Nurturing a Network of Policy Analysts for Enhanced Agricultural Development and Food and Nutrition Security in Kenya

Final Report

November 2018

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1. Background

The International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) and the *AgriFoSe2030* program implemented a one-year initiative to contribute to efforts to address the human resource capacity challenge in Kenya's agriculture sector. This contribution was achieved by developing the capacity of recent PhD graduates to undertake policy relevant research and analysis and disseminate their work to the policy making community in support of agriculture and food security in the country. The initiative entailed implementing a blended learning approach, tailored to the context of the young scientists with emphasis on 'just in time' and 'on the job' learning involving mentoring, coaching, advising, and networking.

ILRI (www.ilri.org) works to improve food and nutritional security and reduce poverty in developing countries through research for efficient, safe and sustainable use of livestock. It is the only one of 15 CGIAR research centers dedicated entirely to animal agriculture research for the developing world. Co-hosted by Kenya and Ethiopia, it has regional or country offices and projects in East, South and Southeast Asia as well as Central, East, Southern and West Africa.

The *AgriFoSe2030* Program was developed by a consortium of scientists from the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU), Lund University, Gothenburg University and Stockholm Environment Institute and hosted by the SLU Global (Agricultural Sciences for Global Development) platform. *AgriFose2030* targets the Sustainable Development Goal Number 2 (SDG2) in low-income countries through a science-based approach on local, regional and global scales. SDG2 aims at ending hunger, achieving food security, improving nutrition and promoting sustainable agriculture. *AgriFoSe2030* contributes to sustainable intensification of agriculture for increased food production on existing agricultural land; the aim is to do so by transforming practices toward more efficient use of human, financial and natural resources. It translates state-of-the–art science for supporting better policies and improved practices within the agricultural sector. This translation is achieved through a set of activities, some of which aim to improve the capacity to synthesize and translate science into information that is directly applicable, and some are about performing this translation *per se*.

This is the final report that covers the period from October 2017 to 31 October 2018. The progress made in implementing the activities is narrated in the sections below and a summary provided in the schedule presented in Appendix 1.

2. Implementation of Activities

2.1 Selection of Post-docs

The process of selecting the beneficiary post-docs began by contacting fourteen candidates who had been pre-selected by the *AgriFose2030* partners. The first step was for them to submit expressions of interest. These candidates had previously participated in activities implemented in the following *AgriFose2030* themes: i) Social and economic dimensions of smallholder agriculture; ii) Multifunctional landscapes in agriculture; and iii) Increased productivity and diversity in smallholder cropping systems.

Thirteen of the candidates responded positively with letters expressing their interest and motivation to participate in the initiative. One of the candidates, although quite enthusiastic about the capacity development initiative, expressed her desire to dedicate time to completion of her PhD thesis which she expected to do by September 2018. In November 2017 one of the thirteen post-docs who expressed interest communicated that he had been offered a post-doc position by Alexander von Humboldt Foundation in Germany and therefore not in position to participate in the initiative. Table 1 provides a list of the twelve post-docs that participated in the training and their contact details.

Table 1: List of Post-docs and contacts

#	Title	Name	Institution	Contact Details	Theme
1	Dr.	Jane Mutune	University of Nairobi, Wangari Mathai Institute for Peace and Environmental Studies	mutheumutune22@gmail.com Phone: 0714 986 104	1
2	Dr.	Charles Recha	Egerton University, Faculty of Environment and Resource development, Department of Geography	charles.recha@egerton.ac.ke Phone: 0720 277 736	1
3	Dr.	Esther Kanduma	University of Nairobi, Department of Biochemistry	ekanduma@yahoo.co.uk Phone: 0722 674 542	1
4	Dr.	Samuel Omondi	University of Nairobi, Department of Agricultural Economics (in the final stages of PhD programme at Lund University)	onyisam316@yahoo.com; samuel.omondi@keg.lu.se Phone: 0720 292 325	1
5	Dr.	Dasel Kaindi	University of Nairobi, Faculty of Agriculture, Department of Food Science, Nutrition and Technology	mulwa.dasel@yahoo.com Phone: 0721 691 478	2
6	Dr.	Eunice Githae	Chuka University Faculty of Science, Engineering and Technology, Department of Biological Sciences	egithaeh@gmail.com Phone: 0725 286 095	2
7	Dr.	Geraldine Matolla	University of Eldoret, Department of Fisheries	gmatolla@yahoo.com Phone: 0724 951 440	2
8	Dr.	Stephen Mureithi	University of Nairobi, Department of Land Resource Management and Agricultural Technologies	stemureithi@uonbi.ac.ke Phone: 0720 401 486	2
9	Dr.	Jaqueline Kariithi	Kenyatta University, School of Environmental Studies	jnkariithi@gmail.com Phone: 0726 355 500	2
10	Dr.	Cecilia Onyango	University of Nairobi, Faculty of Agriculture, Department of Plant Science and Crop Protection	Cecelia.onyango@uonbi.ac.ke Phone: 0715 606 563	3
11	Dr.	Godwin Macharia	Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization (KALRO)	godkams@yahoo.com Phone: 0723 765 846	3
12	Dr.	Jeremiah Okeyo	Embu University	okeyo.jeremiah@embuni.ac.ke; jmokeyo@outlook.com Phone: 0721 706 888	3

