

# NURU ETHIOPIA

## 2023 Impact Report



RAY MARSHALL CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF HUMAN RESOURCES

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# NURU ETHIOPIA

## 2023 IMPACT REPORT

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This report is commissioned by Nuru

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## INTRODUCTION

In 2023, Nuru Ethiopia (NE) offered cooperative and rural livelihood interventions to 28,096 individuals in the South Ethiopia Region. These individuals were members of five distinct cooperative unions to which NE offered support, including members from 203 primary cooperatives. This report samples farmers from two of the NE-supported unions, Hidota (Gamo Zone) and Esipe Dicha (Gofa Zone) with whom NE has supported since 2016 and 2021 respectively. In 2023, the NE interventions led to the following outcomes:

### **Cooperative Impact:**

- NE-supported cooperative unions achieved an average SCOPEinsight score of 4.65 out of 5.0, representing a continued improvement over the 4.4 achieved in 2022. This score is associated with very professional agribusinesses and is well above the regional average.
- 100% of NE-supported cooperative unions achieved net profitability from their business operations in 2023.

### **Agricultural and Livelihood Diversification Impact:**

- Combined livelihood diversification and cash crop activities led NE-supported farmers to an average net income of \$609 USD. This represents a 162% increase over the 2020 baseline value of \$233 USD, and the 4th consecutive year of increased incomes.
- 91% of farmers adopted the majority of Climate-Smart Agriculture (CSA) practices.

### **Gender and Social Inclusion**

- NE successfully surveyed 657 women using the IFPRI & USAID developed Abbreviated Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (A-WEAI)<sup>1</sup>. Results indicated NE-supported women scored higher than national empowerment benchmarks.

In 2023, NE solidified its cooperative approach by shifting primary support from individual cooperatives to unions. This allowed resources, training, and capacity building to be cascaded efficiently from unions to their member cooperatives. NE achieved its highest-ever yields and incomes, demonstrating increased efficiency with fewer resources. With exceptionally high SCOPEinsight scores, this report marks the final evaluation for Hidota and Esipe Dicha unions and the transition to a new cohort of unions for future support.

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<sup>1</sup> IFPRI. 2024. *About WEAI*. [Link](#).

## COOPERATIVE AGRIBUSINESSES

### INTRODUCTION

Agribusinesses are the principal sustainability mechanism of the Nuru model, and are central to the operations of NE. In 2023, NE supported 203 primary cooperatives, which were formal paying members of 5 distinct cooperative unions. NE centralizes support, training, and capacity building through the unions, which is then cascaded down to the primary cooperatives. This approach, adopted in 2022 by NE, has greatly increased the reach and efficiency of NE operations while maintaining the quality of impact and key outcomes of interest for the individual farmers. This approach allows both cooperatives and unions a greater collective bargaining power in the region, and ability to advocate for themselves on a national level.

To successfully scale and replicate programs in new regions, the NE model is predicated on the ability to eventually begin the drawdown of programs where cooperative union professionalism and capacity have reached a highly sustainable level. In order to determine the capacity and level of professionalization of cooperative unions, NE conducts SCOPEinsight assessments and profitability assessments for each union every 2 years. In 2023, two cooperative unions were assessed with the SCOPEinsight cooperative assessment tool, and all five unions were assessed for profitability and net profit.

**Table 1. Nuru Ethiopia Milestones 2023**

2023 Milestones	Target	Achievement
Total Primary Cooperatives	200	203
SCOPEinsight Average	>= 3.3 out of 5.0	4.65 out 5.00
Cooperation Union Net Profit Margin Average	>=3%	3.5%
Percent of Cooperative Unions Profitable	100%	100%

## METHODS

In order to assess cooperative professionalization, NE uses SCOPEinsight, an internationally recognized cooperative assessment tool that provides externally comparable performance benchmarks both regionally and internationally. SCOPEinsight assesses cooperatives over 8 domains of professionalization and capacity, including internal management, operations, sustainability, financial management, production base, market, external risks, and enabling environment. In 2022, NE scores surpassed the regional average considerably, which was highlighted in a blog between SCOPEinsight and Nuru<sup>2</sup>. In 2023, these scores increased even further, to an average score of 4.65 taking into account scores from Hidota (4.6) and Esipe Dicha (4.7). Cooperatives scoring close to 5.0 are rated as “very professional organizations”. These scores not only show high operational capacity against benchmark organizations regionally and globally, but also provide NE with insight into what level of support the cooperative union may need.

To conduct the assessments, staff from NE are trained and certified to become official SCOPEinsight assessors using an online training platform developed by SCOPEinsight. These certified assessors are then able to visit the cooperative unions and conduct the assessments, which can take anywhere from several hours to multiple days to complete.

Profitability assessments are carried out using an external government auditing partner. This third-party audit strategy ensures that there is an objective view of the cooperative financial status and a thorough report on the net profitability and financial sustainability of each organization. Audits are conducted by the government audit partner, and then reviewed and confirmed by the cooperative union prior to finalization. As financial sustainability is paramount to ensuring the continuation of the cooperative and the services to members, audits are conducted for each cooperative union on an annual basis.

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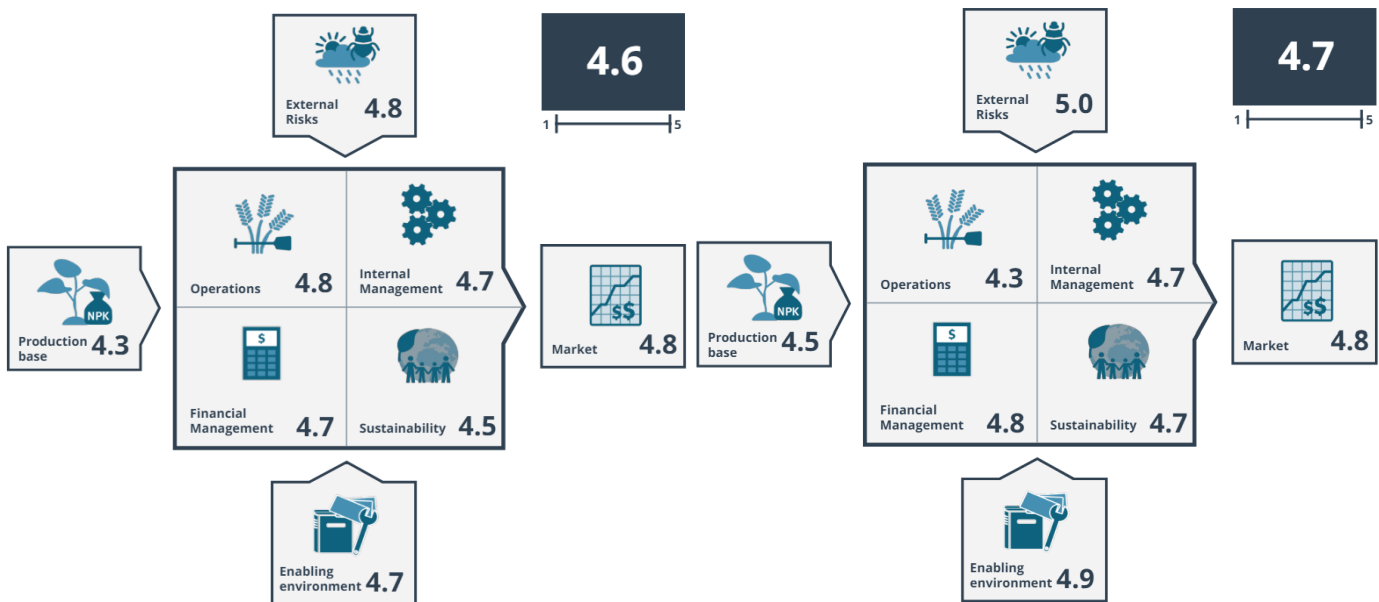
<sup>2</sup> SCOPEinsight. 2023. *Strengthening cooperatives by working together*. [Link](#).



## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results from 2023 show high levels of performance at both Hidota and Esipe Dicha. High-performing cooperative unions such as these have effectively managed production, sales, and external relationships while sustaining policies on gender, climate, and finance. Nuru Ethiopia has supported these cooperatives for many years, helping tens of thousands of members reach levels of efficiency and professionalism that surpass regional norms. These cooperatives, with years of profitability, are now positioned to operate independently after NE's support. According to the AMEA Cooperative Development Assessment conducted in partnership with SCOPEinsight, the professionalism demonstrated through these assessments has the potential to unlock access to finance from commercial lenders in the future, highlighting how improved scores can lead to tangible benefits such as financial resources for further growth.<sup>3</sup>

In 2025, NE plans to begin SCOPEinsight assessments with three newer NE-supported cooperative unions, reflecting a shift in evaluation strategy towards cooperatives receiving the most active support. While average scores may initially dip as new cooperatives are assessed, this cohort is expected to follow the successful trajectory of Hidota and Esipe Dicha, building capacity and professionalism over time.



Results from Hidota Union (left) and Esipe Dicha Union (right) indicate high levels of professionalization across the 8 SCOPEinsight assessment domains.

<sup>3</sup> AMEA, Nuru. 2022. *Cooperative Driven Development in Ethiopia through Sustainable, Localized Business Development Services*. [Link](#).

## RURAL LIVELIHOODS

### INTRODUCTION

Nuru Ethiopia's Rural Livelihoods (RL) program aims to diversify farmer households' livelihoods through interventions designed to enhance resilience to shocks and stressors, while increasing yields and incomes across various value chains. The program's two primary interventions are the cash crop program and the shoaat fattening program. These initiatives are implemented through cooperative unions, supported by Nuru Ethiopia, and delivered by a network of agricultural extension agents, training and extension field officers, and agribusiness advisors who are now permanently staffed at the union level. Agribusiness advisors, in collaboration with the NE technical team, play a critical role in providing technical assistance and training, ensuring the sustainability of these interventions at both the union and member cooperative levels.

To tailor this approach locally, Nuru Ethiopia has established dedicated departments within each cooperative union responsible for delivering extension training and support. Additionally, NE collaborates with government agricultural extension agents to further strengthen training capacity and support the agribusiness advisors. These advisors are key in maintaining the continuity of training and capacity building across the union and primary cooperatives.

### METHODOLOGY

The NE Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) team supports the evaluation of these programs through an annual yield survey which aims to understand to what extent NE is able to make an impact across these diverse interventions. This past year, the annual livelihoods survey consisted of a cash crop yield survey and shoaat fattening survey, as well as the climate-smart practice adoption and women's economic empowerment survey further detailed in the following sections.

**Table 2. 2023 Annual Yield Survey Sample Distribution**

<b>Group</b>	<b>Sample Size</b>	<b>Survey Dates</b>
<b>Cash Crops (Mung Beans)</b>	<b>4,216</b>	<b>March - April 2024</b>
<b>Cash Crops (Groundnuts)</b>	<b>2,387</b>	<b>March - April 2024</b>
<b>Livelihood Diversification (Shoats)</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>April 2024</b>
<b>CSA Practice Adoption</b>	<b>667</b>	<b>April 2024</b>
<b>A-WEAI Survey</b>	<b>657</b>	<b>April - May 2024</b>

After conducting the survey, data on cash crops and livelihood diversification were compared to baseline data from 2020 to measure the respective increases in yields and incomes generated by these activities for farmers in Hidota and Esipe Dicha. All comparative increases are benchmarked against this baseline year.

To effectively communicate the increases in yields and incomes across value chains, Nuru and RMC employ a Crop-Equivalent Yield (CEY) and Combined Income methodology. For cash crops, this involves weighing the yields of both mung beans and groundnuts against the average land size and survey population to generate a single yield value per acre for both crops. A combined income is then calculated by adding the income generated from the CEY yield to the income generated from livelihood diversification activities, such as shoat fattening.

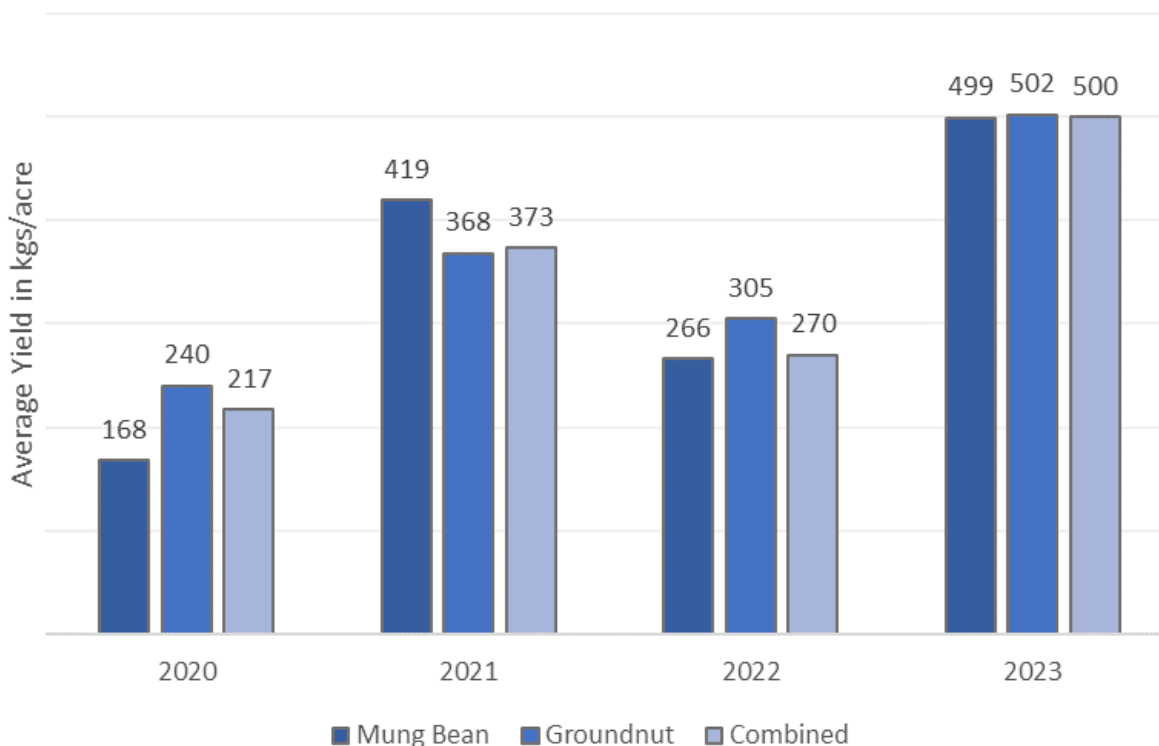
Incomes generated by this combined income model are cost-inclusive, meaning that they take into account any expenses that the farmers accrue to participate in the program. Costs for participating in either intervention are generated from market tracking data from the Gamo and Gofa Zones of the South Ethiopia region, taking into account average input prices at the time of planting or purchasing of animals, and the average sale prices during the months of commercialization. The combined income model therefore generates a net income, all of which the farmer takes home to their families, or reinvests into next years' inputs.

