

Gender Roles in Crop Production and Management Practices: A Case Study of Three Rural Communities in Ambo District, Ethiopia

G. S. Ogato¹, E. K. Boon² and J. Subramani³

¹*Department of Cooperatives, Ambo University College, Ethiopia*

E-mail: gemechushale2005@yahoo.com

²*Human Ecology Department, Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Belgium*

E-mail: eboon@vub.ac.be

³*Department of Cooperatives, Ambo University College, Ethiopia*

E-mail: drjsmindia2008@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT A research on gender in agriculture was conducted in Ambo district, Ethiopia, between July and September 2007 to assess gender roles in crop production and management. This article is the first of two papers resulting from this research. The second article is on "Improving Access to Productive Resources and Agricultural Services Through Gender Empowerment: A Case Study of Three Rural Communities in Ambo District, Ethiopia". A key premise of this first article is that female farmers contribute more significant to crop production and management than their male counterparts. The paper identifies and examines the roles of female and male farmers in crop production and management through a thorough analysis of secondary information and primary data collected in Ambo District with the help of questionnaires, interviews, observations, focus group discussions, participatory rural appraisal, gender analysis and case studies (life histories). Statistical package for social science (SPSS) and excel spreadsheet functions were used to treat and analyze the data. The results of the analysis indicate that female farmers contribute more than their male counterparts in crop production and management. However, despite their significant role in agriculture, the triple roles of female farmers are not well recognized or valued in the district. The promotion of sustainable agricultural development in the district requires that the needs of both rural male and female farmers are addressed in a comprehensive and systemic manner.