

STRATEGIC PLANNING NARRATIVE OUTLINING THE 3-Year Strategic Plan Under PRCI

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Goals of this narrative:

- Summarize the original vision for the Centre as indicated by the initial proposal submitted to PRCI
- Clarify how the vision may have changed due to the analysis done in the PICA Process
- Summarize how the vision will be practically realized, based on what was developed through the PICA process (action steps, activities to undertake, etc.)

Please use this template to provide detail on the PICA Process for your Centre. Please be as concise as possible but ensure that each of the elements requested below is addressed.

Introduction

Uganda's agriculture policy system (APS) is an open one that recognizes the dynamic interactions of the system actors and the fact that the system is influenced by many factors and players. However, the decision-making processes at all levels are influenced by social, economic, political and environmental factors – through formal and/or informal means. Such a process requires capacities/skills to manage it effectively for better development outcomes. Specifically, food security policy system is multi-sectoral in nature and guided by policy frameworks both at national and sectoral levels. However, these policies and strategies highlight several food security interventions – some have been implemented and others not.

The Economic Policy Research Centre (EPRC) is Uganda's leading economic and development policy think tank. Over time, EPRC has built its repute and credibility as a trusted knowledge generator to inform government policy processes. It has interacted with the APS in different capacities – such as membership to agriculture sector working group, technical working groups, accountability sector working groups; technical leadership of Strategic Economic Management (STEPMAN) forum under the Office of Secretary to the Treasury, Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MoFPED); called up to provide critical reviews of several agricultural strategic plans, and through production of agricultural related research products including policy research series and user-friendly products, among others. Notwithstanding these strengths, the Centre needs to deepen its research and organizational capabilities on food and nutrition security (FNS) in Uganda and beyond. However, this can only be achieved by EPRC strategically positioning itself in the entire FNS system to promote more efficient research-responsive decision making.

VISION: Become a GO-To Think Tank for high quality research on FNS for evidence-based policy making

EPRC aspires to build its technical and organisational capacities to undertake cutting edge research to generate credible evidence on FNS, strengthen its policy outreach, as well as build demand for evidence to inform policy processes and practises. The Centre intends to achieve its aspirations by pursuing three interrelated specific objectives. The specific objectives include:

- i) Strengthen in-house research and organisational capacity to (a) respond in a timely manner to topical emerging issues on FNS in the country; (b) conduct foresight research and scenario building for long-term planning on FNS; (c) disseminate research findings on FNS to targeted audiences for policy action; and (d) monitor progress towards the achievements of the SDG targets and indicators related to FNS to inform future government programming.*
- ii) Leverage on our convening power, to facilitate engagement and dialogue (as a knowledge broker) between knowledge generators and strategic actors on FNS.*
- iii) Maintain and broaden strong strategic local and international networks and partnerships in the FNS system for resource mobilisation and organisational strengthening.*

Project outcomes:

- *Enhanced in-house research capacity to support the development of sustainable FNS systems.*
- *Strengthened organisational capacity to support FNS research.*
- *Strengthened capacity of EPRC to influence FNS policy processes in Uganda.*

Systems Mapping Results and Feedback

The system mapping presented opportunities for the Centre to have a deeper understanding and appreciation of the entire APS; as well as a self-reflection on our role and position as a policy think tank within the FNS system. Specifically, the mapping revealed the strengths and weaknesses of the existing relationships, missing linkages, and the extent to which the system adopts evidence to inform the policy development cycle. Some of key weaknesses identified along the system include- weak coordination among strategic actors, limited budget and earmarked funding for the proposed policies/programs/interventions, policy politization, limited engagement of the local communities to be affected by the policies/programs/interventions early in the design, inadequate performance indicators, lack of baseline data to monitor progress and limited stakeholder engagement. The mapping helped EPRC to reflect on its technical capacity aspiration of providing high quality research to meet the needs of its stakeholders for evidence informed decision making on FNS. The Centre has had to rethink its policy outreach strategy to influence evidence uptake and create demand for more research by the strategic actors in the FNS system. The organizational performance index revealed the need for the Centre to focus on its learning from previous programs and activities to inform its future strategic planning – both research and support functions.