## RESULTS

### Yields and Incomes

At the 2020 baseline, Nuru-supported farmers generated an average Crop Equivalent Yield (CEY) of 217 kgs/acre for mung beans and groundnuts. CEY is a standardized metric used to compare the productivity of different crops on a common scale. It is calculated by converting the yields of various crops to an equivalent yield of a single reference crop. This means that for every acre of land, a farmer could expect to produce 217 kgs of these crops. By 2023, this CEY value increased to 500 kgs, representing a 130% increase in yield over the baseline. Using the average sale values at the time of sale, 500 kgs of CEY for mung beans and groundnuts equated to a net income of \$533 USD, up from \$189 USD in 2020

**Figure 1. Crop yields over time by crop type**



### Livelihood Diversification

The Livelihood Diversification (LD) program aims to provide women with an additional income stream by raising sheep and goats (shoats), along with training on financial inclusion to promote savings. NE-supported women can take out loans to purchase one or two shoats, fatten them with cooperative support, and sell them for profit at the end of the season. This intervention is designed to increase incomes

while promoting women’s economic empowerment and financial management. In 2023, 215 women sold two shoats each.

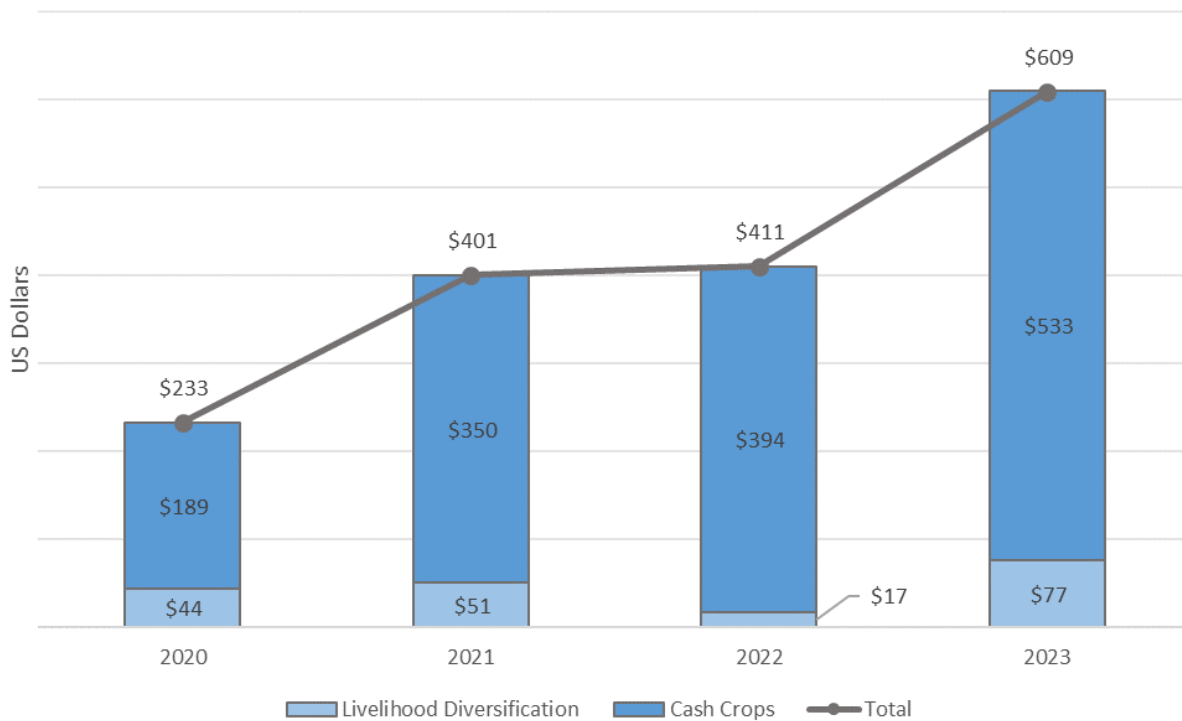
The average loan cost in 2023 was 5,282 Birr, up from 3,132 Birr in the baseline, covering both the animals and their care. While inflation contributed to the rising costs, the continued success of the LD program also contributed to higher sale prices, with an average of 4,745 Birr per animal (9,490 Birr for two). As a result, the net income from the sale of two shoats in 2023 was 4,208 Birr, or approximately \$77 USD.

### Combined Income Model

Nuru Ethiopia's goal is to improve both crop yields and livestock sale values to enhance overall farmer incomes. A key metric of success is the increase in income resulting from participation in these programs.

**In 2023, farmers who participated in both the cash crop and LD programs earned an average net income of \$609 USD, a 162% increase from the baseline of \$233 USD.**

**Figure 2. Combined income model over time**



## CLIMATE-SMART AGRICULTURE

### PRACTICE ADOPTION

Ethiopia's agriculture and food systems are increasingly impacted by climate change, as farmers experience more droughts, floods, pest outbreaks, and crop diseases than ever before. A recent survey in 2021 indicated that 75% of farmers in the former Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Region (SNNPR) of Ethiopia expressed concerns about running out of food due to climate shocks<sup>4</sup>. As climate change accelerates, it's imperative that NE-supported farmers adopt practices that are both adaptive to climate shocks and stressors, but also work to improve yields and long-term soil health.

Climate-Smart Agriculture (CSA) provides various approaches to enhance agricultural sustainability. NE trains agribusiness advisors at cooperative unions, who then pass this knowledge to primary cooperatives and farmers. A 2023 survey tracked the adoption of CSA practices, including proper crop spacing, organic fertilizer use, pest and weed control, soil and water conservation, and improved storage to prevent mold and decay. Better storage technology not only increases food availability but also reduces food waste.

Organic fertilizer is more efficient and cost-effective than chemical fertilizer in the long run, but its use in Ethiopia remains low. Climate-smart practices like organic fertilizer application and soil conservation boost yields by improving soil structure, water retention, and drought tolerance. Since organic fertilizers release nutrients gradually, NE supports farmers in transitioning to them while promoting targeted chemical fertilizer use when necessary. For mung beans and groundnuts, NE recommends biofertilizers like rhizobia inoculants, though their limited availability in Ethiopia is a challenge. If biofertilizers are unavailable, NE suggests applying Urea, a nitrogen-rich compound, 2-3 weeks after plants emerge. These practices improve nutrient efficiency, soil management, and yields.<sup>567</sup>

NE trains farmers on proper plant spacing to conserve water, reduce competition, and enhance nutrient uptake. Groundnuts are spaced 45 cm between rows and 10 cm between plants, while mung beans are spaced 30 cm between rows and 10 cm between plants, promoting healthy growth and higher productivity. Traditionally, seed broadcasting led to overcrowding, limiting sunlight and reducing yields.

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<sup>4</sup> University of Oxford. 2022. *Unprecedented crises trigger severe hunger in southern Ethiopia*. [Link](#).

<sup>5</sup> Advances in Agriculture. 2022. *Determinants of Organic Fertilizer Adoption*. [Link](#).

