

Newsletter 3, January 2018

PROMOTING COTTON BY-PRODUCTS in Eastern and Southern Africa

Countries: Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe

Duration: 2016-19

Website: <http://unctad.org/en/Pages/SUC/Commodities/SUC-Project-1617K.aspx>

Surveys complete in Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe

UNCTAD implemented a full calendar of project activities in the last quarter of 2017, completing surveys and national capacity-building workshops in three of the four project countries.

The surveys were the project's first major activity (1.1). They provided baseline information on the current state of cotton by-products in each country, as well as analysing the opportunities and challenges for their further development, as identified by the cross-section of stakeholders surveyed.

UNCTAD hired the following national consultants to conduct the surveys and analyse the findings:

Tanzania:	Dr. Deograsias Mushi	Zambia:	Mr. Stephen Kabwe
Uganda:	Dr. Isaac Shinyekwa	Zimbabwe:	Dr. Gibson Chigumira

The consultants in Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe completed their surveys and presented their analysis at the workshops held in each country (see below). In all three countries, survey respondents described relatively mature markets for cottonseed, with, for example, excess oil milling capacity and a ready market for cottonseed oil and cake. Meanwhile, regulations in all three countries require farmers to destroy cotton stalks after harvest, to prevent the spread of pests, precluding any value added activities on stalks.

Respondents identified low seed cotton production as one major impediment to adding more value to cotton by-products; another was the lack of awareness among many commercial stakeholders, especially farmers, about how they could add value to cotton by-products.

Country-specific findings reflected on, for example, the structure of the cotton sector, the financing model for seed cotton production, seed cotton producer prices and stiff competition from imports of, in particular, second-hand clothing and edible oil. The survey in Uganda is complete, with the final report due in early 2018. The final reports will all be published on the project site.

National workshops in Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe



Participants in Harare, Zimbabwe (Photo credit Tafadzwa Ufumeli for UNCTAD)

The national capacity-building workshops are the second major activity in the project plan. They gathered stakeholders from throughout the cotton value chain, with a specific focus on those actors, such as farmers, ginners and oil millers, who could participate in adding value to cotton by-products. Policy makers and researchers were the other key participants at the workshops.

In general, each national workshop was designed for stakeholders to decide on specific recommendations of commercial initiatives to add more value to cotton by-products (Activity 1.3), and for policy makers to recommend policies in support of these initiatives (Activity 2.1). According to this plan, UNCTAD and its government focal points held three-day national capacity-building workshops in three of the four project countries:

Location	Dates	Hosted by
Harare, Zimbabwe	27-29 September 2017	Ministry of Industry of Commerce
DSM, Tanzania	15-17 November 2017	Ministry of Industry, Trade and Investment
Lusaka, Zambia	6-8 December 2017	Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry

Together, the outcomes from each workshop – commercial initiatives and policy recommendations – form a National Action Plan to develop cotton by-products that the participants submit to their government for validation. Once each Plan is validated, the country's stakeholders and government will own its implementation, which UNCTAD will support with the remaining project activities.

Participants at all three workshops agreed on National Action Plans to submit to their governments for validation in early 2018. Each plan proposed a broad initiative to develop a new value chain for cotton stalks. The remaining initiatives focussed on implementing specific technologies to existing product lines in the country. In Tanzania and Zimbabwe, for example, participants recommended implementing a microbial process to remove the enzyme gossypol from cottonseed cake, allowing it to be used in feed for non-ruminant animals, such as fish, pigs and poultry. In Tanzania and Zambia, participants proposed to implement technology to process linters and gin wastes into absorbent cotton products.

UNCTAD will hold the project's final national workshop in Kampala, Uganda on 14-16 March 2018, hosted by the Cotton Development Organisation.

Media coverage

With coordination from the public relations department of the Ministry of Commerce Trade and Industry, the national workshop in Zambia received generous press coverage. This included broadcast coverage on the evening ZNBC business news on 6 and 8 December, as well as the following web articles:

Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation, 8 December, "Govt backed over revamping cotton sector": <https://www.znbc.co.zm/govt-backed-over-ramping-of-cotton-sector/>

UNCTAD, 15 December, "Copper-dependent Zambia eyes growing market for cotton by-products": <http://unctad.org/en/pages/newsdetails.aspx?OriginalVersionID=1640>

africanfarming.com, 19 December, "Boost for African cotton sectors from UNCTAD": <https://www.africanfarming.com/boost-african-cotton-sectors-unctad/>

UNCTAD also publicized the workshop widely on social media, including on Twitter and Facebook.

Next steps

In the coming months, the UNCTAD project team will undertake the following activities:

1. Submit National Action Plans for government validation in Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe;
2. Finalise the analysis of survey findings in Uganda;
3. Hold a national capacity-building workshop in Uganda on 14-16 March 2018;
4. Support the implementation of National Action Plans with project activities, including advisory services (Activity 2.2) and investment profiles (Activity 2.3); and
5. Begin preparing a study tour for all four project countries in late 2018 or early 2019.

Contact us

For information about the project, please do not hesitate to contact the UNCTAD project team.

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