy (and confidence) was the extent to which women would still stand up for their ideas if they believed they were right). In this analysis of the ratio of those women who would persist vs those who would just drop the idea.

In the Control group, this ratio is 3:5 with three women indicating that if they believed they were right, they would persist in taking about the issue and convincing others, while five believed that it would mean their idea is wrong and they would drop it. As one woman indicated *“I cannot do anything. I would drop it because I would be discouraged”.*

In the Gender Light Group, the ratio was 1:6 with only one indicating they would persist if they were convinced they were right. The other six women would drop the matter and not try and convince others.

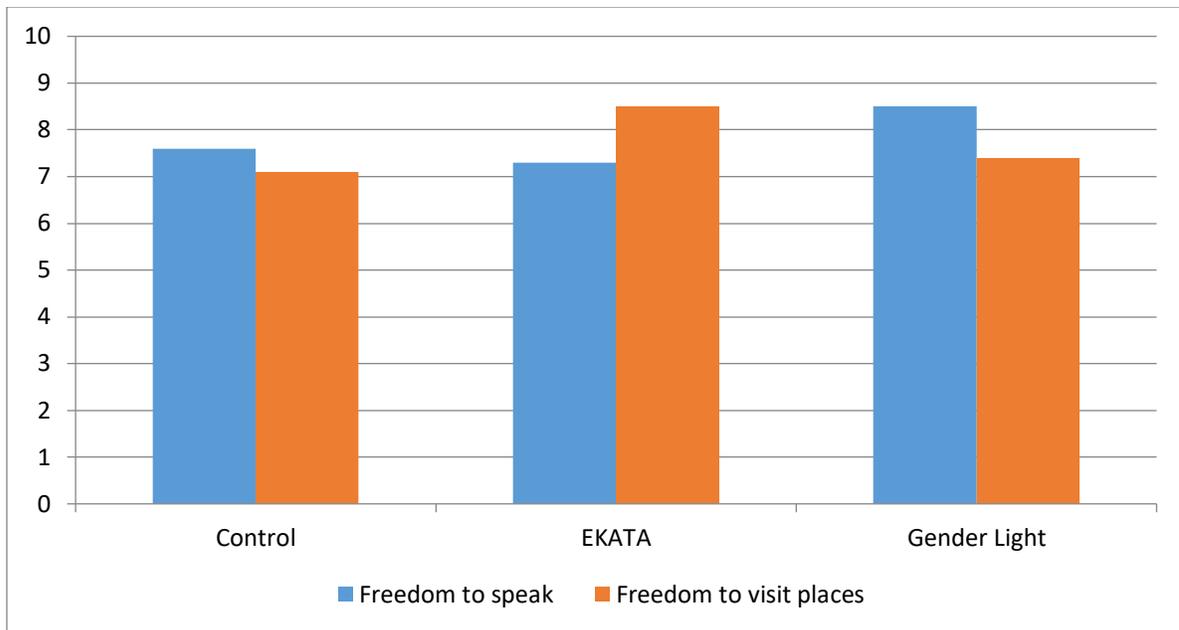
In the EKATA Group the ratio was 5:2 with five women indicating they would persist (one of the women indicated she would try and understand the perspectives of others and why they do not support her idea). Only two women indicated they would not persist and would just drop the matter.

For the men, the ratio was 3:6 with two of those that would persist being in the EKATA Group. All the men in the Gender Light Group indicated they would drop the matter and not insist.

On a ladder ranging from 0-10, women were asked to rate themselves based on their perspectives of their freedom to speak about issues that concern them. The highest mean number of women who felt they were free to speak was the Gender Light group who had a mean of 8.5, where there was no difference between the control and the EKATA groups. Each of the groups had one woman who scored themselves a 10 while the lowest score of five was in the control group.