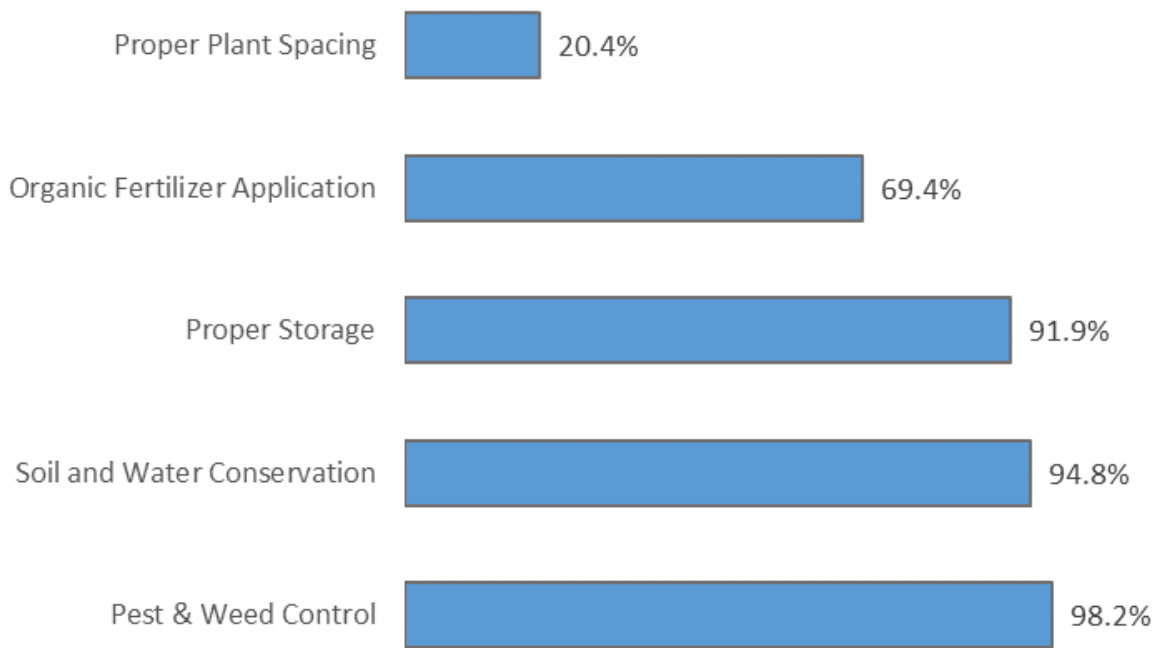
<sup>6</sup> FAO. 2022. *Crops and Climate Change Impact Briefs*. [Link](#).

<sup>7</sup> IFDC. 2023. *Fertilizer and Soil Health in Africa*. [Link](#).

Precise spacing ensures better access to nutrients and sunlight, fostering faster and healthier development of legumes.

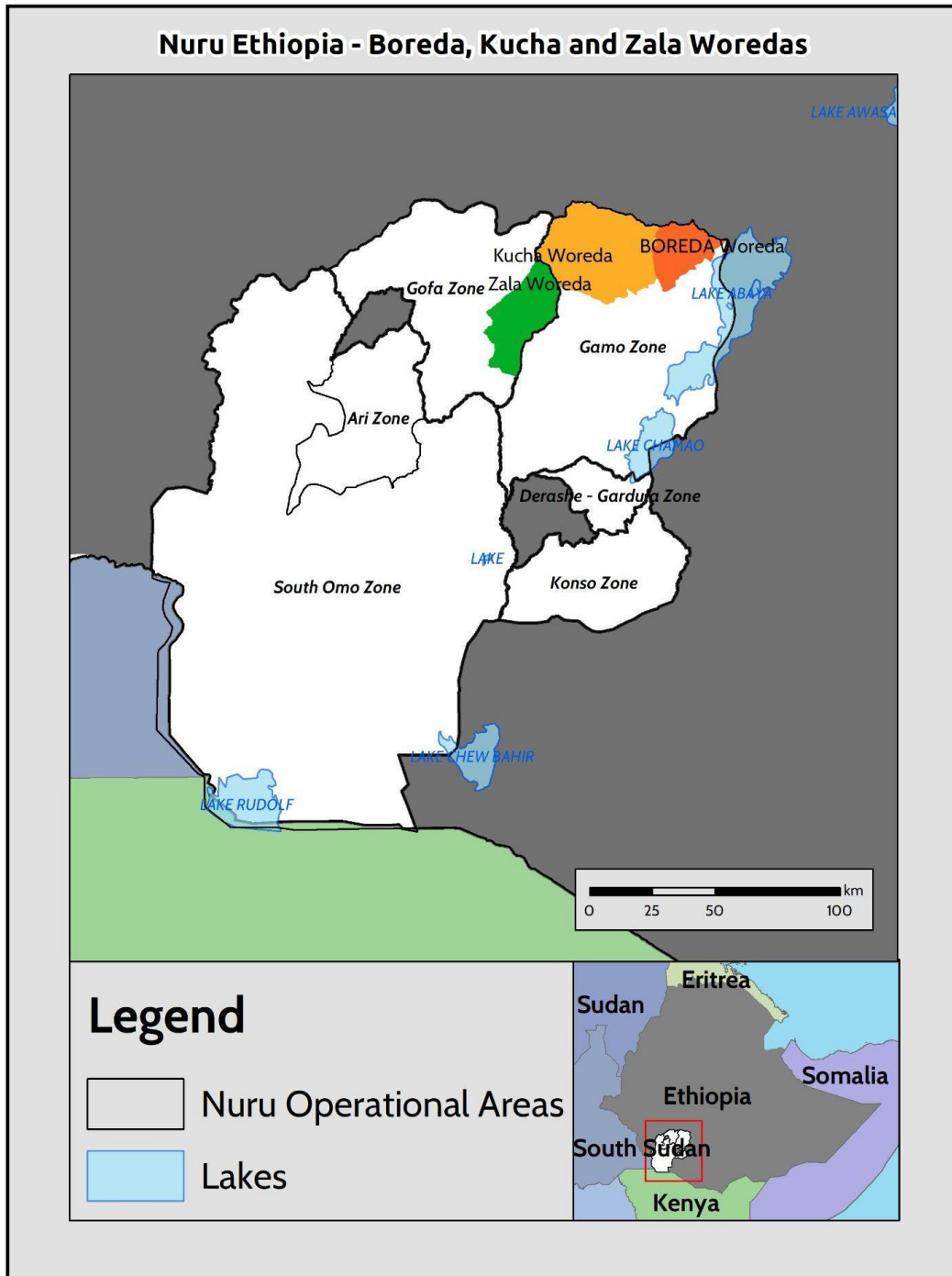
In sum, 667 individuals were surveyed for the adoption of CSA practices. The most adopted practice was pest and weed control, at 655/667 individuals. The least adopted practice was proper crop spacing, at 136/667 individuals. Overall 91% of farmers adopted at least 3 out of 5 of these practices, which NE considered an “adopter”.

**Figure 3. Good agricultural practice adoption rate.**



\*Values represent outcomes for 667 survey respondents

## Nuru Ethiopia Operating Woredas



*\*The map above highlights the primary operational zones of Nuru Ethiopia, as well as the individual Woredas present in this report; Gofa (green), Kucha (yellow), and Boreda (orange).*



