

ABSTRACT

Producer organizations (POs) provide benefits to smallholders by alleviating market access challenges. However, whether all farmers benefit from a PO is still a question. Limited evidence is available on whether POs are inclusive of poor farmers. Even if the poor join, do they participate in decision-making? We conducted interviews with 595 smallholder dairy farmers in Kenya. We distinguish three groups; members of a bargaining PO, members of a processing PO and non-members. We show that membership is related to the structural characteristics of the organization: processing POs favor membership of farmers that are wealthier, more educated and more innovative. As to participation in the decision-making process: older, male and specialized farmers have a higher chance of being involved than poor farmers. Factors distinguishing farmer participation in decision-making between bargaining and processing POs are highlighted. We find that a bargaining PO is more inclusive of all groups of farmers, while women and poor farmers are excluded from decision-making in a processing PO. Our findings contribute to policymaking on inclusive development.