On women's freedom to visit places of their choice, women from the EKATA groups seemed to have more freedom scoring an average of 8.5 on a scale of 0-10 while those in the control group had a score of 7.1 and those in the Gender Light Group had a score of 7.4. Some women indicated they inform their spouses or their family (for female heads of households), and not necessarily ask for permission. Five of the women in the sample (two from the Control Group, two from the Gender Light Group and one from the EKATA group) indicated they cannot go anywhere without asking for permission from their husbands. While in terms of numbers it seemed there were no differences between the treatment groups, the statements the women gave to support their scores are quite different across the groups. In the EKATA groups, most of the women indicated they just inform their husbands or the father /mother with only one indicating they cannot go anywhere without permission.

Figure 5: Women's perception of their freedom to speak in public and to visit places



In the Control Group, even those that lived alone indicated they did not have freedom to go everywhere they wanted with only one woman indicating she could go where she wanted because her responsibilities as a group leader demanded that she moves around.

Men in the control group were adamant that women needed to seek permission before going out and associated women who went out without permission with certain behaviors.

“What is wrong when a wife goes somewhere without asking for permission is that it is evident from many cases in this neighborhood that they adopt immoral practices. They become inflexible and disobedient.” Male FGD participants, Gikuyo Colline (C)

During FGDs, women in the control group indicated they moved more freely compared to years before but this was more related to their ability to have better clothes to wear than an expansion of their freedom of movement.

“Before, we could hardly get the permission on one hand. On another hand, we could not go due to the lack of clothes. But now that we are part of VSLAs, we can buy clothes for ourselves and whenever we need to go somewhere, we just let our husbands know.” Female FGD participants, Kidasha Colline (C)

Women from the Gender Light group had interesting statements on their freedom of movement despite their high scores. For example, only one woman said she had complete control while others gave statements such as

‘I can only go after I have cooked for my husband’

‘I am free to visit but I have to come back and appease my angry husband’

‘Sometimes I ask for my father's permission to go somewhere and I am denied. I only ask permission from my mother when my father is away’.

3.3.3 Leadership and collective action

Most of the women interviewed belonged to groups. The most common type of group was the VSLA.

The most common groups that women belonged to were VSLAs with most of the women in the Gender Light and EKATA being members of a VSLA. Women viewed VSLAs as the most important group for women due to their ability to save money, borrow for their needs and to start businesses, as well as gain some independence from their husbands.

Table 11: Membership and leadership in groups

| | Control (n=8) | Gender Light (n=7) | EKATA (n=7) |
|--|--|---|---|
| Membership in groups | Are members of a group =4 Not members of a group =4 | Are members of a group = 7 Not members of a group = 0 | Are members of a group = 6 Not members of a group = 1 |
| Types of groups | VSLA=3 Other (GIZ group) =1 | VSLA = 6 Other (women forum) = 1 | VSLA =5 Other (Abatangurira Amahoro) = 1 |
| Which groups are most important | VSLAs-Can borrow money when in need, get interest on their savings, can ask for help e.g when a child is sick. | VSLAs most important groups for women – has liberated women from dependence on husbands for their basic needs, can borrow for household needs or business | VSLAs –Members can borrow money, women make money from their activities |
| Leadership in groups | Leadership positions = 3 (One president, 2 hold secretary) | Leadership positions =2 (Chairpersons) | Group leadership =4 (treasurer-2, advisor, sensitizer) |

There did not seem to be any differences across the treatment groups in their preference for VSLAs over other groups.

“VSLA It helps me raise my children as I am able to borrow money when there are problems e.g. when a child is sick”. Female head of household, Mutaho Commune (C)

“VSLA has liberated women from dependence on husbands for basics such as panties and lotion. Now we even pay school fees”. Married woman, Bwambarange Commune (GL)

None of the women interviewed from across the treatment groups indicated their spouses prevented them from attending VSLA meetings and activities. The support spouses provided varied support ranging from financial support for the contributions made in VSLAs to taking over household chores when women were in the VSLA meetings.

“My husband does not prevent me from attending meetings and because of this, people appreciate my availability. He does chores that I'd normally do because I am at the meeting. Sometimes he drops me to the meeting with his motorbike” Married woman, Bugendana Commune (E).