While the Kaleidoscope model (KM) has five components (policy agenda setting, design, adoption, implementation and evaluation and reform), applying the model to Uganda's APS revealed that the role of EPRC varied significantly across the components based on specific policies and programs. EPRC was more visible at the design, and evaluation and reform stages; but less visible at the implementation and adoption stages. This would imply that EPRC might be missing out on building

relationships with key strategic actors in other KM components which in turn restricts the level of the Centre's influence in the FNS system.

Three years from now, EPRC will: *actively involve stakeholders throughout the policymaking processes especially at implementation stages; have well defined outreach and communication channels with a diverse set of stakeholders; strategically conduct joint research on FNS with government ministries, departments and agencies such as the National Planning Authority (NPA), Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Forestry (MAAIF); strengthen relationships with a diversity of development partners in the area of FNS; position the Centre as a reliable knowledge broker and spearhead more Uganda-led research; EPRC as a better learning organization with better managed programs and resources.*

Three years from now, the larger FNS system will: *be aware of the interrelationships between the sugarcane sector, food security and poverty, and the need for evidence to inform the governance structures, budget allocations and programming. Based on the experience of sugarcane, the strategic actors will draw lessons for the larger FNS system. Beyond this, we anticipate increased demand for evidence to inform policy processes and practises, request for further research studies and recognition of EPRC as centre of excellence on FNS systems in Uganda.*

Gap Analysis Results

The EPRC original proposal articulated the technical and organizational gap analysis through a participatory approach. However, the PICA process helped us to rethink and refine some of our initial thoughts. The original proposal focused more on the technical gap analysis and less on the organizational gaps. We were introduced to the Technology, Human resources, Institutions/Infrastructure, Communication and Knowledge (THICK) resource tool that helped us to re-assess and prioritize our organizational needs in line with our Project vision.

On the technical side, the gaps include strengthening - analytical skills in the areas of micro-simulation, macro-modelling, and scenario building; gender analysis and integration in policy research; skills in qualitative research methods in the areas of survey protocol design, interview methods, analysis and qualitative research tools; and infographics skills.

On the organizational side, the gaps include improving business processes such as project management skills; organizational planning and evaluation; knowledge management and learning systems through strengthening policy engagement and communication skills; forging strategic partnerships and networks with both local and international stakeholders in Uganda's FNS system.

Capacity Development Goals

Through the PICA process, EPRC identified two categories of capacity development goals aimed at strengthening her position as a centre of excellence on FNS system in Uganda and beyond. One of the goals focuses on technical and the other on organisational aspiration. The former focuses on generating timely quality evidence through application of cutting-edge methodologies to influence the FNS system. The latter focuses on strengthening the skills of the strategic actors in the FNS system to embrace and demand for evidence to inform policy processes and practices. These aspirations are important because they aim to bridge the gaps between evidence and practice in the FNS system. Below are the aspirations with the respective highlight level activities and a brief explanation of what these activities will involve (see also, Appendix 1).

1. Technical aspirations

a) Engage stakeholders on policy research agenda through stakeholder forums – Year 1

The aspiration is to build and strengthen strategic relationships and constructive engagements with the FNS actors to be able to articulate the evidence gaps in the FNS system. This will be done through targeted meetings especially with MDAs, relevant development partners, private sector, and civil society and the Centre's annual national forums on agriculture and food security. This process will also include the engagement of the EPRC top organ – the Board – for ownership and support of the policy research agenda.

b) Strengthen skills in qualitative methods (data collection, analysis and use of software) – Year 1

