The transition from cotton to horticulture: Effects on the role of rural women in Uzbek agriculture

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Background

• Agrarian Landscape
  • 25% of GPD
  • Cotton production-oriented policies

• Employment in Agriculture
  • Cotton pickers - mainly women (ILO, 2017)
  • Informal organized workers brigade

• Recently started to recognize female farmers (4% of farmers are female)
  • The 15th of October “International Rural Women’s Day”
  • Creation of gender.stat.uz
News
Production of high-quality fruits, vegetables on rise in Uzbekistan

Date: 06.06.2014.

More than 200 representatives of international organizations and financial institutions, as well as leading scientists, experts and business people from over 40 countries, gathered in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, on 5-6 June 2014 for an international conference on Uzbekistan’s food program. Photo credit: © 12

Uzbekistan is paying more attention to increasing production of high-quality fruits, vegetables and grapes as a result of shift in agricultural policy since its independence in 1991.

Uzbekistan annually produces around 16m tons of fruits and vegetables, President of Uzbekistan Islam Karimov said in "Most Important Result".

Uzbekistan exports from agricultural exports h 20%

20%

10%

0%

2%

Source: Statistics Agency Under the President of The Republic of Uzbekistan
Research Question:

How do the roles, economic activities, decision-making, and collective action (empowerment dimensions) of female farmers and female daily workers in horticulture villages differ in comparison to their counterparts in cotton-oriented villages?
Understanding Empowerment

• Gaining **power, control, and influence** over one's life (Kabeer, 1999; Malhotra et al., 2002; Bali Swain and Wallentin, 2009; Khan and Khan, 2016).

• Ability to make impactful decisions (Kabeer, 1999; Malhotra et al., 2002).

• Women's capacity for strategic life choices. Influenced by resources, agency, and achievements (Batliwa et al., 2010, Sen, 1999; Narayan, 2005; Alsop et al., 2006).

• Feminization vs empowerment
Two-dimensions of women empowerment in Uzbek agriculture

Resources

- **Farmers**
  - ECONOMIC
  - Control and access over the inputs
  - Control and access over the outputs

- **Workers**
  - Access to off-farm and farm work
  - Mobility

Agency

- **Farmers**
  - Decision-making over the inputs and outputs & crop choice & labour choice

- **Workers**
  - COLLECTIVE agency
  - Decision-making over work choice
  - Availability to bargain for better working conditions


www.iamo.de/en
The Map of Study Area
Bo’ka:
8 farmers
5 workers

Pastorgom:
2 farmers
4 workers

Yangiyo’l:
5 farmers
4 workers

Jomboy:
6 farmers
6 workers

Tashkent

Samarkand

Cotton-oriented

Horticulture-oriented
# Characteristics of Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Cotton Farmers (10 Respondents)</th>
<th>Horticulture Farmers (11 Respondents)</th>
<th>Workers From Cotton Districts (9 Respondents)</th>
<th>Workers From Horticulture Districts (10 Respondents)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td>44-62</td>
<td>45-67</td>
<td>28-62</td>
<td>32-65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Educational Degree, (Number)</strong></td>
<td>University Degree (5) Vocational School Degree (3) High-school (2)</td>
<td>University Degree (4) Vocational School Degree (6) High School Degree (1)</td>
<td>Vocational School Degree (4) High School Degree (5)</td>
<td>University Degree (1) Vocational School Degree (2) High School Degree (7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number Of Children</strong></td>
<td>2-3</td>
<td>2-3</td>
<td>2-3</td>
<td>1-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Availability Of Car</strong></td>
<td>Yes (Themselves Or Husband/Son Uses)</td>
<td>Yes (Themselves Or Husband/Son Uses)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No/Yes (Husband/Son Uses)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Can Drive A Car</strong></td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tomorka</strong></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>H Animals</strong></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No Or Poultry</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Head Of Households</strong></td>
<td>Themselves Or Husband</td>
<td>Themselves Or Husband</td>
<td>Husband Or Parents In Law</td>
<td>Husband Or Parents In Law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Household Related Decision Making</strong></td>
<td>Herself/ Together With Husband</td>
<td>Herself/ Together With Husband</td>
<td>Husband/ Parents-in-law</td>
<td>Husband/ Parents-in-law</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Farm Characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Cotton</th>
<th>Horticulture</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Farm size</strong></td>
<td>57-106 ha</td>
<td>14-101 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Land share</strong></td>
<td>35/50% wheat &amp; 65/50% cotton (depends on the AIC contract)</td>
<td>30/40% wheat &amp; 70/60% horticulture (depends on the AIC contract)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sharecropping</strong></td>
<td>Yes, permanent workers</td>
<td>With permanent workers, if there is wheat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2nd crop</strong></td>
<td>Vegetables &amp; beans</td>
<td>Vegetables &amp; beans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outcome</strong></td>
<td>Cotton or wheat cluster, wheat pp</td>
<td>Clusters and market</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Input</strong></td>
<td>Partly form Clusters; AIC; Subsidised credits; Market</td>
<td>Clusters or market</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Permanent workers</strong></td>
<td>14-30</td>
<td>3-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Payment to p workers</strong></td>
<td>Sharecropping + overproduced wheat + monetary</td>
<td>Sharecropping + overproduced wheat/horticulture + monetary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Seasonal workers</strong></td>
<td>15-80 (for cotton season)</td>
<td>10-40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Work with self-organised brigades</strong></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results

- Farmers: Resources
  - Subsidised Inputs, Access and Control of Inputs
  - Land tenure

- Farmers: Agency
  - Decision-making power over farm management
    - Crop choice freedom
    - Supply channel
    - Freedom over Surplus Crops

- Workers: Resources
  - Employment Opportunity: Economic activity all around the Year
  - Daily Mobility of Workers: Expanding and Refining Geographical Mobility among Rural Women

- Workers: Agency
  - Decision-making to work on choice
  - Socialising and Collective Agency within the Self-Organised Brigades
Conclusion

• **Empowerment**: Horticulture acts as a catalyst for the empowerment of rural women.

• **Decision-Making Power**: Farmers have greater autonomy and control.

• **Economic Benefits**: Higher economic returns for both farmers and daily workers.

• **Expanded Employment**: More stable labour results in more working days for workers.

• **United Self-Organised Brigades**: Formation of self-organising brigades, increased collective action.
Policy Recommendations

• **Continued Agricultural Liberalization**: Empower farmers with crop choice decisions, and broader farm management.

• **Broad Economic Diversification**: Beyond crop diversification, expand the entire rural economy's range.

• **Prioritize Rural Women's Education**: Invest in and emphasize the importance of educating rural women, rising awareness.

• **Rural Infrastructure**: Improved rural infrastructure is beneficial for rural women’s economic empowerment.
Thank you for your attention!

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• Narayan, Deepa; Nyamwaya, David. Learning from the poor : a participatory poverty assessment in Kenya (English). Environment Department working papers ; no. 34.