

Connecting Farmers to the Market through Agricultural Marketing Automation for Food security and Sustainable Development

^{1.} *Muteshi, K. Hilda*

Kenyatta University, School of Business, Department of Business Administration.

^{2.} *Murigi, Elishiba Muthoni*

Lecturer, Kenyatta University, School of Business, Department of Business Administration.

ABSTRACT

Food security is a key pillar to achieving sustainable development goals and the other three pillars outlined in the Big Four Agenda. Eradicating poverty and hunger as well as improving health and wellbeing depends largely on the success of agricultural marketing. The current global warming and climate change has caused widespread unpredictability in the demand and supply of agricultural produce. Most farmers lack access to market information about demand, supply and appropriate pricing. This has increased losses for perishable produce and high costs of storage for nonperishables. The agricultural value chain is too long, with several middlemen, which robs the farmer a fortune. The purpose of this paper was to conduct an action research on how technology can be used to connect farmers to the market, provide them with information on demand, supply, pricing and link producers directly to consumers. The researchers adopted a secondary data method and market intelligence to review challenges in the agricultural market and existing technological marketing platforms including social media and models an open market place solution to bridge the market gap. This review led to the development of a technological innovation that links a seller to a buyer through an Android Mobile phone application referred to as *SokoBora*. The core role of *SokoBora* is to link sellers with the buyers with the aim of minimizing the cost of transport through matching the nearest buyer to the nearest seller by region, revealing demand and reducing wastage caused by slow demand, consolidating data on demand and supply of products by region, and opening up external markets to farmers. In this paper, we explore how this application can connect farmers to the market through an automated system, and the relevant countrywide reports that can be generated to guide agricultural production and supply that matches the demand by region. This application can be accessed via the link below

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=susafri.com.sokobora>

Keywords: Food security, Agricultural Marketing, Technology, Customer Relationship Management, Automation, Market Access, Farmers, Agricultural Produce, Big Four Agenda, Sustainable Development goals