






Original Article


Women and youths participation in agroforestry: What counts and what doesn't around Mount Elgon, Uganda?

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Abstract: The increase in global climate change incidents is a glaring indication that more pragmatic and direct approaches to tree and forest management are urgently needed. A study was conducted around Mount Elgon Uganda between June 2018 and December 2019. The objectives were to: i) determine the socio-economic characteristics of women and youth farmers engaged in agroforestry, ii) determine the relationship between women and youth farmers' characteristics in adoption of tree technologies and related decisions, and iii) assess the incentives, challenges and strategies for promoting agroforestry technologies' adoption in the region. Data were collected from 250 women and youths using focus group discussions, semi-structured, and key informant interviews. Results showed that engagements in agroforestry practices attracted largely (82%) of uneducated women and youths and

basic methods and tools were used to farm. Up to 70% of women and youth relied on crop farming as a major source of income, earning about USD\$ 250 per-annum. Farm and family size were positively ($P > 0.0001$) related to tree adoption decisions while farmer capacity building activities (such as training, farmer guided field tours, and participatory farmer trial's establishments) and access to low-cost tree seedlings motivated their involvement in tree planting. Land scarcity, soil, water, and tree conservation issues and shortage of desired tree species affected the extent of tree growing in both women and youth-led households. The suggested strategies comprised strengthening farmer capacity-building programs and upholding soil and water conservation technologies. Agroforestry has the potential to address the challenges related to land scarcity and shortage of desired tree products in women and youth-led households around Mount Elgon. However, the women and youths involved in farming activities were generally poor, illiterate and faced issues of land

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