There was however some conditions for some of the support in attending VSLA meetings and a number of women reported that their spouses were supportive as long as the pay outs from the VSLA were used for the benefit of the family or if they were also members of other groups. For some women, there seemed to be a clear distinction that the VSLA activities were their activities and if their husbands supported them with money for contributions, they would have to repay the money. What was not clear in this case was whether there was an expectation that the money from VSLA pay outs was for the women, or men also wanted a part of it.

“My husband has no problem [with me attending the meetings] as long as I inform him. He gives me money to contribute as long as the payouts are used to benefit the family”. Married woman, Mutaho Commune (C).

“[My husband supports me], because he is a member of Mizero and VSLA and he gives me money for the required contributions when I don't have some and does not prevent me from attending meetings”. Married woman, Kirundo Commune (C)

It was clear that when women borrowed funds from the VSLA's, sometimes husbands supported in the repayment. There was however not enough data to tell whether this was the norm or the exception across the treatment groups.

“[My husband supports me]. I borrow needed money from VSLA and my husband refunds it with money made from selling banana”. . Married woman, Bugendana Commune (GL)

Female heads of households also indicated they got support from their parents (doing household chores while they were away in meetings) or from their children (providing funds for VSLA contributions). As one female head of household in the control group indicated *“When I do not have money for VSLA contribution, my son sometimes provides it”.*

Men with spouses in VSLAs seemed very proud of them based on the benefits membership in the associations brought to the households. Some of the men had even formed their own VSLAs.

“Apart from female VSLAs we have also male VSLAs. We assist one another. We can get manure or a loan to buy beans in case you do not have money. Another point I would like to stress is about our spouses who have integrated VSLAs. They have a better future than those who are not in associations. They have got hardworking mindset. In the event they get a capital, they can perform better than others.” Male FGD participants Bwambarangwe Commune(E)

On a scale of 0-10, women from across the treatments groups rated their satisfaction with their leadership capacity as at eight or greater. Four out of the eight women in the Control Group did not consider themselves leaders while two out of the seven in the Gender Light group did not consider themselves as leaders. All the women in the EKATA group considered themselves leaders. For those that considered themselves leaders, they also rated their spouses support at greater than eight.

All the men interviewed indicated they support their wives by not stopping them from attending the VSLA meetings while three out of the nine men indicated they also support with finances. One of the nine men also indicated they support by sometimes attending the meetings when spouses are required (for example participating in the data collection for this interview).

It seemed that a lot of this support was related to the benefits that men saw out of the VSLA's rather than the need to give women autonomy. In two of the interviews, men indicated they saw the benefits of the VSLAs and therefore supported their wives to be members and in their contributions.

"Yes, [..i support my wife] in the VSLA. She's one of the committee members. I give her money to contribute and also save with them. Interest rates at VICOBA's are very high and I am one of the lenders". Married man, Bwambarangwe Commune (E).

3.3.4 Couple conflict and gender based violence

Of the total sample of 22 women, only four indicated that they do not have quarrels with their spouses or parents. All the married women in the Control group indicated they had disagreements with their husbands. In most cases, the disagreements boiled down to men being drunk and picking quarrels about women being out of the house, or about tasks that women had not done such as feeding of cattle or other farm tasks.

"Sometimes (very often) my husband comes home drunk and fixates on whether the cow is well fed. He believes it was not fed if it has finished grass". Married Woman, Kirundo Commune (C)

"We quarrel rarely. One day I came home late after church because I was with my friends. He was angry because I had not fed the calf. He is quarrelsome when he drinks and inconveniences me and other people". Married Woman, Mutaho Commune (C).

During FGDs, the most commonly mentioned types of gender based violence were lack of respect, extra marriages, cheating on assets, quarrelling, and physical abuse.

"Sometimes, a woman would come to us to report the fact that her partner does not help her with anything in the household so that we advise him. That man would always leave early in the morning and come back late at night and would force her wife to have sex with him though he had not assisted her with anything nor provided for the family." Female FGD participant who is also a member of the Women Forum, Mutaho Commune (C)

Both men and women felt that there are avenues for women to report violence, but for men, even if they experienced violence, it would be unlikely that they would report. Men indicated in some cases such as a woman drinking and being violent, they might report.

