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“Development on the margin”

Assesment and Perspectives of Mechanical-power Technology Implementation in Agriculture in Angola

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Abstract

One of the important factors influencing agricultural production is the utilisation of technology. Technology applied in agriculture can be classified according to the origin of power into three levels: human, animal and mechanical. Angola still carries the burden of consequences after the long-lasting civil war terminated in 2002. Almost 70 % of the Angolan population is considered as agricultural, thus directly dependent on agricultural and related activities. The majority of them use hand-tool technology for agricultural production which is often not sufficient to sustain food security of the peasants' families. In 2010 the country was still significantly dependent on imported food. On the other hand, Angola has proved high economical growth rate since 2004. Even though, the Angolan economic growth is mainly driven by the oil sector, there are good financial conditions for increasing the implementation of mechanical-power equipment in agricultural sector and so insuring food security in the country. The survey aimed at the assessment of the current situation of the utilisation of mechanical-power equipment in agriculture and its future prospects with special regard to the possibilities of its utilisation within farmers' association. The survey was conducted in both governmental as well as private sectors at national and provincial level from May 2009 to October 2010. Methods of data collection included semi-structured personal interviews and questionnaires. The results show that nowadays the mechanical-power equipments are used only on 1 % of total cultivated land in Angola. The annual rate of total land cultivated by mechanical-power equipment increased by 7 % in agricultural seasons 2007/2008 – 2008/2009. The work capacity of a tractor in the last documented agricultural season 2008/2009 was 77.6 hectares, number of tractors per 1000 hectares reached only 0.61. The number of mechanical-power equipment is steadily changing due to the average service life of about two years. Unsuitable models of tractors and their implements, low level of maintenance and lack of spare parts, lack of qualified human resources and training capacities are the principle obstacles impeding broader utilisation of mechanical-power equipment.

Keywords: Agricultural development, Angola, mechanical-power technology, tractor