

## Extended Abstract

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<b>Paper/Poster Title</b>	Gendered Perceptions in Maize Supply Chains: Evidence from Uganda
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<b>Abstract</b>	<i>200 words max</i>
<p>In situations with imperfect information, the way that value chain actors perceive each other is an important determinant of the value chain's structure and performance. Inaccurate perceptions may result in inefficient value chains, and systematic bias in perceptions may affect inclusiveness. In a case study on perceptions in Ugandan maize supply chains, a random sample of farmers were asked to rate upstream and downstream value chain actors-agro-input dealers, traders, and processors-on a set of attributes that included ease of access, quality of services, price competitiveness, reputation. These value chain actors were then tracked and asked to assess themselves on the same set of attributes. We find that input dealers, traders, and processors assess themselves more favorably than farmers do. We also focus on heterogeneity in perceptions related to gender and find that for self-assessments, the gender of the value chain actor does not matter. However, the difference between how actors assess themselves and how farmers perceive them is larger for male than for female farmers, as female farmers appear to rate the actors significantly higher in several dimensions. The gender of the actor being rated does not affect the rating they receive, and gender-based homophily among women is not present.</p>	
<b>Keywords</b>	Food value chains, Maize supply chain, Gender, Ugandan agriculture, Ratings
<b>JEL Code</b>	Economic Development: Agriculture O130 see: <a href="http://www.aeaweb.org/jel/quide/jel.php?class=Q">www.aeaweb.org/jel/quide/jel.php?class=Q</a>
<b>Introduction</b>	<i>100 – 250 words</i>
<p>In situations with imperfect information, the way that value chain actors perceive each other is an important determinant of the value chain's structure and performance. Inaccurate perceptions may result in inefficient value chains, and systematic bias in perceptions may affect inclusiveness. In this paper, we study how perceptions align throughout maize value chains in Uganda, with a particular focus on heterogeneity related to gender. To do so, a representative sample of 1,526 maize farmers were asked to rate-on a scale of 1 (very poor) to 5 (excellent)-agro-input dealers, maize traders, and maize processors, on dimensions such as ease of access, quality of services rendered, price competitiveness, and overall reputation. These agro-input dealers, traders, and processors were then traced and asked to assess themselves on the same dimension, resulting in self-assessments of 78 agro-input dealers, 341 assembly traders, and 174 processors. This information was then used to document (in)consistencies between how farmers perceive input dealers, traders, and processors, and how these actors perceive themselves. To investigate systematic bias along gender lines, we further tested if the gender of the farmer and/or actor that was being rated had an impact on the ratings.</p>	

<b>Methodology</b>	<b>100 – 250 words</b>
<p>The reliability of the ratings are tested using intra-class correlation coefficients. We include both inter-rater agreement and intra-rater agreement. Inter-rater agreement considers the correlation between ratings given by different farmers to a single actor, while intra-rater agreement is judged by the correlation between ratings received by different actors from a single farmer. Simple t-tests and multivariate regressions models are used to test the study hypotheses. When the primary outcome variable is the rating given by the farmer to a particular actor, we allow for two-way non-nested clustering at the farmer and actor levels. As we rely on observational data, we control for confounding bias through the inclusion of exogenous control variables.</p>	
<b>Results</b>	<b>100 – 250 words</b>
<p>We find that input dealers, traders, and processors of maize assess themselves more favorably than farmers do. We also focus on heterogeneity in perceptions related to gender and find that for self-assessments, the gender of the value chain actor does not matter. However, the difference between how actors assess themselves and how farmers perceive them is larger for male than for female farmers, as female farmers appear to rate the actors significantly higher in several dimensions. The gender of the actor being rated does not affect the rating they receive, and gender-based homophily among women is not present in rating behavior.</p>	
<b>Discussion and Conclusion</b>	<b>100 – 250 words</b>
<p>The data did not support that female agro-input dealers, traders, and processors are systematically rated lower than male actors. Still, given the extensive literature that finds discrimination in a variety of contexts, we caution against sweeping conclusions. Heterogeneous effects between actors may potentially result from low sample size and limited variation in the gender of the actor. For instance, we do find that male agro-input dealers get higher scores for location than women, an effect which may become significant if the sample size grows.</p> <p>The fact that self-assessments are always higher than farmer ratings may either mean that actors are overconfident or farmers are overcritical. Overconfidence of value chain actors may mean that actors do not see the need to improve, which may delay innovations within the chain. As such, policy interventions aimed at reducing the gap between actor self-assessments and farmer ratings are likely to increase efficiency in value chains.</p> <p>Even though we did not find that farmers rate female actors differently, gender may still affect the inclusiveness of value chains. For instance, the tendency of female farmers to rate more favorably may result in input and service providers treating female farmers differently.</p> <p>Finally, judging by farmer perceptions, there seem to be issues related to price competitiveness within the maize value chain, as agro-input dealers, traders, and processors are consistently scored lowest. Policies that encourage market entry and competition between agro-input dealers, traders, and processors are likely to increase the price competitiveness of value chain actors.</p>	