"If your wife is getting addicted to alcohol, as husband can report it to a local leader who can advise her to drop such a negative attitude and go home early." Male FGD participants, Kirundo Commune (C)

Men also reported that there were ways to stop the violence including men stopping excessive drinking.

Of the four married women in the EKATA Group, two had quarrelled with their spouses while two had not. The common cause of quarrels was disagreements over the number of children to have and because of drunkenness. What is distinct in this group that was not in the other groups was the capacity of women to discuss family planning issues and number of children to have with their spouses.

In the Gender Light Group, quarrels with spouses centred on use of finances, men’s lack of involvement with domestic chores, women’s sexuality and choice on whether to have sex or not.

“In the women meetings, we learn about sexuality. Sometimes when I go home, I do not want to have sex, but he wants (especially when he's drunk)”. Married Woman, Bugendana Commune (GL)

The most common response to disagreements by women was to try and appease their husbands or to ignore the matter. Most women dropped the matter that was causing the disagreement or walked away from the conflict.

From FGDs, women in the Gender Light groups indicated violence was becoming rare in the Colline and only men who did not understand the importance of being in associations would abuse their wives. The women also seemed to have some internal mechanism amongst the families to deal with gender based violence.

“When we have heard a case of such a violence, we pay a visit to those concerned, that is, the perpetrator and the victim, we have a discussion with them and then we introduce the issue, listen to both parts and we provide them with pieces of advice”. Female FGD participants, Mutaho Colline (GL).

Two of the men in the EKATA Group indicated they do not have quarrels while one indicated their major source of tension is religion. He is Christian and his spouse is Muslim and they are both adamant about converting to each other’s religion. He has refused to convert to Islam and his wife has refused to convert to Christianity. It is illustrative that in a patriarchal system where women adopt the religion of the husband’s family, that she has refused to convert. In the Gender Light and Control Group, the men indicated most of the quarrels start when women go out of the house or the village without letting them know or when they make household decisions without consulting them. In a few cases, men did admit the causes of the quarrels are their own drunkenness.

“When it (quarrel) happens, I am the one who starts the quarrel for no reason just because I am drunk”. Married Man, Mutaho Commune (C)

On whether the women interviewed had experienced any form of violence, the most common form of violence experienced by women was the use of humiliating language.

Table12: Most commonly cited forms of abuse experienced by women

| | Control | EKATA | Gender Light | All |
|-----------------------------|---------|--------|--------------|-----|
| Use of humiliating language | 4 | 0 | 3 | 7 |
| Deny money for basic needs | 1 | 0(2)* | 3 | 4 |
| Withdraw love | 2 | 1 | 3 | 6 |
| Hit or Push | 4 | 1 (1)* | 2 | 7 |
| Forced Sex | 1 | 0 | 1 | 3 |

*Used to happen before 2018 but not anymore

Within the EKATA group, only one woman had experiences withdrawal of love and hitting and pushing. Two women had experienced their husbands denying them money and basic needs even when they had the means, but this had stopped from 2015 when they started participating in the project. One woman’s husband has also hit and pushed her and stopped after joining the group.

What is most illustrative though of the differences across treatments was how women would deal with the abuse. All the women in the EKATA Group indicated they would report the matter to someone, community leaders, the police, women's rights organizations or the Abatangamucho.

"If it started, I would be very sad. I would first talk to our best couple, then our parents. There is a community conflict resolution system starting at Nyumba Kumi level. There is also the Abatangamucho system". Married Woman, Bundegana Commune (E)

"I would report my case to the centers that advocate for women's rights in my community. There is an office at Bugenda Center". Married Woman, Bugendana Commune (E)

This was however different in the Control Group and the Gender Light Group. In the Control Group, half of the women indicated they would tolerate it since they did not know what else to do, while the other half indicated they would report to the chief. Women in this group seemed to have fewer options for dealing with gender based violence. None of the women mentioned women's rights organizations, the police or the Abatangamucho as avenues for reporting cases of violence.

