



More meat milk and eggs by and for the poor

POLICY BRIEF

The Pig Sector in Uganda: Policy Issues and Recommendations for Actions

Briefing Notes for the Office of the Prime Minister

Prepared by the MorePork project of the CGIAR Research Program on Livestock in Uganda



A sow and her piglets in Kazinga village, Uganda. ©Photo K. Dhanji/ILRI

Background

The MorePork project, delivered through the CGIAR Research Program for Livestock since 2012, has conducted research and initiated interventions towards improving the pig value chain in Uganda, raising the efficiency and income generation potential of pig value chain actors and contributing to the policy agenda in the country.

During a policy briefing workshop in Kampala in December 2020 that focused on highlighting the potential impacts of climate change on the pig sector in Uganda and relevant policy recommendations, Dr. Julius Okello, team leader infrastructure of the Delivery Unit of the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM), cordially invited researchers of the MorePork project to prepare for a briefing session with the Prime Minister.

Further, Dr. Juliet Sentumbwe, Director of Animal Resources at MAAIF, requested the MorePork program to join forces and organizing a high-level event to raise the agenda, support and promote the pig sector in Uganda.

Uganda is ranked high on good policies, but faces implementation challenges, which OPM is trying to coordinate and address hand in hand with all ministries. These briefing notes highlight evidence-based policy issues and recommendations for action to uplift the pig value chain in Uganda.



A rider loads up a pig carcass at a pig slaughterhouse in Masaka district, for delivery to a pork restaurant (referred to locally as a 'pork joint'). ©Photo K. Dhanji/ILRI

Policy issue #1: Low visibility and public sector investment in smallholder pig production

The pig sector provides a source of income for more than 2 million households and several businesses countrywide. The country has the highest per capita consumption of pork in East Africa, estimated at 3.4 kilograms per person per year (FAOSTAT, 2018). The consistent rise in demand for pork has contributed to a rapid increase in the number of pigs in Uganda from 0.2 to 4.1 million between 1980 and 2018 (UBOS, 2018).

Yet despite its importance for the economy, income and nutrition, the pig sector continues to attract comparatively little investment when compared to dairy and beef. According to the National Development Plan (NDP III) report (2020), the agricultural sector grew at an average of 3.4 percent per annum between 2015 and 2020 – with the livestock sector registering the lowest annual growth performance at 2.1 percent. The Agriculture Sector Strategic Plan (ASSP 2015/16 – 2019/2020) identified 12 priority commodities that include dairy, fish and meats. This prioritization is based on the sector contribution to employment and wealth creation through export earnings. Although pork is second to beef in terms of meat production in Uganda, it is lumped within the meat category and not specifically prioritized.



Recommendation #1.1 (MAAIF): Key agricultural development strategies such as the NDP III and ASSP should be amended to specifically prioritize pig production, recognize its importance for smallholder livelihoods and call for accelerated investments and performance of the pig sector.



Recommendation #1.2 (MAAIF): Government expresses need and initiates steps towards the development of a Livestock Master Plan, that would include a prioritization and investment plan for the pig sector. Since 2013, the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) has been providing technical support to interested countries in Africa and Asia to develop Livestock Master Plans, to facilitate identification and prioritization of livestock development investment objectives.



Recommendation #1.3 (MAAIF): Organize high-level cross-ministry workshops with media coverage to raise the profile of the pig sector within Uganda and attract public and private sector investment. This would also provide an opportunity for the Government of Uganda to demonstrate its increased focus and commitment to expand and improve the pig sector.



Recommendation #1.4 (Uganda National Roads Authority UNRA and Ministry of Local Government MoLG): Efforts to improve rural infrastructure is ongoing. A greater focus on developing roads that link farmers to markets is highly recommended. Improved access to markets can significantly reduce transportation costs, minimize loss of produce and raise freshness of products, contributing to greater productivity.



