

Second meeting

Task 2

The strength of all relevant agri-food research capacities in the WB countries

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2. Objectives

- The aim of this presentation is to present the results of the analysis of research capacities in agriculture
- Approach was based on three survey instruments.



Challenges

- High number of report objectives
- Questionnaires were too long
- Survey instruments were diversified for a very limited number of actors.
- Major part of the questionnaire was difficult to structure information and rigid in structure.
- Covid situation hampered the collection of official statistics
- Actors were reluctant to provide the information due to need for various resources
- Last but most important: Structure of the report is too long and with repeated content.
- An invite for reconsidering the report structure to present information based on secondary data.

3. Policy context

- The National Strategy for Development and Integration 2016-2021
- Pillar 4: Growth Through Sustainable Use of Resources, 12.3: Agriculture and Rural Development and the objectives 3.1 – 3.4 of the Inter-sectoral strategy for agriculture and rural development in Albania 2014-2020.
- Intersector Strategy for Agriculture and Rural Development 2014-2020 sets out this vision for rural and agricultural development
- The National Plan for European Integration 2017-2019 has a separate section for research. Chapter 25 which relates to Science and Research

International Agenda

- The Government of Albania is motivated to focus on research in agriculture due to the Agenda 2030 related to Strategic Development Goals, namely SDG Target 2.a and Target 9.5

- Ministry of Education and Sports (MES) and the National Council for Higher Education and Science (NCHES),
- National Agency for Funding of Higher Education (NAFHE)-the funding of scientific activities
- National Agency for Scientific Research and Innovation (NASRI) supports financially national projects on research-development
- Ministry of Finance and Economy and Albanian Investment Development Agency (AIDA)
- Other ministries
 - MARD, Patent and Trademarks Directory at MoFE and the National Agency for Protection of Authors Rights.

Scientific research

- 1. Agricultural University of Tirana and University Fan S. Noli in Korca, while other non-public (private) Higher Education Institutions may contribute.
- 2) Public Institutes / Centers / Agencies for scientific research, Agriculture and Transfer Centers (ATTCs) as well as the Food Safety and Veterinary Institute for carrying development studies and projects, as well as the transfer of knowledge and technologies.
- 3) Centers / agencies / institutes and other private enterprises Academy of Sciences, which might de jure promote research in the agriculture disciplines, vis a vis with other disciplines.

- Article 8 of the Law no. 80/2015 institutionalized the Council of Higher Education and Scientific Research
- National Agency for the Financing of Higher Education (NAFHE) was established based on DCM no. 397 on 3.5.2017
- NASRI was the main body driving the new National Strategy on Science, Technology and Innovation 2017-2022 and based on DCM no. 165 on 21.3.2018, is the entity ranking institutions of higher education and research centers based on the quality of their research output.
- Law no. 132/2014 dated 02.10.2014 for enabling Horizon 2020 - Programme for research and innovation ,
- Ongoing
 - National Strategy of Scientific Research, Technology and Innovation 2017-2022" ,,
 - On Science and Technological Development

Research Institutes

Research institutes

- Fushë-Krujë ATTC (forages, beans, cattle, pork, poultry and integrated farm management; Land and water; other needs and priorities of the region; recently the Center has covered nut trees as well).
- Lushnja ATTC (Open field vegetables and vegetable in green houses; Wheat; other needs and priorities of the region).
- Vlore ATTC (Stone fruit trees, olive, vineyard, citrus trees; Other needs and priorities of the region).
- Korçë ATTC (Small ruminants; Seed fruit trees, potato, barley; Other needs and priorities of the region).
- Shkodër ATTC (Corn; Other needs and priorities of the region; recently the Center has covered MAPs as well).

