COFFEE INNOVATION SYSTEMS IN ETHIOPIA AND RWANDA

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Background

- Coffee is one of the most important cash crops in developing countries
- High price volatility → farmers need to improve the skills and technologies they use in production and marketing
- Innovation Systems Approach (ISA) → aims at putting farmers at the center of the innovation system
- Integrated Agricultural Research for Development (IAR4D) → sustained collaboration among key actors influences innovation outcomes

Objective and research questions

- Comparatively analyze the innovation systems regarding coffee value chains in Ethiopia and Rwanda
  (i) Who are the major actors involved in knowledge management?
  (ii) What types of alliances exist among the different actors?
  (iii) How is information disseminated?

Study approach

- Data from 105 household surveys in 3 woredas of Ethiopia and 3 districts of Rwanda
- Social network analysis

Results

- Ethiopia (13 actors)
  - Density: 0.25; Reciprocity: 0.59; Efficiency: 0.79

- Rwanda (10 actors)
  - Density: 0.59; Reciprocity: 0.67; Efficiency: 0.35

- While Ethiopian coffee farmers are rather information senders than receivers, Rwandan coffee farmers are rather information receivers than senders
- Cooperatives in Ethiopia and NGOs in Rwanda are the brokers of the respective coffee innovation system
- Some actors of the Ethiopian coffee value chain are unknown

Conclusions and policy implications

- Coffee farmers in both Ethiopia and Rwanda are not at the center of the innovation system
- The coffee innovation network in Ethiopia is not as highly connected as the one in Rwanda
- The ISA and IAR4D paradigms do not seem to have been fully embraced in both countries
- For an effective support of value chain operators, it is advisable to strengthen the capacities of long-term organizations rather than those of temporary facilitators