A member of staff from Vetline Services team completes the relevant paperwork after a pig was artificially inseminated in Kabembe village in Mukono, Uganda. ©Photo K. Dhanji/ILRI



Instructions being given to a boda-boda (motorcycle) courier on the delivery specifics by a member of Vetline Services Offices in Mukono, Uganda. Vetline Services use a variety of means of transport to deliver pig semen for artificial insemination all over Uganda. ©Photo K. Dhanji/ILRI

Policy issue #2: Animal health

African swine fever (ASF) is the biggest threat to productivity of the pig systems in Uganda and a major cause of losses to pig farmers. Control of the disease can therefore significantly contribute towards a thriving pig industry. With no vaccine or treatment currently available, strict biosecurity measures supported by policies and legal instruments are necessary to prevent economic losses and the spread of the disease. Administering such policies have been a challenge, however, due to a diverse range of factors in the animal health field that limit the execution of any of these legal instruments. There is urgent need to strengthen the re-enforcement of policies in health services delivery and regulations related to ASF disease control in order to improve productivity in a sustainable manner. Furthermore, the Local Government Act of 1997 that established local authorities at district level and introduced a decentralised chain of command in all technical departments resulted in a weakened veterinary structure and chain of command, which has hampered the effective control and surveillance of diseases, including ASF. There are many incidences where Adjust the Local Government Act that lays down the functions of the Chief Administrative Officers (CAO) as the Technical head of the District and hence the CAO supervises and coordinates all delegated services from the Centre. In its current form, District Veterinary Officers

(DVO's) are deterred from implementing full disease control instruments in fear of contravening political decisions especially measures that lead to loss of revenue to the District.



Recommendation #2.1 (MAAIF): Put in place strategies to enact policies related to monitoring pig movement due to trade, as well as pig restocking, pig exchange with neighbouring districts and pork safety, building on the Animal Diseases Act. The policies should be mainstreamed to all Local Governments and value chain actors for effective control of pig disease outbreaks (esp. African swine fever). Local Governments should further be guided and supported to enact self-policing/regulations (by-laws) in a participatory manner involving all value chain actors.



Recommendation #2.2 (MAAIF): As a long-term strategy, Government should plan for incentives for farmers to control diseases (ex. compensation scheme) and commit funds to all disease control programmes, which are stipulated as a public good in the Animal Diseases Act.

Policy issue #3: Forage and feed

The National Animal Feed Policy (2015) aims at stimulating increased feed production, ensuring quality animal feeds on the market, reducing production costs and building capacity among private and public sector for the development of the animal feeds industry. In Uganda, the production of compounded feeds is dominated (about 75%) by small-scale commercial producers who mix 'tailor - made' feeds to suit what farmers can afford. While these small-scale feed producers are expected to play significant roles in ensuring sustainable availability and accessibility of affordable commercial feeds to farmers in many years to come, they are not well provisioned for in the policy. Moreover, an estimated 70% of Uganda's forage seed requirements are met by the informal seed systems including farmers and on-farm seed system multiplication and sale/exchange. In spite of this, there

is no national forage seed policy that ensures the sustainable availability and use of affordable quality seeds and planting materials.



Recommendation #3.1 (MAAIF): Draft a national forage seed policy to establish a well-coordinated and efficient national forage seed system. The national forage seed policy should provide measures to support the informal forage seed system.



Recommendation #3.2 (MAAIF): Include small scale commercial feed producers in the National Animal Feed Policy (2005, but under current revision). They need to be supported to produce quality feeds that meets productivity and nutrition standards.



A farmer harvesting Rhodes grass seed in Kayunga district in Uganda



Backyard feed mixers in Uganda



Packing processed feed for pigs in Masaka district. © Photo K. Dhanji/ILRI

Policy issue #4: Climate change adaptation and environment

When pigs are exposed to continuous heat stress, their bodies lose the ability to cool themselves effectively, resulting in reduction in pigs' growth, reproduction, and health and, at times cause premature death. Current climate models project that over 90% of districts in Uganda will experience severe heat stress conditions by 2100. Even the NDP III report acknowledges that under-performance of the agricultural sector is partly due to

climate change. Coping and adaptation measures at farm and pig value chain level are urgently needed. Despite the pig sector's vulnerability to climate change, there is little to no inclusion of pigs in climate change and adaptation planning. Climate-induced heat stress adaptation should be mainstreamed into pig sector development initiatives, while coping and adaptation measures must be promoted at the farm level. Livestock, including pigs, are making important contributions to environmental impacts including greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) but gaps remain in monitoring and reporting of progress towards international commitments.



