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Challenges and the Way Forward in the Value Chain of Forage Technologies Production and Marketing in SNNPR, Ethiopia: A Review Paper

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Abstract

Lots of forage technologies have been introduced and disseminated in almost all Zones and woredas of SNNPR region by zonal and wereda agriculture offices, Southern Agricultural Research Institute (SARI), Universities, other GOs and NGOs. In the process, various challenges were encountered by the value chain actors in different stage. This review work is aimed to indicate these challenges along the value chain and the way forward suggested to tackle the challenges. The result indicated that challenges on input supply such as lack of needed forage technologies, unfair distribution; Challenges on Production such as limited

training and extension contact; Challenges on marketing such as Low market demand and lack of Market information were among the main challenges identified along forage value chain of Ethiopia. Increased supply of diversified types of improved forage materials and bringing them up to the farm get; fair distribution of the materials; linking forage producer farmers to cooperatives/unions engaged in forage materials sale, livestock fattening, and private investors with large dairy farms; and strengthening extension services were among the way forward suggested along the value chain to improve forage production and productivity.

Keywords: Forage Technologies, Challenges, Value Chain, Review

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the review

Ethiopia is a country following Agricultural Development Lead industrialization (ADLI) as its economic policy. Agriculture is the mainstay of the national economy despite its low level of development (Infomineo, 2016)^[2]. The sector contributes 50% of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), 85% of total employment, and 88% of foreign exchange earnings. As a result, growth of agriculture is a major driver of poverty reduction and economic development in Ethiopia. Knowing this economic potential of agriculture, the government of Ethiopia has also made a number of efforts to improve production and productivity, especially since 1960s (Tedros & Tesfaye, 2018)^[4]. Supplying and promoting technological packages containing a number of components were among its efforts made to increase agricultural productivity. However, various studies indicate that the growth of the sector is constrained by different factors. This study is aimed to identify and document the main challenges associated with forage technologies production and marketing along the value chain, and the way forward to enable concerned organ easily intervene to solve the issues.

1.2 Objectives of the review

This review was conducted having objectives of indicating those challenges of forage technologies production and marketing along the value chain and the way forward suggested to tackle these challenges. In doing that, the review indicated intervention areas along the value chain to be worked upon to enhance forage production, productivity and marketing in Ethiopia.

2. Results and discussion

2.1 Forage technologies dissemination in SNNPR, Ethiopia

Various forage technologies have been introduced and disseminated in almost all Zones and woredas of SNNPR region by zonal and wereda agriculture offices, Southern Agricultural Research Institute (SARI), Universities, other GOs and NGOs (Samuel and Destaw, 2022)^[3]. Some of these technologies are desho grass, elephant grass, Rhodes grass, susbania, cow-pea, pigeon-pea, lablab, oat, vetch, trilucern and others. The most disseminated and known technologies in SNNPR are Desho and Elephant grasses (Dilebo, 2021)^[1]. However, various challenges were identified on the sector. The challenges and the way forward along the value chain are reviewed and discussed in short as follows.

2.2 Challenges of forage technologies production and marketing along the value chain

2.2.1 Challenges in input supply

Studies indicate that forage materials being supplied are not based on the needs of farmers. The types of forage materials being supplied mostly were Desho and Elephant grass. Unfair distribution of planting materials across woredas and within kebeles were another challenges reported by literatures. Some were receiving large amount and some others were receiving low and even forgotten (Dilebo, 2021) ^[1].

2.2.2 Challenges in Production

Limited training and Extension contact are among the main challenges in production.

2.2.3 Challenges on marketing

Low market demand is one of the challenges. Producers complain that market demand for improved forages was low compared to other agricultural products. Market information is also among challenges reported by producers. Most of them responded that market information was not being delivered regarding forages (for whom to produce, where to sale, what the price of forage is, how much to produce (demand analysis)).

2.3 The way forward in forage technologies value chain

Based on the challenges identified by the review, the following interventions are recommended by various studies as the way forward in forage technologies production and marketing along the value chain.

1. Agriculture offices and other organizations who supply improved forage materials to farmers should demonstrate first and come up with forage materials preferred by producers.
2. Zonal and woreda agriculture office should take the responsibility and work to ensure fair distribution to solve discrimination against woredas and farmers in forage materials dissemination.
3. Woreda trade and industry office should try to link forage producer farmers to cooperatives/unions engaged in forage materials sale, livestock fattening, and private investors with large dairy farms.
4. The DH model output indicated that extension contact was affecting improved forage materials adoption positively and significantly. Therefore, DAs working in each kebeles should frequently visit, technically advise and follow-up the works of farmers.
5. Distance to FTCs where farmers get improved forage materials was significantly and negatively affecting adoption of improved forage materials. Therefore, woreda agriculture office should work to supply forage materials up to the farm get. So that the distance travelled will be reduced and adoption will be improved.

3. Conclusions

Challenges on input supply such as lack of needed forage technologies and unfair distribution; Production challenges such as limited training and extension contact; Challenges on marketing such as Low market demand and lack of Market information were among the main challenges identified in forage value chain of Ethiopia. Increased supply of diversified types of improved forage materials and

bringing them up to the farm get; fair distribution of the materials; linking forage producer farmers to cooperatives/unions engaged in forage materials sale, livestock fattening, and private investors with large dairy farms; and strengthening extension services were among the way forward suggested along the value chain to improve forage production and productivity.

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