In brief
In order to foster south-south learning between Africa and Asia, this study presents the findings from three country studies (Ghana, Nigeria and Vietnam) (figure 1) to understand households’ decision-making with respect to the options for reducing post-harvest losses, including the options of processing for value addition to cassava. The study examines how decisions to use, sell, store or process cassava and peels are taken in the context of the risks and benefits to food security.

Context
Households provide the context in which important market and non-market transactions between men and women take place in all societies. In essence, households provide:
1. over 80% of all hours spent in agricultural production, processing and about 60–90% of the rural agricultural product marketing
2. more than two-thirds of the work force in agriculture
3. the principal source of distinct economic gender roles

Cassava producing and processing households make decisions on:
1. the options for maximizing profit
2. managing risks from post-harvest handling
3. ensuring food security for the household and other social benefits

Household decision-making affects many choices with important consequences including:
1. the distribution of income, allocation of resources
2. allocation of responsibility
3. allocation of time and options for value addition

Study areas: Nigeria, Ghana and Vietnam
Figure 1: Maps of Nigeria, Ghana and Vietnam showing the study areas

Methodology
A total of 501 households in the countries chosen for this survey were selected using rapid participatory rural appraisal methods to elicit responses to the set objectives. Data were collected using Individual Household Interviews (IHI) guide, focus and group discussions (F and GD) and semi structured questionnaires. Descriptive statistics such as Tables and Venn Diagrams were used to analyse data.

Results and discussion
Household decision making on cassava production and processing assets:
The study found out that in all three countries decisions on use and allocation of resources are taken by men – despite women commonly being responsible for post-harvest handling and processing.

Cassava waste utilization has low value and is therefore not a focus of male interest. By adding value, this dynamic may change. Women showed great interest in the economic opportunities offered by waste (cassava peels) utilization.

Gender Roles and responsibilities in Cassava Production and processing differs by gender across countries as indicated in figure 3.

Conclusion
Advocacy groups and the media should be engaged for social change. This will catalyse the questioning of gender norms towards less strict normative frameworks to allow household adoption of more gender equitable behaviours that address gender blind cultural issues around decision making and empowerment.

Recommendations
Participatory transformational empowerment pathways to build women’s decision making ability in the household and community should be encouraged. The aim of this is to question assumptions and challenge orthodoxies around household decision making on production and processing.