To produce high quality research on FNS, the in-house staff needs to have the requisite analytical capacity both in quantitative and qualitative methods. Currently the in-house research staff is stronger in the former, but capacities need to be strengthened in the latter. This will be done through mentored/partnered project research with PRCI team. This will be combined with targeted technical training sessions by the IFPRI researchers. These training sessions will focus on those critical qualitative methods gaps as will be identified by EPRC to enhance the researchers' capacities to gather in-depth insights from a range of strategic actors in the FNS system.

c) Strengthen gender analysis and integration in policy research and policy processes – Year 1

Understanding gender and the role of social norms and beliefs is critical for inclusive and sustainable FNS systems. Thus, gender mainstreaming in policy research as well as policy processes and practises is critical for the success of this project. Currently, the Centre has limited capacity to integrate a gender perspective in its research and limited ability to undertake a thorough review on gender responsiveness of a given policy/program/interventions. Capacity building in this area will be through peer-to-peer learning with participating centres, targeted training sessions, and mentorship provided by PRCI.

d) Strengthen in-house research to policy capacity on FNS – Year 1 to Year 3

To some extent, the Centre has conducted studies that have to a great extent informed the FNS system. However, it is still lacking in the use of cutting-edge methodologies and measurements of FNS to ably articulate the interrelationships, and dynamics of the wider agriculture policy system. The Centre will leverage on the different technical training sessions offered by PRCI to the other participating centres as well as project specific mentorship program (collaborative research between EPRC and PRCI mentors) and Centre's targeted trainings. Further, the Centre needs to strategically strengthen its policy outreach capabilities to effectively influence policy processes and practises in the FNS system through evidence. The Centre will leverage the opportunities of being part of the PRCI project through tapping on the vast experience of partners within the Project wide-network to strengthen the capacities of its researchers on FNS.

2. Organizational aspirations

a) Produce high quality, relevant, systems-based research – Year 1

The Centre intends to strengthen its business processes that will support the production of high quality, relevant, systems-based research. Here the focus will be on strengthening the Centre's project management skills to improve on its efficiency and ability to learn from its experiences. The process will involve training and mentorship by the PICA team. Through this exercise, EPRC will acquire a project management tool (such as Smart Sheet) as will be guided by the PICA team so that it automates its business process.

b) Meaningfully engage and communicate with strategic actors in the entire policy cycle – Year 1 to Year 3

The Centre's priority here is to improve the way it communicates and engages with the various strategic actors in the FNS system. A mastery of skills to navigate from research to policy will be required. This will be realised through capacity building in presentation and communication skills of the in-house research staff. But this will also require researchers to have a better understanding and internalisation of the needs of the various strategic actors to tailor the policy messaging accordingly. Given the diversity of the strategic actors, there will be need to enhance the capacities and competences of the Information Management and Dissemination Unit (IMD)¹ in utilisation of new technologies and approaches to ensure effective design and implementation of the proposed policy outreach strategy for this Project.

c) Leverage national and international relationships to become a trusted knowledge broker – Year 1 to Year 3

The aim is to improve the Centre's overall knowledge management and learning as a mechanism of reaching out and networking with stakeholders in the FNS system. This will involve, first, strengthening the internal knowledge management system (including establishment of an internal centralised database for management of relevant data and resources on Uganda's FNS). Second, the Centre considers the website as the heart of its virtual platform. Thus, the search function in the current website needs improvement to be given more visibility to EPRC existing knowledge and research products; and improve the searchable EPRC resource centre catalogue that can be accessed online via our website – currently only 40% can be accessed. Third, develop a database on individual's in-country and those outside Uganda with expertise on FNS. This will generate a pool of experts that the Centre could call upon to undertake research on FNS but also encourage them to continuously share their works the EPRC research team. Generation of a pool of experts will be through leveraging on the Centre's partnerships with international organisations/bodies such as FAO, World Food Programme, AGRA; and international universities/research institutions such as Cornell University, IFPRI; and regional bodies such as ASARECA, among others. Fourth, blending existing knowledge and evidence from other knowledge generators with the new evidence resulting from the Project for greater policy impact on FNS system. Through these interventions, EPRC will strengthen its position as a dynamic and learning organisation that will leverage and sustain success achieved through the Project.

