TItle: Can a Small Push Change Farming? Evidence from Experimental

Intervention in Maize Production in Uganda

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Abstract

We conducted an experimental intervention in maize production with small-scale farmers in Uganda to examine the impact of the free distribution of modern inputs on input demand and information diffusion. The intervention was a sequential, randomized controlled trial. Prior to the 1st cropping season, we distributed free inputs for maize production and provided the instruction of their usage in treatment villages while no input or training was provided in control villages. Before the subsequent cropping season, we revisited all sample villages to sell farmers the same inputs that we had previously provided free of cost. To do so, we held a sales meeting in each of the treatment and control villages and invited all sample households as well as their neighbors. Using the information collected at the sales meeting, we estimated demand curves for each input for different types of households with and without the credit option. The results show 1) the average purchase quantity of the treatment households was much higher than that of the control households, and that of the neighbor households fell in between, and 2) the credit option had a large impact on the purchase quantities of all inputs and for all types of households.