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Examining the Impact of Coffee Wilt Disease on the Livelihoods of Coffee Farmers in Uganda: A Case Study of Coffee Farmers in Bumbaire Sub-County, Bushenyi District.

The goal of this study was to examine the impact of the coffee wilt disease on the livelihoods of coffee farmers in Bumbaire sub-county, Bushenyi district. The study covered 7 parishes, namely: Ibaare, Numba, Kiyaga, Ryeishe, Kainamo, Bumbaire and Ruharo. Specifically, the study examined the effect of coffee wilt disease on the livelihoods of coffee farmers, the problems faced by coffee farmers and, efforts implemented to mitigate the negative effects of the coffee wilt disease in Bumbaire sub-county. During the study, a total of 78 respondents were consulted. A cross sectional research design was used and primary data collected through interviews and observation. Data collected were analysed both qualitatively and quantitatively. Descriptive statistics were used in the analysis.

The results of the study revealed that Coffee Wilt Disease (CWD) had a negative effect on the livelihoods of coffee farmers in Bumbaire sub-county in terms of fall in farm income, abandoning coffee plantations, low access to education services, loss of employment and poor standards of living among others. Apart from the CWD, coffee farmers faced problems like lack of farming inputs, lack of extension services, poor farming technology, exploitation by coffee middlemen, and shortage of working capital, poor infrastructure and poor coffee varieties among others. However, in order to mitigate the effect of CWD on the livelihoods of coffee farmers, the government implemented some measures like provision of resistant varieties (clonal coffee), chemicals and sensitisation of farmers on how to control the spread of the disease. In addition to the above, the study recommended interventions by other players like Non-Governmental organisations (NGOs), Community-Based Organisations or Civil Society Organisations with a bias towards agriculture, carrying out more agricultural research on high yielding crops and disease resistant crops, organisation of farmers into strong and registered community or producer groups to improve their disease control ability and enhancing agriculture extension services.

Key Words: Coffee Wilt Disease, Livelihoods, Coffee Farmers, Bushenyi District.