¹ IMD is the Centre's Unit responsible for the implementation of the policy outreach strategy.

Indicators

Output indicators

Number of Occasions when National/Regional/Global Organizations/Entities Approach PRCI Researchers/Partners with Requests for Information, Consultation, Data, and Presentations by the strategic actors in the FNS system. This indicator will, first, demonstrate improvements in demand for likely use of evidence at the different policy components of the APS. Second, evidence generated during the project lifespan has been used towards improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the FNS system. The key data source of this indicator will include: commitments of leadership to explore FNS policy options; tracking of emails, formal letter requests, requests to technical working groups, instituted steering committees, taskforces and expert panel; policy proposals for considerations; document reviews including annual reports, monitoring and evaluation reports from the FNS coordination unit under the Prime Minister Office. Where Project funds allow, the team will conduct a baseline survey focusing on strategic actors in the FNS system to guide their evidence use; and an endline survey to measure change in use of evidence.

Increased presence of EPRC FNS research in refereed journals. In the grant proposal training session, there was emphasis of how growing journal publications could contribute to increased financial resource mobilisation and visibility for the PRCI participating centres. This indicator will be measured by the number of publications in such journals by EPRC research staff. It will also demonstrate strengthened capacity of researchers to generate high quality research that is publishable in refereed journals.

Number of times EPRC evidence is cited on topical development issues say, in government documents; number of knowledge products to inform discussion on these topical issues; number of times relied on networks/partnerships to provide timely response to emerging topical issues; number of products produced through partners/networks;

Number of researchers with technical capacity to undertake research on FNS; number researchers with capacity to undertake foresight and scenario building on FNS; number of policy shifts derived from EPRC evidence; number times EPRC is represented on various government technical working groups on FNS; number of times of active implementation engagement with critical policymakers to strengthen and support policy implementation

#knowledge exchanges/brokerages; uptake of evidence to inform policy processes and practises in the FNS system.

Outcome indicators:

Enhanced analytical skills for in-house research staff. This indicator will demonstrate EPRC as a learning organisation with capabilities to leverage on the skills acquired through the PRCI technical trainings. This will be a qualitative measure that will be monitored by the number of policy research reports, user-friendly research products and journal articles that have a meaningful integration of gender.

Stronger networks and partnerships in the FNS built: This indicator is important for EPRC to measure how it has leveraged these partnership to inform Uganda's FNS system. These partnership should not be in numbers but present high-quality relationships that will contribute to our Vision and strategic objectives. Such partnership will be a source of future funding, collaborative works, in-house research capacity building in cutting-edge methodologies, and influential to EPRC's positioning in the FNS

system. The baseline indicator will be based on the number of current networks and/or partnership related to FNS as well as funds attracted through the partnerships.

Strengthen knowledge management system: This indicator will demonstrate how EPRC is able to improve its knowledge management system for both its internal staff and those wishing to get quick access to knowledge and research products on FNS. User statistics of the different resources that will be developed as part of this project.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Process

The Centre has an existing monitoring and evaluation tool, which will be updated to capture the relevant missing indicators for the Project. First, EPRC will review and refine the proposed indicators, develop a structure and potential data sources and their frequencies. This will contribute towards a solid MEL framework for the Project, tracking progress and effective implementation of the proposed capacity strengthening activities.

Second, the team will develop tools for the baseline and endline surveys of the strategic actors in the FNS system as proposed above and conduct the surveys accordingly. This activity is important for filling the baseline and targets as well as monitoring Project progress. Third, as indicated earlier the project monitoring will be done via the Smart Sheet, which will be managed by the Executive Director in Year 1. In the subsequent years, the tool will be managed by the Director of Research. Also, to note, the PICA team mentorship and regular check-ins have been and will continue to be a valuable asset in monitoring project progress.

Fourth, the team will document and report on best practices, lessons learned. This activity will be led by the Program Manager. Specifically, this activity responds to the proposed EPRC policy outreach strategy. This will facilitate evidence generation, tracking of lessons and refinement of proposed activity, if need arises.