Recommendations #4.1 (MAAIF, MWE): The National Adaptation Plan for the Agricultural Sector (2018) and the National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA, 2007) should be updated to explicitly include heat stress risk in pigs.



Recommendation #4.2 (Ministry of Local Government): Enhance cross-ministry collaboration and de-centralization on adaptation planning and implementation. The National Adaptation Programme for Action (NAPA) implementation processes can be used to develop district adaptation plans of action (DAPAs) with local community input. DAPAs should include strategies for alleviating heat stress in pigs, especially in districts where heat stress vulnerability are high.



Recommendation #4.3 (OPM, MWE): Operationalize the National Climate Change Monitoring, Reporting and Verification (MRV) system after a focal point at OPM has been appointed. Build the capacity of MRV focal points at the OPM in terms of data collection, analysis and reporting of GHG inventory data and progress towards the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).



Recommendation #4.4 (OPM, MAAIF, Ministry of Works and Transport, Ministry of Security): Revise the 'cattle trader's license' into a more general 'livestock traders' license' that includes pigs. In addition, revise movement permits that restrict transportation of animals to daytime only, to allow for nighttime transportation. Transportation of pigs at night can help mitigate the impacts of heat stress, contributing to improved productivity and reproductivity of pigs and the quality of pork.



Recommendation #4.5 (MAAIF): The National Fertilizer Policy 2016 aims to promote use of organic fertilizer (including manures) and inorganic fertilizers in Uganda to address the low soil fertility constraint. However, the manure handling aspects to avert potential risk of transmission of zoonotic diseases and exposure of antimicrobial resistant pathogens from manure to farmers is not addressed in the policy. This should be included in the next review where it is explained how farmers should safely handle manure.



Manure management is one important biosecurity measure to keep diseases at bay from pigs. Photo courtesy of the More Pork project of the CGIAR Research Program on Livestock, taken in the outskirts of Kampala, Uganda. © Photo K. Dhanji/ILRI

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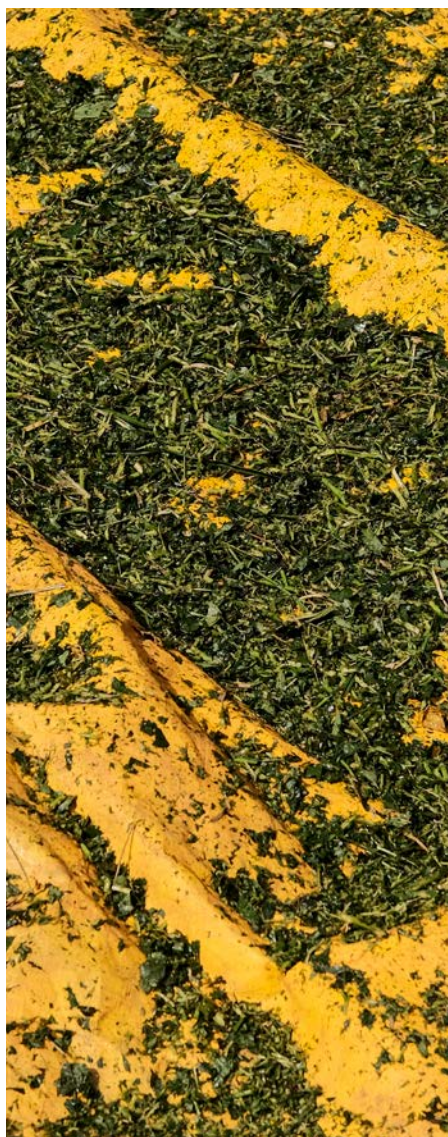
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