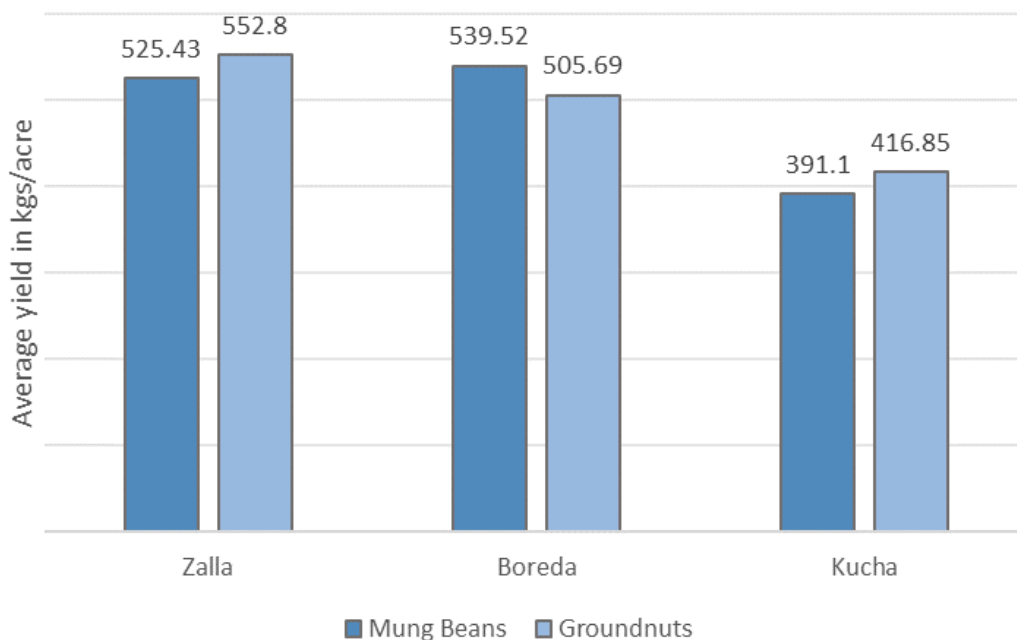
## REGIONAL YIELD DIFFERENCES

Climate-smart agriculture is essential for adapting to the diverse climatic conditions across Southern Ethiopia. While average yields for 2023 were 499 kgs/acre for mung beans and 502 kgs/acre overall, there were significant regional differences. Farmers from Hidota (operating in Boreda and Kucha woredas) and Esipe Dicha (operating in Zala) were sampled for this assessment.

In 2022, Zala experienced a notable yield drop to 238 kgs/acre due to drought and pests. However, in 2023, Zala saw substantial recovery, with yields reaching 525 kgs/acre for mung beans and 553 kgs/acre for groundnuts. Kucha, on the other hand, saw marginal improvement, with yields increasing to an average 400 kgs/acre from 368 kgs/acre in 2022.

Each woreda has distinct landscapes and microclimates, which affect rainfall and weather events. As climate change disrupts weather patterns, fluctuations in yields between neighboring woredas are becoming more common, making it harder for farmers to predict droughts, pests, and diseases. NE-supported cooperatives are well-positioned to help farmers adapt by introducing new technologies and practices through demonstration plots and field days. Using a diffusion of innovation approach, NE helps farmers reduce losses during extreme weather and maximize yields in stable conditions.

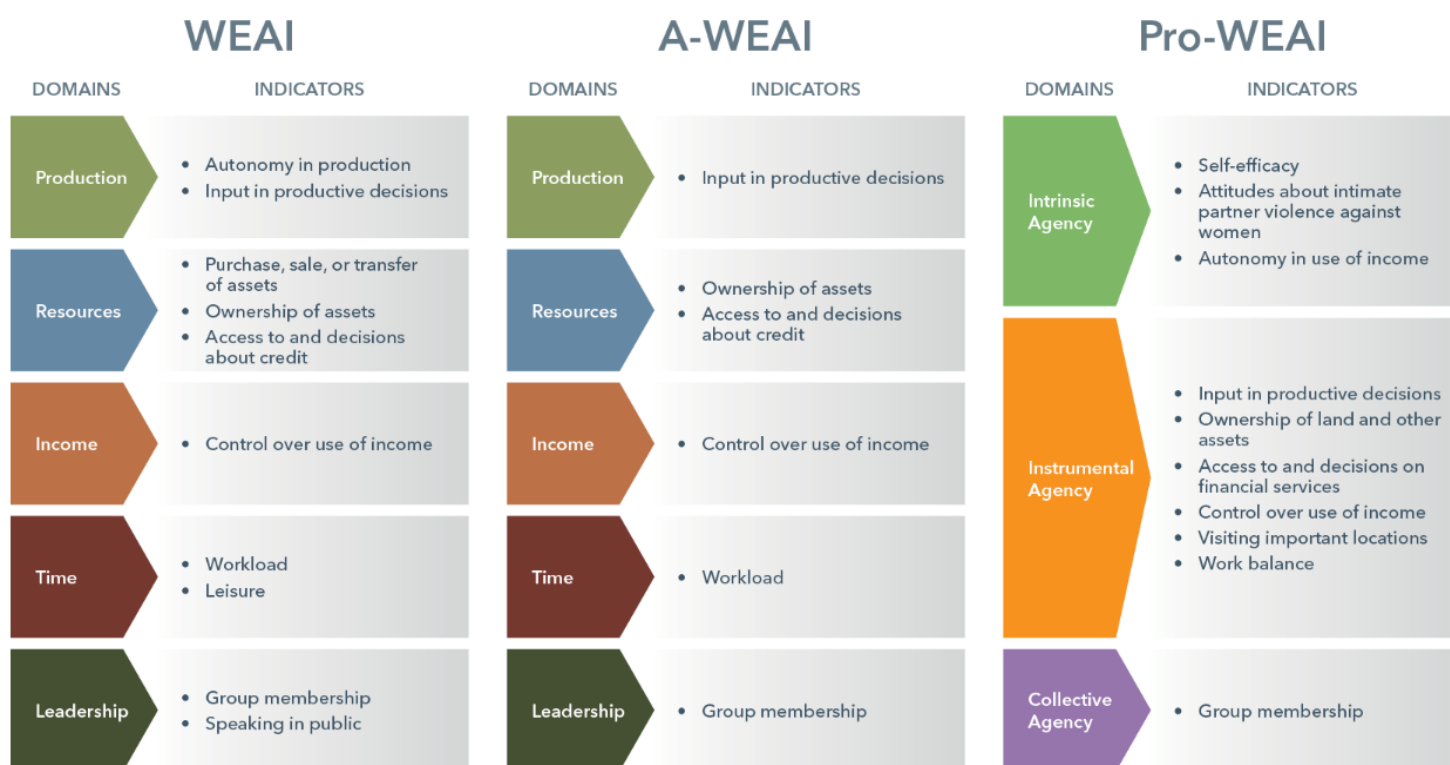
**Figure 4. 2023 Yield results for mung beans and groundnuts by region**



## WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT IN AGRICULTURE

In 2023, Nuru Ethiopia piloted the Abbreviated Women’s Empowerment in Agriculture Index (A-WEAI), developed by IFPRI and USAID, to assess women's empowerment in agricultural interventions. The A-WEAI is a streamlined version of the full index, designed for quicker use in programs with a narrower agricultural focus. It measures empowerment across five domains: production, resources, income, time, and leadership. Respondents answer standardized questions, producing an index score that can be compared with other contexts.

Using a representative sampling methodology, NE surveyed 395 women and 262 men from various regions and cooperatives. All respondents were members of NE-supported cooperatives. Results are presented by individual domain and total index value.



*The WEAI toolkit comprises multiple different tools including the WEAI, A-WEAI and Pro-WEAI.<sup>8</sup>*

<sup>8</sup> IFPRI. 2018. *WEAI Version*. [Link](#).