Appendix 1: EPRC Three-year Project activities

Task #	Activity	Start	Finish	Indicators	USD
1	Strengthen Technical Capacities				
1.1	Engage stakeholders on policy research agenda through stakeholder forums				
1.1.1	Host a forum to establish a research agenda that is responsive to the needs of the stakeholders	2/26/21	7/23/21	5 year- Research agenda	3,746.89
1.1.2	Host a planning meeting to set annual research agenda	2/26/21	6/11/21	Approved annual work plan	31.20
1.2	Annual National Forum on Agriculture and Food Security				
1.2.1	Host the Annual June Meeting National Forum on Agriculture and Food security - 1	2/26/21	8/4/21	Annual Forum held	8,626.06
1.2.2	Host the Annual June Meeting National Forum on Agriculture and Food security - 2	4/13/22	6/20/22		8,626.06
1.2.3	Host the Annual June Meeting National Forum on Agriculture and Food security - 3	4/13/23	6/21/23		8,626.06
1.3	Strengthen capacities for evidence uptake in policy processes & practises				
1.3.1	Conduct stakeholders' capacity strengthening for evidence uptake in policy processes-1	12/2/21	2/18/22	# requests for information, data knowledge products, representation on technical committees	6,876.57
1.3.2	Conduct stakeholders' capacity strengthening for evidence uptake in policy processes-2	8/8/22	10/3/22		6,876.57
1.3.3	Conduct stakeholders' capacity strengthening for evidence uptake in policy processes - 3	8/2/23	10/3/23		6,876.57
1.4	Target specific segments of groups in the FNS system				
1.4.1	Host Town Hall days for specific segments of the stakeholder groups targeting women and youth groups on Uganda's food systems- 1	10/12/21	11/29/21	#town hall meeting held per year	2,927.38
1.4.2	Host Town Hall days for specific segments of the stakeholder groups targeting women and youth groups on Uganda's food systems - 2	10/10/22	11/29/22		2,927.38
1.4.3	Host Town Hall days for specific segments of the stakeholder groups targeting women and youth groups on Uganda's food systems - 3	10/10/23	11/28/23		2,927.38
1.5	Strengthen capacities for mainstreaming gender responsive policies, programs etc				
1.5.1	Organise gender forum on FNS	9/21/21	2/22/23		
1.5.1.1	Host a gender forum every year with women's groups to share knowledge and discuss policy initiatives towards Uganda's food system - 1	11/4/21	12/13/21	#gender forum held	4,524.71
1.5.1.2	Host a gender forum every year with technocrats/scientists/policy makers to share knowledge and discuss policy initiatives towards Uganda's food system - 2	1/11/22	2/22/22		4,524.71
1.5.1.3	Host a gender forum every year with technocrats/scientists/policy makers to share knowledge and discuss policy initiatives towards Uganda's food system - 3	1/11/23	2/22/23		4,524.71

