

**Increased Regional Trade: Opportunities & Issues in East and Southern Africa Video
Conference: Zambia Country Report**

By Stephen Kabwe and Chance Kabaghe

Held on Thursday, 23rd September 2010 at the World Bank Zambia Offices, Lusaka.

In attendance:

Name	Institution	Position
1. Mr. Chance Kabaghe	Food Security Research Project	Director
2. Mr. D. Mingochi	Zambia Agricultural Research Institute	Principal Research Officer
3. Ms. Angela Mulenga	COMESA	Agro Food Coordinator
4. Mr. L. Ntalasha	Private Sector	Farmer
5. Mr. Simango	Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives	Horticultural Extension
6. Mr. Malumo Nawa	Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives	Horticultural Extension
7. Mrs. Shirley Ng'andu	University of Zambia	Lecturer, Horticultural
8. Mr. Stephen Kabwe	Food Security Research Project	Research Associate

General Overview

With a significant population growth, rapid urbanization, and the rise of supermarket chains, focus on horticultural trade is increasingly shifting from international markets to regional markets. There are opportunities and issues the regional markets are facing. However, understanding them would make participating countries to engage in trade and do it efficiently and effectively. The objective of the video conference was to share experiences and knowledge by different countries on the regional trader issues. Therefore, this report is a synthesis of outcomes from the video conference that was held on 23rd September, 2010 among Ethiopia, Uganda, Zambia, Mozambique and Tanzania on regional trade for horticultural produce.

Status of regional trade for horticultural produce

Regional trade on horticultural produce is getting important relative to European markets. However, the major challenge the countries that participated in the video conference are facing is the capturing of quality data on export and imports. Import and export is not all that consolidated and in most cases it cannot be used to determine the market decisions. It was felt that a well developed data capturing mechanism can help to make correct market decision for horticultural produce. Therefore, regional trade can only develop if there is quality and reliable data. COMESA informed the members participating in the video conference that it collects imports and exports data on horticultural produce from its member states. So every member country was encouraged to get that data. Then it was highlighted that all countries needed to include each countries consumption per capita. Only Mozambique included consumption of horticultural per capita.

Management of constraints on regional trade

Under this section it appeared that all countries have some degree of expertise on trade of horticultural produce. For example in Zambia, the expertise is there but what is lacking is the coordination at strategic policy level. A national ad hoc committee to bring public and private partners can enhance regional trade. It was learnt that some countries are in the process of developing ad hoc committees while others like Tanzania have fully fledged committees which help to organize the sector with an exception of Ethiopia which does not have any ad hoc committee. Some of the common regional constraints faced by the countries that participated in the conference include regional trade being in informal trade. This makes it difficult to capture trade information. For example the largest part of Tanzania's regional trade is still informal.

On-going strategy at regional level

Strategies at regional level to improve regional trade are being done in different countries and sometimes by regional trade blocks. For example, there is policy harmonization process taking place in the member countries of different regional trade blocks like COMESA, SADC, EAC to enhance regional trade. Under COMESA, a COMESA model energy policy framework is in place, a consumer price index harmonization etc are also proposed. COMESA-Simplified Trade Regime and SPS regulations have been developed. All these initiatives are aimed at enhancing trade with regional counterparts.

Conclusion

In conclusion Remi highlighted that regional trade is very important for development of horticultural sector. He noted that information on consumption per capita in all national presentations was not presented except Mozambique. He therefore, encouraged all countries to include the consumption per capita of horticultural produce.