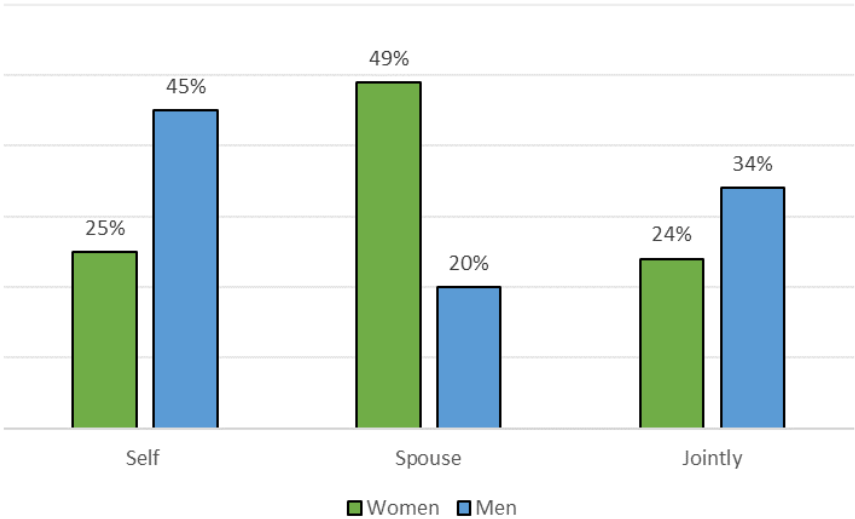
**RESULTS BY DOMAIN**

There are a total of five domains of questions present in the A-WEAI survey including empowerment across choices over production, utilization of resources, decisions over income, time usage, and leadership opportunities. As there are nearly 100 questions in the individual survey, select excerpts of leading questions can be seen below to highlight differences present between men and women at the household level.

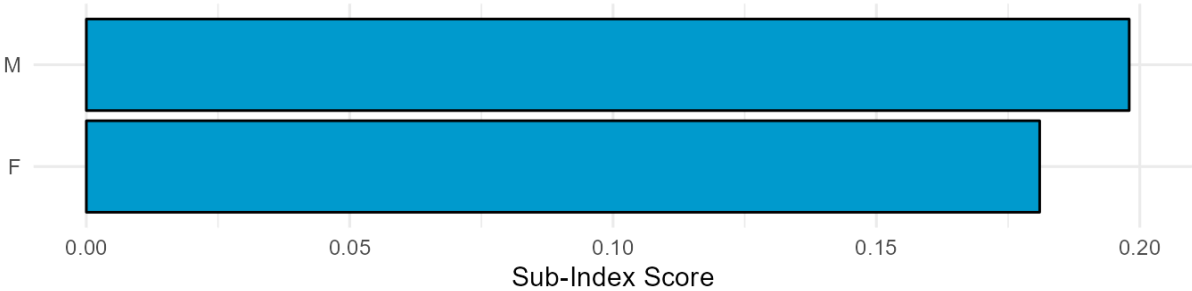
**Production**

Under production, individuals were asked what they produce, and who was in charge of decisions regarding what to produce at the household. Respondents had the option of responding “self” if they made the decisions regarding production themselves, “spouse” if it was only the spouse, or “jointly” if they made decisions together surrounding production decisions. Women reported making decisions by themselves 25% of the time, jointly with a spouse 24% of the time, and reported their spouse was the sole decision maker 49% of the time. Men reported making decisions by themselves 45% of the time, jointly with a spouse 34% of the time, and reported their spouse was the sole decision maker 20% of the time. These values are significant, because they indicate that in the majority of decisions over production, men are either involved, if not the sole decision-makers. When conducting programs, there is a high likelihood that women will not be able to make decisions regarding activities without the input of their husbands.

**Figure 5. Decision-making agency in productive activities by sex**



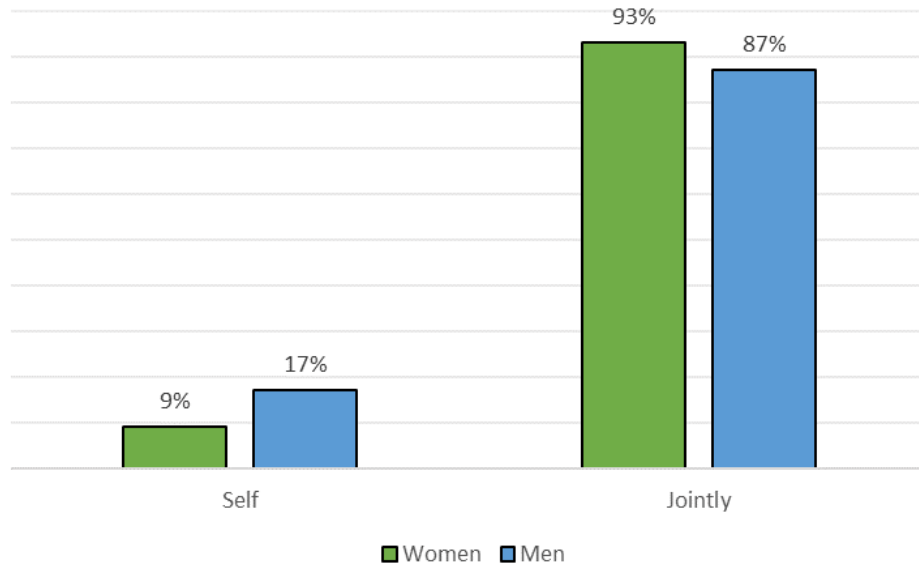
**Figure 6. Dimension 1: Production - scores by sex**



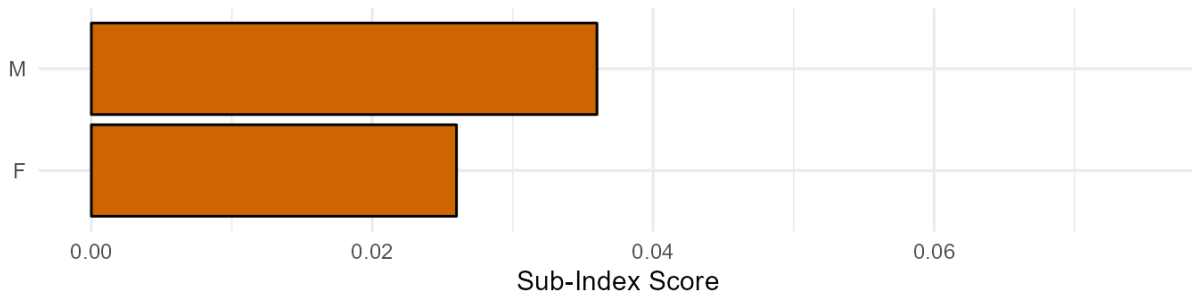
**Resources**

On resources, this survey asks about ownership over a standard list of household items including radios, televisions, transportation, and more. Respondents then are asked who owns these items, to which they can respond they own them personally, or jointly with a spouse. There was only a small difference in ownership using this data, which showed that women reported owning items personally 9% of the time, versus men’s 17%. Women reported owning items at the household jointly 93% of the time versus men’s 87% of the time. There is some overlap in percentages due to various items having different levels of ownership. In short however, we can see a slight preference towards men owning items in the household over women, at nearly double the personal ownership rate. Furthermore, women and men were asked about their ability to access credit, to which men were far more likely to respond affirmatively than women.

**Figure 7. Resource ownership by sex**



**Figure 8. Dimension 2: Access to credit - scores by sex**



### Income

For the income section of this index survey, individuals are asked to what extent they are able to make decisions regarding the income earned from activities. This is particularly important for Nuru Ethiopia, as one of the main goals of the program is to generate more household income. Respondents have various options to respond to their level of agency in decision making over income, using a scale from 1 to 4, where 1 means "not at all" and 4 means "to a high extent." The vast majority of responses fell into either 2, "a small extent," or 3, "a medium extent." A large difference was observed between the sexes: women reported "a small extent" 69% of the time compared to men's 27%, and "a medium extent" 31% of the time versus men's 61%. This means that far more often, men are in charge of decisions over income at the household level in Ethiopia.