Task #	Activity	Start	Finish	Indicators	USD
1.5.2	Strengthen in-house research skills in gender analysis and integration in policy research, policy processes and practises	4/14/21	6/24/21	#researchers trained	4,730.00
1.5.3	Improve skills in qualitative research methods	4/14/21	5/5/21	#researchers trained	4,730.00
1.6	Strengthen in-house research capacity on FNS (Case of sugarcane)				
1.6.1	Refine proposal based on the reviews from mentors				3,330.00
1.6.2	Concept development for T1 & T2	2/5/21	4/27/21	2 concept notes	3,330.00
1.6.3	Literature review	2/3/21	10/7/21		7,310.28
1.6.4	Develop Research to Policy (R2P) Outreach Strategy	3/15/21	3/19/21		
1.6.5	Study development (into program from project)	6/11/21	7/30/21		
1.6.6	Develop survey tools	4/1/21	7/29/21	Survey protocols	3,808.06
1.6.7	Fieldwork in sugarcane growing sub-regions ^a	7/22/21	10/21/21	database	68,575.43
1.6.8	Data management	7/20/21	11/10/21	Clean database uploaded	
1.6.9	Data analysis	11/1/21	11/30/21	Stata code	5,454.54
1.6.10	Documentary production	11/1/21	11/11/21	documentary videos	1,325.00
1.6.11	Develop research products ^b	11/22/21	4/28/23		
1.6.11.1	Draft Policy Research paper T1	11/22/21	3/7/22		
	Draft Policy research paper, user-friendly products, journal article	11/22/21	12/10/21	1 policy research paper, 1 user-friendly products, 1 journal article	10,587.90
	Validation meeting to discuss the draft report	1/10/22	1/31/22	#meetings	5,676.18
1.6.11.4	Draft Policy Research paper T2	11/22/21	3/7/22		
	Draft Policy research paper	11/22/21	12/10/21	1 policy research paper, 1 user-friendly products, 1 journal article	10,587.90
	Validation meeting to discuss the draft report	1/10/22	1/31/22	#meetings	5,676.18
1.6.11.7	Draft Policy Research paper T3	8/1/22	11/1/22		
	Draft Policy research paper	8/1/22	8/19/22	1 policy research paper, 1 user-	10,587.90

Task #	Activity	Start	Finish	Indicators	USD
				friendly products, 1 journal article	
	Validation meeting to discuss the draft report	8/17/22	9/27/22	#meetings	5,676.18
1.6.11.10	Draft Policy Research paper T4 ^c	1/10/22	7/4/22		
	Concept development	1/14/22	2/10/22	1 concept note	
	Literature review	1/10/22	2/23/22		
	Review of secondary data sources	2/2/22	2/18/22		
	Analyze data	2/9/22	2/18/22		
	Draft Policy research paper	2/21/22	7/4/22		
	Validation meeting to discuss the draft report	3/14/22	6/16/22		
1.6.11.11	Draft Policy Research paper T5 ^d	1/10/22	4/28/23		
	Concept development	1/14/22	2/14/22		
	Review documents and literature write to inform concept design	1/10/22	1/13/22		
	Review documents and literature write to inform indicators	2/15/22	2/21/22		
	Literature review to inform report/ paper writing	2/22/22	2/28/22		
	Review of secondary data sources	2/2/22	2/24/22		
	Draft Policy research paper	2/25/22	7/5/22		
	Draft research paper	2/25/22	3/18/22		
	Validation meeting to discuss the draft report	3/18/22	6/17/22		
1.7	Policy Engagement and Communication on project research products ^e	3/8/22	4/28/23		2,300.00
	Targeted round table dialogues (such as Parliamentary Committees, NDP program working committees, among others)	3/8/22	8/3/22		
	One-to-one debriefing especially at policy level	11/28/22	4/28/23		
	Media engagement through press releases, newspaper articles	11/28/22	11/28/22		
	TV and radio appearances	11/28/22	11/28/22		
2	Strengthen Organizational Capacities				
2.1	Strengthen project management skills (a better focus on time needed, Level of effort required, etc) -required both at org and project-level			Improved business processes	

