PROSPECTS FOR BIO-FORTIFICATION REDUCING MICRONUTRIENT DEFICIENCY IN KENYA: LESSONS FROM SUGAR FORTIFICATION PROGRAMMES

KENNEDY PAMBO AND FRED MUGIVANE

Department of Agricultural Economics, University of Nairobi, Kenya

kennedypambo@gmail.com

Paper prepared for presentation at the 18th ICABR Conference – 130th EAAE Seminar

"Bioeconomy and Development"

Nairobi, Kenya, June 17 – 20, 2014

Abstract

Food fortification has proven to be an important strategy for addressing micronutrient deficiency that includes vitamin A, iron and zinc deficiency in most developing countries. Development efforts have thus focused on breeding for crops that have natural ability to produce through a process widely known as bio-fortification. However, efforts to promote mass fortification of foods (both bio and industrial) have yielded little success due to existence of weak information on factors affecting consumption of these nutritionally-enhanced foods. This study therefore, assessed factors affecting consumption of fortified foods using Vitamin A fortified sugar as a case study. Data collected from rural and urban areas of Kenya was analyzed through a probit model to examine consumption drivers. The results showed that point of purchase, trust for stakeholders' involved in fortification, consumer' awareness and knowledge of the importance of vitamin A have significant effects on consumption of fortified foods. These findings offer useful insights for the development of nutrition policies in Kenya, and Africa at large.

Keywords: Micronutrient deficiency, bio-fortification, consumption drivers, probit models