Figure 9. Dimension 3: Income control - scores by sex

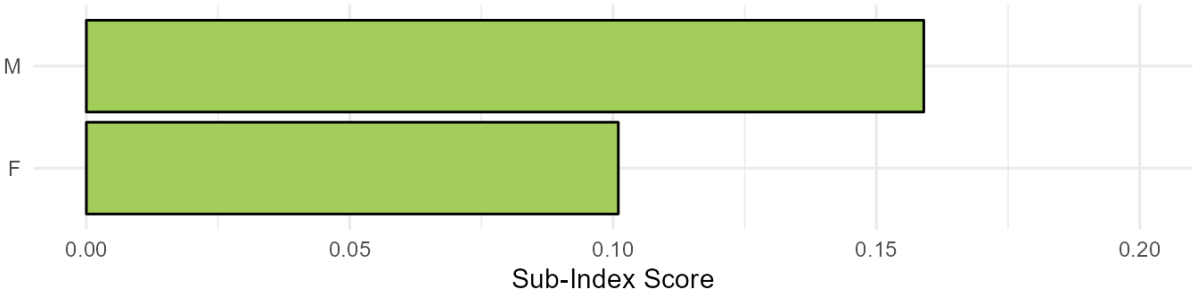
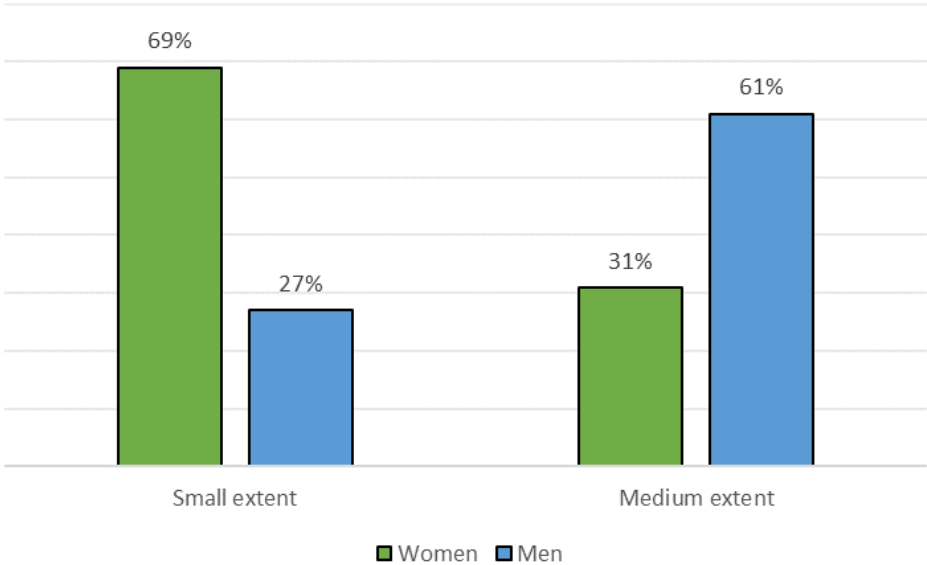


Figure 10. Extent of decision-making power over spending by sex



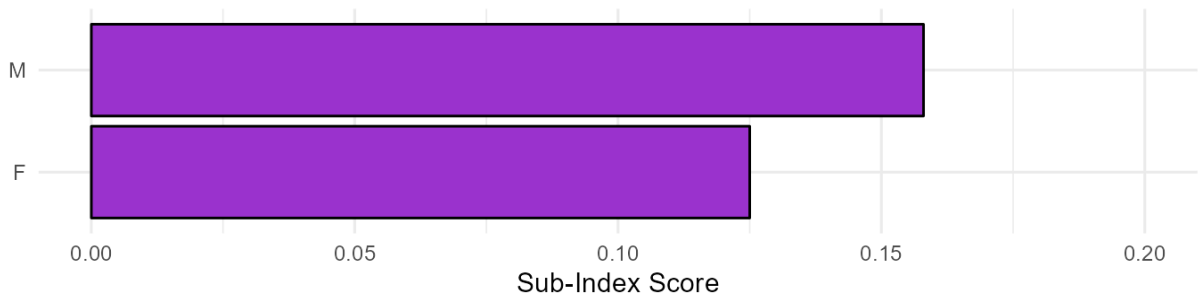
## Time

Women and men were both asked additionally to respond to questions about their time usage. The question asked respondents to say how many hours per day they spent on average with a list of various different tasks. In summary, women are far more likely to be engaged in domestic labor, including cooking, cleaning, taking care of children, and are also expected to participate in on-farm labor. Men seem to have more time available overall, although do spend marginally more time on the farm.

**Table 3. Time spent engaging in household activities by sex (hours)**

Sex	Cooking	Domestic Labor	Farming	Taking care of Children	Social Time
Men	0.26	0.31	3.44	0.37	2.58
Women	1.59	1.54	2.44	1.17	2.16

**Figure 11. Dimension 5: Time - scores by sex**



## Leadership

The leadership domain principally asked for the respondents membership in any number of groups within the community. However, since one of the options is “agricultural cooperative”, our positive response rate for these questions is 100%. As such, discounting the most popular two group types, cooperative and religious groups, gives us more accurate data for comparison. Among women, and excluding agricultural and religious groups, there were only 60 individuals (15%) who responded that they were not members of groups within the community. For men, this value was a very similar 36 individuals (14%). This could indicate that there is a high emphasis on group participation and membership in these communities, which differs little based on sex of the individual.

## A-WEAI INDEX CALCULATION

The A-WEAI tool provides an index calculation to compare program scores with external benchmarks. The Ray Marshall Center calculated these values using IFPRI's public Stata guidance.<sup>9</sup> The index weighs various dimensions of empowerment and assigns individual scores for men and women respondents. In NE-supported communities, men scored 0.81, while women scored 0.76, revealing a 0.05 gap largely due to differences in income access and production, where women have less decision-making power.

The 5DE (Five Domains of Empowerment) index measures empowerment across five key areas: production, resources, income, leadership, and time. It assigns weights to each domain, producing a composite score that reflects an individual's empowerment level within their community.

**Figure 12. Combined 5DE score by sex**



Domain	Indicator	Definition of indicator	Weight
<b>Production</b>	Inputs in productive decisions	Sole or joint decision making over food and cash crop farming, livestock and fisheries	1/10
	Autonomy in production	Autonomy in agricultural production	1/10
<b>Resources</b>	Ownership of assets; purchase, sale, or transfer of assets	Sole ownership of major household assets	1/15
	Purchase, sale, or transfer of assets	Participation in decisions to sell, buy, or transfer assets	1/15
	Access to credit and associated decision making	Access to and participation in decision-making concerning credit	1/15
<b>Income</b>	Control over use of income	Sole or joint control over income and expenditure	1/5
<b>Leadership</b>	Group member	Whether respondent is an active member in at least one economic or social group	1/10
	Speaking in public	Whether the respondent is comfortable speaking in public	1/10
<b>Time</b>	Workload	Allocation of time to productive and domestic tasks	1/10
	Leisure	Satisfaction with available time for leisure	1/10

Source: Alkire Et Al. (2013).

*The 5DE Score weights the various dimensions of empowerment to create a combined index value.*

<sup>9</sup> IFPRI. 2024. *Dataprep and A-WEAI Calculation*. [Link](#).



## EMPOWERMENT IN PROGRAMS

Nuru Ethiopia's ability to gather data on both yields and empowerment scores during the survey period has enabled the Ray Marshall Center to identify a strong, positive relationship between empowerment and agricultural productivity. The multivariate regression model below demonstrates a statistically significant correlation, showing that for every 0.10 unit increase in empowerment, mung bean yields increase by between 95.7 and 108.9 kgs/acre. Similar trends are observed for groundnut yields, with increases as high as 243.3 kgs/acre for more empowered individuals.