Task #	Activity	Start	Finish	Indicators	USD
2.1.1	Have in place a standardized project management approach and tool	4/21/21	4/29/24		2,241.00
2.1.2	Host a workshop on enhancing project management skills & training on using Smartsheet for the Senior Management, HoDs and Senior Research Fellows	6/30/21	7/19/21		
2.1.3	Host a workshop on enhancing project management skills & training on using Smartsheet for the research team	7/26/21	8/2/21		
2.1.4	Conduct training depending on areas of further strengthening	12/14/21	12/14/21		1,440.00
2.2	Strengthen knowledge management and learning system				
2.2.1	Enhance researchers' abilities to translate research more effectively to policy impact	9/28/21	11/25/21	Enhanced skills to communicate research	4,000.00
2.2.2	Enhance the capacities and competences of the information management and dissemination unit staff	2/7/22	3/14/22	Improved PEC activities	17,623.50
2.2.3	Develop an effective knowledge management and learning system	9/15/21	8/28/23	#trained	5,285.71
2.2.3.1	Establish a digitized internal centralized place for various databases - data, research associates, projects etc	4/4/22	6/14/22	Digitalized central system in place	1,998.23
2.2.3.2	Create an online catalogue for the Resource Centre searchable via the website	11/7/22	4/20/23	#number of requests, # people who access the catalogue	10,209.45
2.2.3.3	Improve on the publication search function on website	9/15/21	10/1/21	#downloads	1,000.00
2.2.3.4	Develop a digital system to utilize and capture historical knowledge to help shape future decisions	1/17/22	6/22/22	Digitised system in place	30,000.00
					300,125.69

Notes: ^aThe budget estimate for fieldwork does not include the supplementary funding of USD47,557.

^bResearch Themes - T1: Institutional arrangements between sugarcane growers and millers in Uganda: Implications for productivity and profitability; T2: Determinants of sugarcane production and production arrangement: Does gender and farm size matter?; T3: Food security and welfare effects of sugarcane production: An empirical evidence from Uganda; T4: An examination of sugarcane absorption, mills' capacity utilisation, product space deepening in Uganda; T5: Sugar policies and trade arrangements hindering or facilitating regional market for Uganda's sugar.

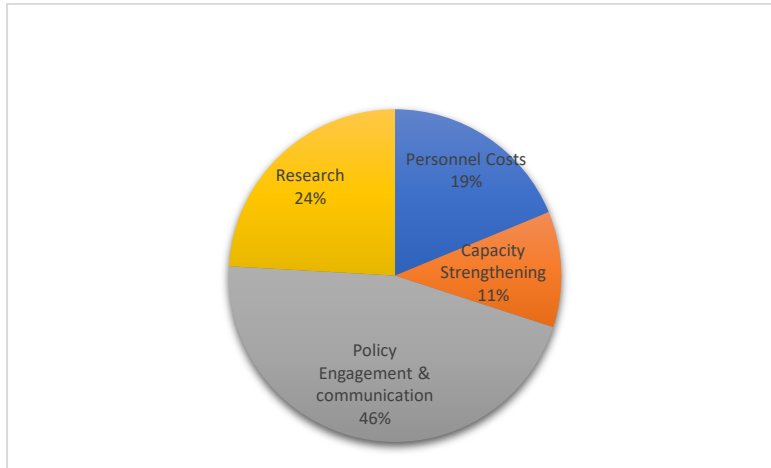
^{c,d} The Centre intends to look for funding for theme 4 and 5. Otherwise, these themes are critical for the program approach the Centre has embarked on.

^e Some of these policy engagement mechanisms are already budgeted for in other high level activities. Thus, the indicated budget is to cater for the residual activities.

Budget Narrative

Figure 1 illustrates how USD300,000 is distributed across major budget items. The aspects of the capacity development as the overall objective of the Project are crosscutting in the mentioned budget items. The budget is COVID-19 responsive to the Standard Operating Procedures as per the Ministry of Health guidelines. Below is a brief narration of what each budget item includes.

Figure 1: Budget allocation across major activities, % *



* Excluded the supplementary budget of USD47,557 for fieldwork.

Professional staff time

- Strengthen the research capacities of 6 in-house research staff needed to conduct high-quality and credible FNS research at different level of effort. The Research team engagement will be in concept development, development of the tools, training of enumerators, supervise the data collection to ensure quality control but also participate in data collection, data analysis, report writing and dissemination activities.*
- Strengthen of 2 communication staff through their involvement in developing communication strategies for the project, review of design of the research products and policy outreach through organising consultative engagements, media engagement and dissemination events, among others.*
- Two administrative staff to execute the project and coordinate the project activities.*