Trends for ATTCs

- Major funding sourced from the state budget
- The overall amount of financing is less than 1 mln Euro
- Each ATTCs has 1 to 2 ongoing projects of 2to 3 years of length.
- The number of scientific materials is less than 200
- Overall, there are 59 research officials with PhD In terms of age, majority lie in the category of 51-60 years old.
- Only two out of four ATTCs have access to publicly available research information, online access to databases of scientific journals etc.
- services and knowledge that ATTCs provide is made by direct contacts with the interested actors (stakeholders), through seminars and conferences, internet, visits, demonstrations (on farms) etc.
- use different types of technology transfer services such as consulting, trainings and workshops, lectures, presentations and promotions of innovations for processing and retail companies within Albania

Challenges

- insufficient financial resources
- lack of international connections
- insufficient number of researchers
- lack of specific knowledge and experience lack of communication among researchers
- lack of connections with the companies benefiting from the research
- lack of adequate infrastructure (advanced equipment and laboratories)

- Services such as consulting, training related services, laboratory services but also investments in advanced technology and devices, agricultural innovative components, and innovative technology.
- Institutions such as local governments, domestic companies (small agri-food businesses), individual farmers or farmers' organizations are potential users of ATTCS research results

ATTCs performance

- Three out of four ATTCs percept that competencies of individual farmers and farmers organizations exist but are insufficient.
- Moreover, three out of four ATTCs percept that the financial capacity of individual farmers is missing.
- This institution provides support to processing companies particularly: in training, demonstrations, consulting, publication etc., and also it assists them technically to complete IPARD application calls requirements.
- Only two out of four declare that learning about new technology through advisory /extension services is sufficient.
- While only one out of four considers business incubators and networks/clusters are sufficient.

Centres of Excellence

- There are no centers of excellence in Albania.
- AIDA (Albanian Investment Development Agency, formerly Alb-INVEST) is supporting enterprises in developing their export and internationalization.
- AIDA is also providing information and some financial support to investments, in the form of competitive grants under the “Competitiveness fund”.
- An additional agency ARTI (Agency for Research, Technology and Information) supports science and research and aims at driving interaction between research and enterprises.

Faculties

- The Agricultural University of Tirana is a public university located in Tirana, Albania.
- University Fan S. Noli in Korca has a Faculty of Agriculture.

Advisory services

- The public **extension service** basically provides technical assistance for farmers to increase their income and consists of three levels: central level, regional level and local level.
- has 290 employees at central and local level operates 120 local Agricultural Information Centers (AICs)
- four Regional Agricultural Extension Agencies (AREB's) were established as subordinate institutions of MARD.

Business Incubators

- There are two Business Incubators in Tirana and Shkodra
- Very little is known about the extent to which the Albanian business incubators have been successful,
- There are no official clusters operating across Albania.

ASTI Indicators

- It is known that Albania spends about 0.2% of its GDP for research and has the lowest per capita spending on research and innovation in South East Europe.
- According to the Ministry of Education funding of scientific research for the year 2016 as a percentage of the Ministry's budget was 1%, [and] compared to overall public spending was 0.09% of the budget and 0.024% of the GDP."
- However, according to the European Commission's (EC) Albania 2018 Report, the funding for research is put at the higher level of 0.35% of the GDP.
- Albania and Bosnia have the lowest number of researchers per 1 million inhabitants (157 researchers) in the region and, based on data from 2014, almost 60% of them work in government and the rest in higher education institutions the majority of which are also publically funded.
- Albania had the lowest university industry research collaboration and the lowest rate of patents granted per million inhabitants
- Capacity to retain talent as in 2017 it scored 2.6 out of a maximum seven.

ASTI Indicators cont.

- Ratio between government share of agriculture expenditure and the share of agriculture in the GDP is less than 2% (SWG, 2019).
- For the period 2010-2024, more than 30% of the overall financing is provided for Agriculture, Food and Biotechnologies.
- The amount of research expenditures used by Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development namely the research, development, advisory and expert services has remained stationary at EUR 2 Million (ibid).

- Major part of investments are directed toward infrastructure and logistics development.
- Adopted innovations in irrigation infrastructures, intensive fruit plantations, greenhouses for vegetable production and seedlings and construction of storage capacities (cold storage, ULO cold storages) or processing capacities (wineries) that belong to manufacturers, thus enabling direct market access.
- Other investments are made in direction of energy efficiency and strengthening of quality indices.

Ongoing work

- To collect information on research publications in agrifood (using ISI Web or Scopus)
- Carry an assessment of type of research activities at firm level
- Reconsider the part of the report to avoid overlapping....

Thank you for your attention!

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