"I would not do anything because I can't fight him. There are committees that deal with domestic conflicts and because I am a member in such a committee, I can't report." Married Woman, Mutaho Commune (C)

Another woman in the group indicated she would tolerate the abuse even if it occurred multiple times because she believes it is a family issue that should not be shared.

"I would tolerate it and warn him to stop it. [Probe: What if he continues?] I would tolerate still. I never share my family issues". Married Woman, Mutaho Commune (C)

The reactions by women in the Gender Light group were the same. Women in this group also felt they did not have options for reporting violence while others felt it was not right to share such information with others. Those that reported having shared the information did so with their parents or other relatives

"I told my mother that my husband used to force me to have sex with him. She told me to endure it." Married Woman, Mbwambarange Commune (GL)

"Back in the days when we fought, I would report my husband to his uncle who intervened. I would never go to the local authorities because I too used to get drunk and I felt that I could not report a case when I was drunk". Married Woman, Bwambarange Commune (GL)

Women in the Control group reported having been trained that sex was a conjugal duty that they had to do and they needed to plan for it like any other household task.

Asked on what the consequences of such violence was to their livelihoods, most of the common answers related to women's own sadness and emotional anguish. In one case, the woman said when her husband becomes violent; she is forced to go to her parents' home which means she cannot work on her farm.

Asked to rate the quality of their relationships, women in the Control Group gave the lowest rating with an average of 6.8. The lowest rating was 2 while the highest was 9. In the Gender Light Group the rating was 8.6 with a high of 10 and a low of 6. In the EKATA Group, women rated their quality of relationships at 8.5 with a low of 8 and a high of 9. This group had the least variation in their ratings.

3.3.5 General satisfaction with life

Respondents were asked when they have been most satisfied with their lives and why. For women in the Control Group, they were most satisfied when they had their children and when they got married, and for those widowed or separated, they were most satisfied when they had their husbands, General life satisfaction in this group seemed to be tied to family.

Women in the EKATA and Gender Light groups similarly related their general satisfaction of life to children and marriage. Only one woman from the Gender Light group associated moments of general life satisfaction with joining the VSLA, saving her own money and getting economic independence.

[I was most satisfied in my life]...“when I got integrated in the nawenuze (VSLA) association. I learned from lessons and put them to practice. I was able to save money. My husband also joined an association.” Married Woman, Bundegana Commune (GL)

Most women, except four, associated their most dissatisfied time with their family situation, mainly loss of a child, divorce, loss of a parent or the loss of a spouse.

“When my husband walked out on me and left me at home. I still feel dissatisfied. There was no conflict, he just left. Those who have seen him say that he lives in Uganda.” Female head of household, Bwambarangwe Commune (GL)

Of the four women who did not associate their most dissatisfied time in life with family, two indicated they cannot point to a time when they were most dissatisfied with life, while for two, they associated it with their living conditions and lack of livelihood opportunities.

“Before we were taught how to improve our livelihoods, life was difficult - even hopeless - now we do so much and our lives are better”. Married Woman, Bugendana Commune (GL)

[I felt most dissatisfied]...“during the war in 1988 and 1993 - because we fled home and became refugees”. Married Woman, Kirundo Commune (C)

Four of the nine men related their times of greatest satisfaction to life with getting married. What was interesting were the reasons they were satisfied about the marriages, all of them had to do with getting someone to help them.

“I was most satisfied with life when I got married to both my late and the current wife. I got a helper and I know someone is home when I am not there”. Married Man, Bwambarangwe Commune (E).

The other five men associated their most satisfied times as the times when they could adequately take care of their families, have enough food and provide all that their families need. Five of the

men also indicated they would like to change their lives by improving their living conditions, getting capital to invest in things like motor bikes and improving their houses.

All the women in the control group, except one, wanted to change their lives. Most of them indicated they wanted to get enough money to ensure they gave good lives to their children. In the EKATA group, only two out of the seven women wanted to change their lives, to get capital to improve on their businesses and increase their agriculture productivity, while the other five indicated they were satisfied with their lives. And in the Gender Light Group, five of the eight women wanted to change their lives.

