

Burundi-Fertilizers

The Use of Fertilizers in Kirundo Province

January 15, 2011-Bujumbura-The availability of mineral fertilizers remains problematic in Burundi. That is also the case in Kirundo Province, in northern Burundi, where retail sale points are very rare and the prices fairly high. This situation was studied during a field visit from 10 to 12 January 2011.

Access to fertilizer in the commune of Kirundo is pretty difficult. Fertilizer dealers cannot easily attain fertilizers. They must travel to the provinces of Ngozi, Gitega or Muyinga in order to find supplies; there simply are no wholesalers in Kirundo. Even when fertilizers are obtained their quality is poor (for example, they may have passed their expiration date). Moreover, traveling to other provinces in search of fertilizers influences the retail price of these fertilizers and they become more expensive than farmers can afford. Wholesalers and retailers do not buy sufficient quantities of fertilizers due to high prices. The DPAE (Provincial Departments Of Agriculture and Livestock) which dispose of these fertilizers distribute them only to associations which are not supported by any organization or project.

According to Juvénal Sezirahiga, one of the fertilizer dealer in Kirundo, he and his colleagues were informed that fertilizer prices were lowered for the coffee-producing associations, and they wonder why it is not the case for them.

When the producers do not buy large quantities, the stocks do not flow quickly. In Kirundo, shortages of DAP fertilizer, especially during the cropping period, is one of the constraints. The packaging used can also cause confusion because it changes from time to time.

Hence, agro-dealers in Kirundo end up requesting government support in the search for supplies and markets and in fixing the top price for fertilizers. In addition, the dealers seek wholesalers from whom they can buy fertilizer supplies. This could reduce transportation costs, which would lower the overall price of fertilizers in the province.

Last, they request information from experts who can explain when prices rise or fall in order to prepare accordingly.

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