These results highlight the powerful role that empowerment—measured across five domains—can play in enhancing agricultural outcomes. This connection emphasizes the importance of empowerment interventions, as higher empowerment scores directly correspond with improved yields. While this model successfully captures the influence of empowerment on yields, further exploration is necessary to incorporate additional factors such as access to infrastructure, education, and other relevant variables to deepen our understanding of this relationship.

**Table 4. Correlations between household female empowerment scores and yields.**

Crop	Variables	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Mung Beans KGs Yield/Acre	<i>Empowerment Score</i>	108.9**	95.7**	107.1**
	<i>Season Meher</i>	-	-76.4**	-77.2**
	<i>HH Type/Only Female</i>	-	-	-66**
Groundnuts KGs Yield/Acre	<i>Empowerment Score</i>	243.3**	245.5**	-
	<i>Season</i>	-	-	-
	<i>HH Type/Only Female</i>	-	-3.6	-

The demonstrated link between empowerment and agricultural productivity highlights the importance of continuing to use tools like A-WEAI to measure empowerment in Nuru Ethiopia's programs. These insights can guide future interventions, ensuring that efforts to boost empowerment also contribute to higher yields and improved livelihoods for smallholder farmers.

## CONCLUSION

Nuru Ethiopia's 2023 results highlight remarkable progress in agricultural productivity and cooperative development. NE-supported farmers achieved a 130% increase in crop-equivalent yields (CEY), from a baseline of 217 kgs/acre in 2020 to 500 kgs/acre in 2023 for mung beans and groundnuts. This impressive growth is the result of NE's continued investment in cascaded training, which ensures that best practices and innovations reach farmers through cooperative unions and primary cooperatives. The increasing professionalization of these cooperatives, with an average SCOPEinsight score of 4.65 out of 5, demonstrates their ability to operate independently and profitably.

In addition to agricultural gains, Nuru Ethiopia successfully measured women's empowerment outcomes for the first time in 2023 using the Abbreviated Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (A-WEAI). Although NE did not increase empowerment this year, the results indicate that women in NE-supported communities have higher empowerment outcomes compared to the national average. For example, NE women scored 0.76 on the 5 Domains of Empowerment (5DE) index, above the 0.69 national average reported in the Feed the Future Ethiopia Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index Data Fact Sheet.<sup>10</sup> This is particularly notable given that NE operates in rural areas, where empowerment scores are typically lower.

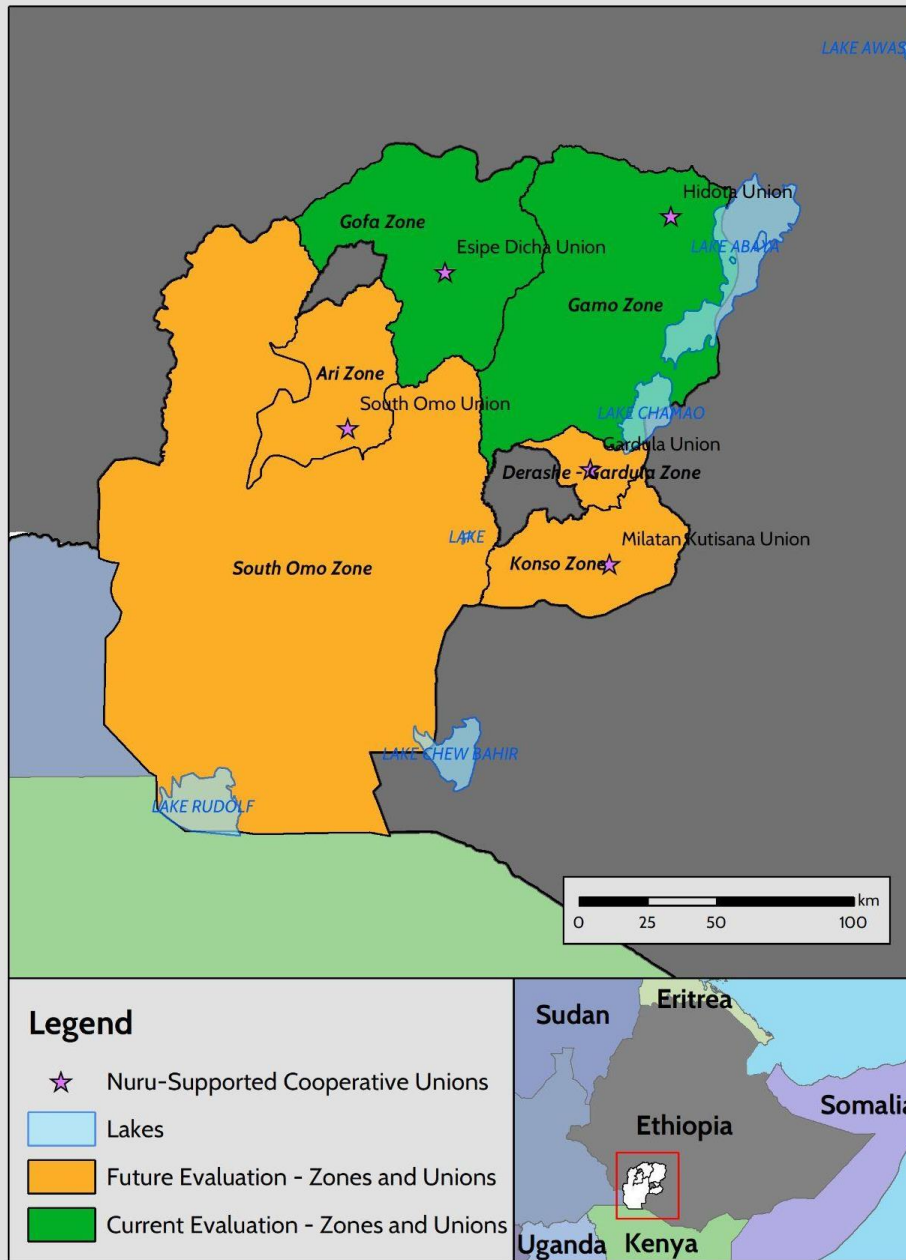
Looking ahead, Nuru Ethiopia will shift its focus to new operational areas, supporting emerging cooperative unions with the same high-quality interventions. A new baseline evaluation for these unions will take place in 2025 to guide future support and ensure continued growth. This transition marks an exciting phase in NE's expansion, with the goal of replicating the successes of 2023 in new regions. A map detailing the new operational areas can be found on the following page.

Ray Marshall Center (RMC) and Nuru U.S. remain committed to providing continued evaluative support as Nuru Ethiopia expands its operations into new regions. This partnership will ensure that NE's growth is accompanied by robust monitoring and evaluation frameworks, helping to measure impact and refine interventions. As Nuru Ethiopia continues to deliver strong results in both agricultural productivity and women's empowerment, RMC and Nuru U.S. look forward to collaborating closely, ensuring data-driven insights that will guide NE's ongoing efforts to improve the livelihoods of smallholder farmers across Ethiopia.

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<sup>10</sup> Feed The Future. 2018. *Ethiopia Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index Data Fact Sheet*. [Link](#).

## Nuru Ethiopia - Current and Future Evaluation Zones and Unions



*In 2025, NE will begin intensive support of a new cohort of cooperative unions in the South Omo, Ari, Konso, and Gardula zones of the South Ethiopia Region (orange). Evaluation will help to establish baseline performance in these regions against which performance will be benchmarked in the coming years.*