

Dr. Nicholas Kilimani presents paper on household nutrition effects of crop commercialization in Uganda during the ESSA Conference in South Africa

EfD-Mak Research Fellow, Dr. Nicholas Kilimani on 1st-12th September, 2019 travelled to South Africa to participate at the Economic Society of South Africa Annual Conference at Birchwood Hotel and Conference Centre, Johannesburg.

Dr. Kilimani presented a paper on, “Household nutrition effects of crop commercialization in Uganda”, The paper analyses how government policies and programmes aimed at agricultural commercialization have contributed to household nutrition in Uganda.

Using a nationally representative data set, the study analyses whether such programmes as the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP), the Plan for Modernization of Agriculture (PMA), the National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS), the Rural Development Strategy (RDS), and the Prosperity for All programme have contributed to an improvement in the intake of calorie, proteins, calcium, zinc, iron and vitamin A.

The findings show that while commercialization has contributed towards increasing agricultural income, its impact on overall nutrient intake has been adverse. This is in line with some of the literature on the impact of commercialization in Africa indicating that whereas commercialization increases agricultural income, improvements in nutrition sensitive consumption do not necessarily occur.

These findings are partly attributed to the fact that agricultural policies and programmes have largely focused on market oriented agricultural production than on nutrition sensitive agriculture.

To maximize the impact of such policies on overall household welfare, the study proposes deliberate sectoral linkages between health and agriculture stakeholders since nutrition is both an agricultural and health matter.

Since agricultural income does not necessarily translate into improvement in nutrition overall, there is need for public sensitization on the importance of a healthy diet on grounds that even households with better incomes and education, their nutrient intake was not any better than those with lower education and income.

Further, the presence of market infrastructure is crucial for both commercialization and nutrient intake. This reinforces the need to provide infrastructure to support commercialized agricultural production.