



AGRICULTURAL MARKETING INFORMATION SYSTEM IN ZAMBIA:

Current Status and Future Directions

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Background to AMIS-ZAMBIA

- Based on Marketing Information Systems in 72 Districts .Out of which only 9 provincial based districts are connected to the central AMIS HQ in Lusaka.
- Districts in each of the 9 provinces are connected to their respective provincial based district which produces a local bulletin.
- Each District manned by a District Marketing Officer (DMCO), and his assistant.

AMIC Aspects

- Communication
 - Use telephones /faxes to link up with the 9 provincial based districts.
 - Ideally to link with all districts, due to inadequate infrastructure.
- Data collection
 - Data collected by District Marketing Officers
 - About 12 commodities covered.
- Database Management
 - SPSS used as a database management tool as well as an analysis package at the HQ.

System Aspects (Contd)

- ✦ Dissemination- A combination of Methods
 - Use of Bulletins produced on a Bi-Monthly basis. Distributed by e-mail, fax and hard copies.
 - Use of National Radio- Price table from 9 provincial markets aired on National Radio on a Weekly basis.
 - Use of national media, such as Newspapers on as often as the information is available.

Types of Information Collected

- ✦ Commodity Prices(Selected commodities covered at retail and wholesale levels).
 - ✦ Average nominal prices reported.
 - ✦ Input(fert.,Seds and Chems.) prices.
 - ✦ Regional commodity prices, such as SAFEX prices.
 - ✦ Exchange Rates.



System Strengths

- ✦ Availability of National Radio broadcasting slots at no cost.
- ✦ Support from institutions such as MSU/FSRP in capacity building.
- ✦ Identified need for marketing information by government and other supporting partners.
- ✦ Willingness by stakeholders to receive the information so produced.



Weakness

- ✦ Lack of truly organised private national organisation for farmers/traders national wide to demand info.
- ✦ Less collaboration between private/public sectors.



Future Challenges

- Improving of linkages with the Private sector even at the National Level.
- Development of Regional systems in the remaining 7 provinces with the current staff turnovers.
- Timeliness in the transmission of data from the districts to AMIC HQ- may require investing in more sustainable ways of data transmission.
- Continued support from partners.



Way Forward

- Strengthening of Regional Marketing Information Systems e.g Central and Eastern Provinces information systems.
- Involvement of the private sector in the provision and dissemination of marketing information (Increased collaboration/NGOs).
- Commercialization of the dissemination of the information to achieve sustainability.



Eastern Province: An Example

- ✦ System to be based on private sector and public partnership.
- ✦ System center to be based at the Eastern province Chamber of Commerce and Industry.
- ✦ Govt to contribute technical support.
- ✦ Govt personnel continued involvement in data collection (Price and supply) and information dissemination at the markets.
- ✦ Govt to link system with equipment such as two-way radios- (Already installed) in the 8-districts of the province)



Eastern Province(Cont'd)

- ✦ Info to be disseminated through different methods- including radio, e-mail, etc.
- ✦ Also use of the Web to disseminate market information. Web already being maintained and used by the Chamber of Commerce.
- ✦ Local radio stations motivated into airing of mkt info on their stations.
- ✦ Mobile phones would also suffice for commercial farmers to a limited extent.