The biggest current concerns for women were meeting current basic needs of their families like producing enough food to feed their families, having enough money to pay hospital bills or having enough capital to support their agricultural activities. These concerns did not seem to vary across the groups. Men's concerns were generally too about basic needs for their families with mention of school fees for children, improving their houses so that they were more comfortable and did not lead during the rains and purchasing farm inputs. Other than a few men and women who mentioned family, there were no concerns mentioned around gender or relationships between men and women.

On a scale of 0-10, women in the Control Group had the lowest scores for their level of satisfaction in life with six of the seven women giving themselves a score of six or below and with an average score of 5.4. In the EKATA group, four out of the six women who answered this question gave themselves a score of eight and above with two scoring themselves below five. In the Gender Light Group, four out of the eight women gave themselves as score above eight. Both the EKATA and Gender Light groups had an average score of seven.

4 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This report provides an analysis of the perceptions of women and men from the EKATA groups, the Gender Light groups and the Control groups on livelihood changes, levels of empowerment, decision making and control of income, gender based violence amongst others.

From these in-depth interviews and the FGDs, it is clear that there are differences in some of the variables across these groups. For some variables such as in access to extension information, training, adoption of good agricultural practices and status of food available, the differences are not distinct between the EKATA and Gender Light groups as expected but they are distinct between these two groups and the Control groups,

It is in the empowerment indicators where more clear differences emerge with those women in EKATA groups having higher levels of general satisfaction with their lives, being more confident to speak in public about not just issues affecting their families but affecting women and society in general. They are experiencing less gender based violence and when they do, they have more options for reporting (outside of their families) than the women in the Gender Light and Control groups. While these changes are very promising, it is clear that more is needed even with these groups to make the changes deeper and more sustainable.

Table 13: Summary results across the different variables

| Variable | Key results |
|---|---|
| Agricultural production, access to extension and training | The diversity of agricultural activities was the same across groups. In terms of access to extension services and inputs, men and women from the EKATA group reported the highest diversity of extension information sources and types of Information. Women in the EKATA had the highest scores for satisfaction with their access to extension services and inputs. Men and women in EKATA have had more trainings than those in the Gender Light and Control groups. In terms of adoption of good agricultural practices among the women, those from gender light reported adopting on average four good agricultural practices, those from EKATA three and from the control group two. From FGDs, there were indications that use of good agricultural practices was bearing fruit in terms of increasing productivity and production. |
| Gender division of labour (agricultural tasks and domestic chores) | While generally, there seemed tasks done by men and those done by women (e.g activities such as selling commodities in the market were done by men while activities such as weeding were more likely to be done by women and adult children), in the EKATA group there seemed to be more mixed sharing of roles although roles like marketing remained a role for men. Women generally did more tasks than men. From time clocks, both men and women agreed that women were overburdened. There was however a general feeling that this was natural and expected. |
| Decision making and control over income | Women from control and gender light groups had the most diverse activities – five each – compared to women from EKATA group who concentrated on the trade of three types of commodities. Across the three treatment groups, women’s decision making did not seem to differ much across groups. Across the EKATA, Gender Light and Control groups, it was mainly women heads of households that made decisions individually. In the EKATA group though, women’s attitudes towards who should make decisions seemed to be shifting and men had started making some decisions jointly with their spouses. All married women from EKATA said that women and men must consult before making decisions. EKATA women were also more satisfied with their input in decision making on use of income. From FGDs, results showed that even when there was joint decision making, men often made the initial suggestions of what money would be used for, and if there was a disagreement, men would have the last word. |
| Ownership of assets | Across all groups married women only mentioned owning chickens and guinea pigs individually. Most of the other assets were either owned by men or jointly by men and women. What was different was what women thought should happen to assets in the event of a separation. In the event of separation, women in the Control Group said they would opt to leave the few assets they own as individuals behind to cater for the children. In |

