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Farmers’ and academia’s views”

Leveraging scaling up of biofortification through small and medium enterprises in Uganda: what are the governance challenges?

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Abstract

One of the world’s challenges is hidden hunger, where 17 % of the global population has an inadequate micronutrients intake. Scaling biofortified crops so that many farmers can grow and consume them is one approach to reducing hidden hunger. Many institutions are involved in scaling biofortified crops, yet governance challenges are not extensively studied to provide policy direction.

This study aimed to identify the governance challenges facing farmers, aggregators, processors, and retailers as one of the scaling pathways and understand whether training may reduce identification governance challenges in high iron beans.

The paper develops a conceptual framework based on new institutional economics to identify the causes of the governance obstacles. We used the process net-map to elicit knowledge regarding processes, actors, and challenges in the food value chain of biofortified crops. The process net map involves the identification of actors, roles the different actors play, their influence on the outcome and challenges in the processes. We used a field lab experiment to determine ways of reducing the identification challenge in the high iron beans. We used correlated random effects models to analyse the effect of training on identifying high iron beans.

The results demonstrate that apart from the known agricultural marketing challenges, vine multipliers are faced with bribery in the supply of vines, and households face a trade-off between allocating land for orange-fleshed potatoes and other varieties. In addition, the value chain actors mix high iron beans with other varieties while consumers are not willing to pay a premium price for biofortified crop products. These challenges result from information asymmetry, nutrition advice merit goods, collective action, and free-riding. Though training can improve the identification of high iron beans, its effect is not significant.

The findings show the existence of gross governance challenges in the biofortified crop food value chain and suggest investment in subsidies to increase production while creating awareness of the importance of nutritious products.

Keywords: And training, biofortified crops, governance challenges, scaling, transaction costs