

Event Report

National Consultative Workshop on NEPAD Agriculture Programmes November 29-30, 2005, Lusaka

Introduction

Participatory Ecological Land Use Management (PELUM), Association Zambia, and Consumer Unity and Trust Society-Africa Resource Centre (CUTS-ARC), organised a National Consultative workshop on NEPAD Agriculture Programmes under a partnership project entitled 'Information based Advocacy, Networking, and Capacity Building on NEPAD in Zambia', supported by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). Participants were drawn from government, public and private sector institutions, donor community, civil society, research institutions and media organisations.

Objectives

The workshop aimed at integrating NEPAD agriculture programmes into the Fifth National Development Plan (FNDP), and build capacity among development actors, from both civil society and government on comprehensive understanding of NEPAD agricultural programmes. The workshop also aimed at identifying feasible projects that can be implemented under NEPAD for the betterment of small-scale farmers in Zambia.

Some of the themes discussed at the workshop include:

- Overview NEPAD Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program (CAADP),
- Zambia's Agriculture Sectors: Constraints and Developments
- Streamlining CAADP into the FNDP
- Building Communication linkages around NEPAD
- Providing a framework for expanding Zambia's agriculture trade

Highlights

The highlights of the workshop are as follows:

- The workshop got together over 40 participants, with a good representation from the farmer support organisations
- The Government through the Ministry of Agriculture and Co-operatives presented the National Agriculture Policy (NAP), which gave an overview on Government policy.
- The workshop was addressed by H.E the Canadian High Commissioner to Zambia John Deyell
- The approach used was participatory and comprehensive, thus the workshop achieved the intended objectives and identified a number of projects which can be implemented under NEPAD in Zambia
- The workshop established a network of organisations working in the agriculture sector
- The workshop identified the challenges for intervention by the Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in the process
- There was sufficient time for discussions
- The event was well reported in the media, including electronic, particularly in the Daily Mail, Times of Zambia, Hot F.M, Zambia Information Service, etc

Lowlights

Apart from the highlights the workshop had a few constraints:

- Zambia National Farmers Union (ZNFU), which is the umbrella body in agriculture, did not participate. This deprived an opportunity to get the views and positions of ZNFU on NEPAD and to learn how the ZNFU rates NEPAD with other previous initiatives
- Another key constraint was absence of the National Focal Point for NEPAD of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA). The MoFA is the co-ordinating ministry for all activities under NEPAD
- The workshop was constrained by the inability to have some of the proposed paper presented; this could have been caused by mainly late notice
- Although the number of participants was over 40, it was below the target of 60
- There was poor participation from the private sector.

Outcomes:

- Stakeholders cited a number of constraints to the development of the sector in Zambia, such as, lack or poor infrastructure, including roads, dams, storage and transportation facilities, irrigation techniques, poor pricing mechanism, absence of finance, inadequate extension services, unavailability of market information, the lack to ownership to land, and low budget allocation to the sector
- Small-scale farmers face difficulties in accessing the international markets due to standards requirements, such as Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) measures. In the domestic market, farmers are disadvantaged due to inadequate or poor transportation system, lack of market information and poor agriculture marketing system
- The stakeholders realised the importance of the CAADP, in order to promote agriculture in Zambia and indicated that for the initiative to be successfully implemented there should be strong political will. Farmer's representatives lamented that small-scale farmers do not own land; most of the land is under customary or state ownership. This has impacted negatively on the sector, because people cannot use land as security to access finance due to lack of title deed. Therefore to ensure national productivity and development of the sector, there should be mechanisms or policies in place to ease procedures in acquiring land.
- Most farmers in Zambia depend on seasonal rainfall, which has contributed to food insecurity in the nation. This can be addressed by encouraging water harvesting technologies and promoting irrigation to encourage productivity. One major constraint in the use of modern irrigation facilities or techniques is the lack of electricity. Distribution of electricity in Zambia is concentrated along the railway line. This deprives most small-scale farmers who are not along the line of rail and underlines the need for rural electrification. It was highlighted that there should be harmonisation in the use of organic and non-organic methods.

- There are a number of problems pertaining to market access, including inputs and finance. Poor and inadequate transportation facilities are compounded by absence of market information, resulting in the selling of produce at a price below the production costs. It was felt that a well-networked transportation system could provide efficiency and reduce the cost of production. Mr. Kasote Singogo, from the Zambia Association for Research and Development (ZARD), stated that there is need to put in place a mechanism that will enable both farmers and traders access information such as market price, market demand, and market supply. Farmers should be further provided with micro-finance and processing facilities to avoid wastage.

- The following projects were identified by stakeholders as relevant under NEPAD
 - Capacity building for small scale farmers on use of land and water systems
 - Construction and improvement of rural road network
 - Fish farming and fish conservation
 - Growing rice in the Western province and Chambeshi, etc.
 - Growing and processing of sugar cane
 - Cassava project in all rainfall regions
 - Constructing and renovation of existing dams
 - Agriculture market information

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