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|---|--|
| | <p>the EKATA group, there were mixed views albeit more progressive. Women said they would keep the individually owned assets especially if they were movable, or they would demand that these be shared equally. Results from the FGDs showed that women had devised ways of owning assets especially livestock, which they would sometimes keep with their friends or relatives.</p> |
| Nutrition | <p>Two periods were constantly mentioned as periods of food scarcity - February to April and October to December. All the households in the Control Group indicated they had food shortages for at least one month with an average of 2.1 months. Gender Light groups also had food shortages for an average of 2.1 months while those in the EKATA group had food shortages for an average of 1.4 months. EKATA women were satisfied with food availability compared to women from the other groups.</p> |
| General life satisfaction | <p>Women in the Control Group had the lowest scores for their level of satisfaction in life with women in the EKATA Group and those in the Gender Light Group having the same scores.</p> |
| Meanings and experience of empowerment | <p>Women in the control group were more likely to define empowerment from very practical perspectives of being self-sufficient by for example having enough food for their families and not working in other people's fields and being able to take care of their families. In the EKATA sites, women were more likely to define empowerment as women's agency and ability to inspire other women, their families and communities. They used a different language from women's ability to look after their families. For them, empowered women could speak publicly about things that affected them. Most of them related their definitions of empowerment to trainings they have received on the topic. When asked to score on their perceptions of their own empowerment, women in the EKATA group had the highest scores. From FGDs, while women's perceptions of empowerment were linked to how well they looked after their families, having a husband etc, it was common for men to feel empowered just for being, and even when they made mistakes.</p> |
| Autonomy and mobility | <p>There were a similar number of women who had spoken out in public in the Control and EKATA groups. The key difference between the women in the EKATA and those in the Control Group was what they spoke about. While women in the Control Group were more likely to speak about domestic issues and their VSLA women in the EKATA groups spoke about public services to the community including roads, theft in their community and employment the community in the government public works program. The highest score for women on their satisfaction to speak freely was the Gender Light group who had a mean of 8.5, where there was no difference between the control and the EKATA groups. On women's freedom to visit places of their choice, women from the EKATA</p> |

| | |
|--|---|
| | groups seemed to have more freedom compared to those in the control group and the Gender Light Group. |
| Leadership and collective action | All the women in the EKATA group considered themselves leaders. For those that considered themselves leaders, they also rated their spouses support at greater than eight. Only half of the women in the Control Group considered themselves leaders. |
| Couple conflict and gender based violence | All the married women in the Control group indicated they had constant disagreements with their husbands while in the EKATA Group, half of the married women had constant disagreements with their husbands. Women in the EKATA groups were less likely to experience abuse. What is most illustrative though of the differences across treatments in terms of abuse was how women would deal with the abuse. All the women in the EKATA Group indicated they would report the matter to someone, community leaders, the police, women's rights organizations or the Abatangamucho. In the Control Group, half of the women indicated they would tolerate it since they did not know what else to do, while the other half indicated they would report to the chief. Men felt that there were more options for women to report violence whereas as men, they would find it difficult to report violence. Men however indicated women were more affected by violence and that men's alcoholism was a major contributor. |
| Men's care giving practices | Women in the EKATA groups were more likely to say that men engage in domestic tasks although similar to what men indicated, men often tended to do this when women were either away or unable to do these tasks due to illness. Gender stereotypes are very distinct in the control group and seemed more relaxed in the EKATA groups, although the actual practice of these tasks by men seemed to happen mainly when women were away or unavailable to perform these tasks. Women from EKATA reported greatest satisfaction in division of both domestic and agricultural chores followed by women from the Gender Light group. Women from the control group were least satisfied and men from the control group most satisfied. The major constraint to men taking up care giving practices was fear of what other community members would say, and also fear of disrespect from women. Men also undertook care giving and domestic tasks when these tasks took a more masculine form e.g splitting logs for firewood compared to collecting small firewood. |

This report provides results in women and men's own words of how they are experiencing the project. Further analysis is planned to track changes over time for individual men and women across groups using data from the last two years and next year.

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