

## Case Study Brief No 4: Regional policy change on dairy and seed trade in East Africa

This brief outlines a case study conducted as part of the International Livestock Research Institute's (ILRI's) and Overseas Development Institute's (ODI's) 'Process and Partnership for Pro-poor Policy Change' project, which seeks to identify and institutionalise innovative research and development mechanisms and approaches that lead to pro-poor policy outcomes. A new approach to policy process analysis was used as outlined in the accompanying brief: *'An Approach to Understanding the Role of Research in Policy Processes'*. This case study differs from the others in that it applied a 'quick and dirty' version of the analysis to look at the influences on two regional policy processes supported the Eastern and Central Africa Programme for Agricultural Policy Analysis (ECAPAPA).

### Background – Regional policy on seed trade and dairy marketing

Agricultural policies in East Africa are predominantly set at national level. But given the relatively close economic ties between the constituent countries, harmonisation of policies has often been encouraged, especially with the development of the East African Community. ECAPAPA has been supporting attempts to harmonise and rationalise policies in two key areas – seed trade and the dairy sector. In both cases, having identified a key policy area, ECAPAPA's approach has essentially been one of data collection and analysis followed by facilitated dialogue between key actors (See Figure 1).

### Case study findings

#### **Regional seed trade policy**

##### **The issue:**



Cereals are hugely important in the region and supply of appropriate seed is likewise important. But seed supply relies on several stages, including development and testing of new varieties, certification and release of seeds, and marketing and distribution of seeds across different countries. Following liberalisation and the opening up of the market to national and international plant breeding and seed companies, the companies still faced the process of going through the inefficient public approval system, with no regional agreement on standards. There

were also complicated and inconsistent phytosanitary regulations for cross-border trade and poor systems for intellectual property rights. Amongst other efforts ECAPAPA sought to address some of these policy and regulatory problems through their policy analysis and dialogue approach.

**Policy change:** Following ECAPAPA's facilitating activities, some key changes in policies, regulations and behaviour have occurred. These include: (i) agreement on more efficient variety release procedures (ii) strengthened plant variety protection measures in some countries (iii) more efficient seed certification procedures, (iv) more appropriate phytosanitary controls and (v) more efficient import/export procedures. There has also been a noticeable change in attitude and behaviour between many of the key actors, who are now engaged in positive dialogue towards more change, whereas before there had often been distrust, especially between private and public sector actors.

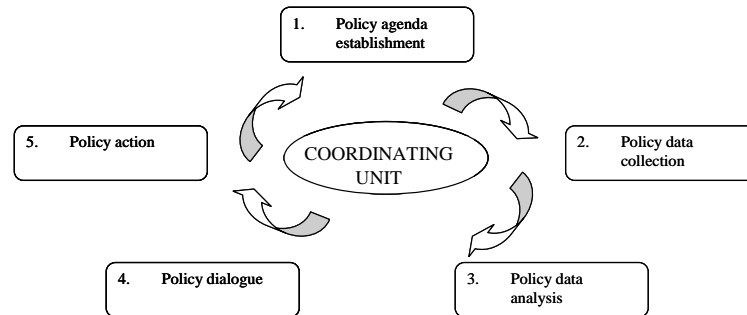
#### **Regional dairy policy:**

**The issue:** Case study 1 on dairy marketing in Kenya outlines the key role of the informal raw milk market in Kenya, and the situation is similar in other countries in the region. Policies designed for a western industrialised dairy model have been inappropriate for the informal sector of the market which supports most of the livelihoods in the sector. Led by overwhelming consumer demand, small-scale milk vendors (SSMVs) have not been able access training nor be certified to operate. Against this background, genuine concerns about



quality and public health have been all but impossible for regulators to deal with. Harassment of SSMVs has had the effect of increasing consumer price and decreasing farm gate price for milk.

**Policy change:** Following on from the policy change in Kenya described in Case Study 1, regulators across the region are now more proactively engaging to train and certify SSMVs. And in 2006, dairy market regulators from Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda and Rwanda recently agreed on a common approach to the training and certification of SSMVs, and procedures to facilitate cross border trade, including a common syllabus for training.



**Figure 1: ECAPAPA's way of working**

### **Key influences:**

While acknowledging the favourable environment, it seems that the recent progress towards rationalised and harmonised seed policies and the more harmonised dairy market policy has been largely influenced by the activities supported by ECAPAPA, and particularly its way of working:

Relevant evidence was collected and analysed with care, involving all key actors. The dairy change also drew heavily on evidence from Kenya's Smallholder Dairy Project. But critically, the evidence in both cases was effectively communicated through wide consultation and through sharing and discussion of this evidence on multiple occasions with key stakeholders from the relevant sectors.

Above all, the major influence has been through facilitating linkages. The wide engagement encouraged 'buy-in' to the whole process of policy reform, with stakeholders recognizing their role in the process. This has also led to better transparency and collaboration between actors in the relevant sectors, so changes are more likely to be actually implemented, and further changes to occur.

A key difference between the two cases has been the type of actor that has been targeted from the private sector. In the seed case, the informal seed sector has been largely ignored with progress being made in the formal commercial sector. In the dairy case, the opposite is true – engagement with SSMVs has enabled progress in the policies on the informal sector. The poverty-relevance of these differences may warrant some investigation.

### **Key lessons**

- Regional policymaking is a very different process from local or national policy processes. Policymakers are further removed from grassroots stakeholders affected by the decisions. Technocrats and higher-level actors play a key role. The interests of the poor may be difficult to feed to such processes other than via well-placed organisations with a pro-poor focus.
- At regional level, facilitating linkages and enabling dialogue is the most critical element for influencing change. Barriers to change include sensitivities between similar actors in different countries, and between different actor types.
- Use of evidence is important, and collection and analysis of such evidence should be done in the context of this close collaboration with the key policy actors.
- Evidence may have to be handled sensitively if particular actors face reduced roles.

### **More information**

The full report will be published by ILRI as a collaborative research report: Hooton, N. (2007) *Regional policy change in dairy marketing and seed trade policy in East Africa: An analysis of influences*. Details are also available on the Process and Partnership for Pro-Poor Policy Change project website [www.pppppc.org](http://www.pppppc.org) and ECAPAPA website: [www.asareca.org/ecapapa](http://www.asareca.org/ecapapa)