

Assessment of Consortium Approach in Food Value Chain Development on Income of Smallholder Farmers in East Africa, Countries of Uganda, Tanzania and Rwanda

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Agriculture as one of the most important sectors in East African Community (EAC) accounts for about 80% of the workforce involving the smallholder farmers in rural areas for their livelihoods. In spite of this the EAC is characterized by low agricultural productivity and low incomes thus rated amongst the poorest in Africa. The reasons for this are poor access to well structured and efficient markets, inconsistent supply of quality inputs and finance. Moreover several value chain approaches have been adopted to bridge the gap, but still low income of smallholder farmers persist, thereby making them vulnerable to shocks.

However the consortium approach under the Regional East African Community Trade in Staples (REACTS) project implemented by Kilimo Trust is a response to address the gaps of low agricultural productivity and incomes of smallholder farmers and other actors in the value chain.

The ongoing study, therefore seeks to assess and analyze the effectiveness of the consortium approach vis-a-vis conventional approach in food value chain development on productivity and incomes of smallholder farmers. The assessment would be done on the capacity building efforts to meet the requirements of well understood markets which the farmers can sell, the post-harvest handling process of the produce, access to high quality inputs, credit facility and the acceptability of the produce to highly competitive trading systems in cross border trades. The value chain actors would be selected through randomized controlled variable using questionnaires, key informants guides and focus group discussion guide. The study would be conducted in Uganda, Tanzania and Rwanda.

The study would evidence- based information of the effect of the consortium approach on productivity and profitability with a view to promoting scalability and sustainability of the consortium approach in EAC. The findings will reveal the critical success factors for sustainability of the approach; the Strengths, Weaknesses; Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) for further development in the value chain.