

**RESEARCH PROJECT: STRENGTHENING AGRIBUSINESS ETHICS,
QUALITY STANDARDS & ICT USAGE IN
UGANDA'S VALUE CHAINS" (AGRI-QUEST).**

**ARF UGANDA WORKSHOP
JUNE 18-20, 2019, FAIRWAY HOTEL, KAMPALA**

AGRI-QUEST Implementing institutions

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About AGRI-QUEST

Premised on the fact that there is a considerable lack of attention to these two issues in agribusiness value chains (VCs) in Uganda with respect to accelerating transformation, competitiveness and sustainability of a vibrant food security program. That is:

1. Ethical behavior /conduct of players, and
2. Quality related issues.

VCs targeted: Rice, potato, dairy, oil seed, and cassava.

Hence the project aimed to initiate an agenda that can create a more ethical trading environment rooted in behavioral change of VC players since Ethical conduct compliments formal laws to drive trade.

Insights

1. Drivers of unethical behaviour fall in 3 categories
 - a) Institutional voids – e.g. gender inequality, poor organization/networks, inept judiciary, financing arrangements
 - b) Low competence levels of value chain actors –e.g. skills, equipment, facilities, contracting, labour supervision, information processing
 - c) Motivation of value chain actors – e.g. rewarding markets, equity in regulatory practices

2. Gaps hidden in or caused by institutional voids hinder technology uptake and market functionality:
 - a) Poor infrastructure
 - b) Lack of investment funds
 - c) Inadequate competence development arrangements
 - d) Dominance of the agricultural sector by disempowered womenfolk

3. Value chain actors appreciated benefit of ethical conduct to their business but are driven by several factors in the above categories

Outputs

1. [Numerous flyers, policy briefs, research papers.](#)
2. [AGRI-QUEST website](#)
3. [AGRI-QUEST Facebook](#), for short messaging and narrations
4. [YouTube channel](#) with short documentaries/clips
5. Peer review papers (manuscripts submitted to Academy of Management, Belfast Food Summit Conference)
6. Self-assessment through implementation of Code of Conduct (CoC).
7. A conceptual value creation and trade model to be used in motivating value chain actors to act ethically. Model still requires research to generate quantification.
8. Training materials and publications in multimedia

Outcomes

- Value chain apex bodies, associations and cooperatives (e.g., USPPA for Potato, UCCCU for Dairy; BAIDA for Rice) had their capacity built and can help to promote agribusiness dialogue on ethical conduct and quality aspects between micro-players in the value chains.
- Individual change agents established for every value chain...see Joan Kahizi of Potato value chain in Kisoro.

Impact

- Functional Networks on issues of business ethics and standards – universities, industry, MSPs
- Debates on ethical conduct in agri business (E.g., Africa Counterfeits Networks)
- Now in Uganda, across a variety of trading industries, quality issues are paramount, and ethical conduct climbing top on agenda as part of relationship and trust building

Going Forward

1. **Assumptions (related to the ARF Impact for Research approach)**
 1. Based on public outcry on substandard goods in the market, there is fair chance that ethical conduct can be leveraged to grow market share
 2. Public policy can be stimulated by informed debate on business ethics, cheaper than official standards to administer.

2. **To the extent possible Partnerships should be formulated to cut across the following:**
 1. All of trade and investment sector – production, handling, logistics, quality standards, legal framework, investment attraction, financing
 2. Local, regional and international orientation
 3. Commodities, products and services

 4. Design, Engineering and Construction related to the industry chosen for research on ethical conduct e.g. animal housing, milking equipment, drying equipment, storage structures, delivery vehicles, fish water bodies
 5. Practitioners, facilitators and regulators (MDAs, tax administration)

3. **Scaling up, out and deep**
 1. What Competencies are required to handle scaling – do actors including youths, women etc. have the competencies?
 2. How is Financing arranged for scaling -
 3. Management of scaling –handling change management issues,
 4. Markets to take up the increased output

END

Thanks for your attention