Capacity strengthening

- Organise 3 non-residential annual group trainings of 40 participants including trainers each for two days over the project lifespan to strengthen the capacities of the strategic actors in the FNS system to use and demand for evidence in policy processes and practises. The cost centres will include venue hire, refreshments, stationery, training materials and transport facilitation to selected participants.*
- Organise Strengthen the technical capacities of the in-house researchers in qualitative methodologies and gender analysis and its integration in policy research, policy processes and practises for greater impact on quality of FNS research. The cost centres include venue hire, refreshments, stationery, and hire the services of two experts in each of these specific areas of interest.*
- Improve business processes through strengthening the project management skills of the top managers as well as those of the research team. The foundation training session was done by the PICA team and not costed in the project budget. Instead, provisions are made for those targeted training on the Smart sheet tool to ensure it fully usage by the top managers.*
- Enhance capacities and competences of 2 communication staff to for impactful policy outreach and networking. The costs include their peer learning from similar institution but with very strong and effective*

communication units – AERC in Nairobi. The costs include air tickets, accommodation, and other related costs.

Policy Engagement & Communication (PEC)

- a) *The Centre intends to engage with strategic actors in the FNS system in three ways that is; targeted meetings, stakeholder consultations, public dialogues, and dissemination/forums. In all these events, EPRC will be cognizant of COVID-19 SOPs compliance requirement and costing for the same accordingly. The cost centre include venue hire for approximately fifty (50) persons, refreshments, and modest transport facilitation for a selected group of participants as well as facilitation to panellists and event moderators; and publicity materials such as banners and other stationery. Facilitate the Media teams to mainly publicise the project knowledge and research products. The Centre intends to host:*
- i) *A stakeholder consultative forum for establishing the research agenda that is responsive to the needs of the stakeholders. The costs will be very minimal from the Project as the other costs will be covered by EPRC.*
 - ii) *Three (3) Annual Forums on National Agriculture and Food Security in June every year to engage with stakeholders on topical issues on agriculture and food security issues in the country. In addition to the above costs, the other Forum costs include live streamed on National Television as well as on Social Media Platforms (Zoom, YouTube, and Facebook), .*
 - iii) *Three (3) annual town hall days for targeting women and youth groups on Uganda's FNS systems.*
 - iv) *Three (3) annual gender forum with women's groups to share knowledge and discuss policy initiatives towards Uganda's food system.*
 - v) *Two (2) stakeholder validation workshops during the project period, these are meant to validate the research finding.*
- b) *Project support to the Knowledge Management and learning systems through; the development of an effective Knowledge Management system, establishing a Centralised digitized internal system for various databases - data, research associates, projects etc and also in creating an online catalogue for the Resource Centre searchable via the website.*

Research costs

Collect primary data from the sugarcane growing sub-regions Busoga, Buganda & Bunyoro targeting 2,400 households, and their communities; and consultations at national and lower levels. Data will be collected through structured interviews, Key Informant interviews and Focused Group Discussions. The collected data will be used to generate policy research papers around the three (3) topics that were identified by the EPRC team and the PRCI Mentors under Cohort 1 & 2.

The costs centres will include field work preparation (development of tools, design of survey instruments in Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI), recruit and train 30 enumerators for 5 days; venue hire, meals & refreshments, and transport refund for 5 days; stationery materials; and hire and fuel 2 mini-bus vehicles with a seating capacity of 18 persons (COVID SOP Compliance) for 1 day of pretesting.

Conduct actual fieldwork 27 days including the listing exercise. Four (4) EPRC staff toll participate in the data collection especially for KIIs as well as supervise the enumerators for a period of ten (10) days. Hire and fuel 8 motor vehicles for the teams for the respective field workdays, provide wages/per diem to 30 enumerators, provide airtime and mobilization funds to the team leaders to easy communication, mobilize respondents and e-send data collected daily to a centralised place.

Conduct 39 FGDs each of 8 persons in 18 districts in the sugarcane growing sub-regions. The cost centres include venue hire (if need arises), and a modest compensation for their time and transport.