



Answering the Agricultural Value Addition Missed Calls in Uganda



Report of PROCEEDINGS of the Agriculture Policy Symposium

Prepared by

DRUSSA WP5 Country Coordination Unit

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1.0 Introduction

The Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF) is among the three Ugandan ministries that are participating in DRUSSA¹ Programme. The others are Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development (MEMD) and Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Sports (MESTS).

MAAIF organised the symposium on 22nd April 2015 at the ministry headquarters in Entebbe to discuss the progress made in defining MAAIF research priorities to facilitate implementation of value-addition aspects of the National Agriculture Policy (2014).

The DRUSSA Policy Fellow attached to MAAIF, Dr. Ayebazibwe Chrisostom convened and facilitated the symposium. He welcomed the participants and noted that policy symposia are prepared to equip staff with conventional skills and approaches in handling of research evidence, conducting research using appropriate methodologies and in translating research into policy.

2.0 Presentations

2.1 DRUSSA Programme

Dr. Tomas Harber from the Association of Commonwealth Universities in the United Kingdom presented an overview of DRUSSA programme. He explained the three components of the programme as including:

1. Policy Symposia, meant to encourage interaction and engagement between policy-makers and researchers
2. Executive education courses for capacity strengthening of ministry staff in evidence-based policy-making
3. Policy fellowship program to provide in-house technical support to the ministries in compiling and effectively utilizing available research evidence to support policy processes.

The three components of the programme are inter-linked and mutually re-enforcing to enhance skills, create awareness of latest research and create a supportive environment. Evidence based policy-making is possible if a link that facilitates high level interaction between the policy-makers, the academia and the public is developed.

2.2 Agricultural Value Addition Missed Calls in Uganda

Professor Noble Banadda from Makerere University presented a paper entitled 'Answering Value Addition Missed Calls in Uganda'² in which he discussed policy issues related to value addition to agricultural commodities to reduce post-harvest wastage and improve market competitiveness. The paper identifies the policy focus on increasing agricultural production and limited investment in value addition as greatest cause of the missed opportunities for agricultural transformation and increased contribution to economic growth in Uganda and Africa at large.

¹ Development Research Uptake in Sub-Saharan Africa

² This paper was presented at the first Agricultural Policy Symposium

3.0 Emerging Issues

The MAAIF Policy Fellow, Dr. Ayebazibwe Chrisostom presented a report on his progress with identifying key research priorities to facilitate implementation of value-addition aspects of the National Agriculture Policy (2014). MAAIF has identified and clustered several areas for value addition under crops, livestock and fisheries. In view of the potential impact and limited research knowledge available on the dairy and beans value chains, DRUSSA programme could concentrate on identifying research evidence that could facilitate MAAIF interventions geared towards value addition to those commodities. Based on the presentation, the following issues emerged:

1. It was considered useful for MAAIF to analyse and respond to the solutions proposed in the presentation on 'Answering Value Addition Missed Calls in Uganda'.
2. The policy fellow should support MAAIF in implementing the feasible solutions arising from the Agricultural Value Addition issues paper.
3. Milk and beans were considered high impact and prioritized agricultural commodities whose product value chains are little researched.
4. DRUSSA programme could support collection of relevant research evidence to facilitate evidence based policy and programme interventions focusing on the two commodities.

4.0 Way Forward

1. It was suggested that as a way to sustain the DRUSSA symposia, there is need to hold regular meetings to enable knowledge sharing between the policy makers and the academia.
2. DRUSSA will forward to the ministry for their feedback especially concerning the number and categories of MAAIF staff that should be nominated to attend the Executive Education Course conducted at the Civil Service Collage in Jinja in July 2015.
3. DRUSSA will advise MAAIF when process of selecting the next cohort of Policy Fellows will start. The next policy fellow will be seconded to the ministry before September 2015 to support the current policy fellow in implementing evidence-based policy processes.

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