2.2 Identification of Resource Persons

Suitable resource persons with expertise and experience in policy work were critical for the successful implementation of this initiative. Seven resource persons were identified based on their long-standing engagement with agriculture and food security policy work in Kenya and their availability and willingness to participate in the policy initiative. In addition to resource persons identified from within ILRI, four individuals external to ILRI were identified, approached and accepted the role. The resource persons

provided capacity development support to the network by: developing and delivering training materials and continuously mentoring, coaching and advising the young scientists. Table 2 below provides the names, institutional affiliations and areas of expertise of the resource persons.

Table 2: Resource Persons and Areas of Expertise

#	Title	Name	Organization	Areas of Expertise
1.	Prof.	Willis Oluoch-Kosura	University of Nairobi, Department of Agricultural Economics	Agricultural economics; development economics; and policy analysis
2.	Prof.	Stephen Wambugu	Chuka University, Department of Geography	Agricultural marketing; economic geography; and policy analysis
3.	Dr.	Mohammed Said	Consultant	Climate change policy; biodiversity; and ecosystem services
4.	Ms.	Anne Nyamu	Consultant	Technical writing and communication
5.	Dr.	Phillip Sambati	ILRI/CapDev	Instructional design
6.	Dr.	Paul Guthiga	ILRI/ReSAKSS	Policy analysis; agricultural trade, monitoring and evaluation; and impact evaluation
7.	Dr.	Joseph Karugia	ILRI/ReSAKSS	Policy analysis; agricultural development planning; agricultural marketing; agricultural trade; and monitoring and evaluation
8.	Ms	Stella Massawe	ILRI/ReSAKSS	Monitoring and Evaluation, GIS, and agricultural development planning

3. Technical Workshops

Three training workshops were planned and implemented for the duration of the initiative. The first workshop was held on February 19-21, 2018. The design of the workshop was informed by a survey of the pots-docs which was conducted in December 2017 and completed in January 2018. In addition, the workshop agenda considered feedback received from the January 2017 *AgriFose2030* training workshops held in Nairobi as well as experience of the resource persons.

The February training workshop therefore laid emphasis on exposing the post-docs to key concepts in policy; the policy landscape in Kenya including key issues and the policy-making processes; the role of scientific evidence in policy-making using case studies; training on technical writing and communication skills; and training on use of internet resources including information search using advanced search techniques. The workshop was very interactive with ample time provided for discussions and individual and group exercises. The agenda was developed and reviewed in a series of meetings involving resource persons. The workshop report is embedded below.

Workshop
Report_Policy Training

A workshop evaluation was carried out on the third day. The evaluation showed that trainees were highly satisfied with the workshop content and logistics (see Annex II in the embedded workshop report). Participants also provided their inputs on priority topics for the two remaining workshops.

The second workshop was held at ILRI Nairobi campus on May 7– 9, 2018. It covered topics prioritized by the post-docs during the February workshop. The areas covered were: generating and using evidence; engagement in policy processes; policy communication and advocacy; theory of change; and monitoring and evaluation. As in the first workshop, the training sessions were facilitated by researchers and professors affiliated to Kenyan institutions and ILRI staff. The workshop report is embedded below.

ILRI_AgriFose
Second Workshop

The third and final on *"Research to inform agricultural and food security policy and practice in Kenya"* was held at ILRI Campus, Nairobi on 16th – 19th July 2018. In addition to tying loose ends in areas that had been covered in the first two workshops, the workshop sessions emphasised the following topics:

i) Systematic reviews;
ii) Meta-analysis;
iii) Identification of priority policy areas at national and county levels;
iv) Proposal writing for policy research and resource mobilization;
v) Networking and negotiation skills;
vi) Communication skills;
vii) Advocacy skills; and
viii) Monitoring and Evaluation

These topics had been identified and prioritized by the participants during the second workshop held in May 2018. A record of the proceedings of the workshop and a summary of participants' evaluation of the series of capacity building workshops is embedded below.

ILRI_AgriFose_Third
Workshop Report_J

The workshops also offered the learners opportunities to interact with policy makers in the agriculture and food security sectors at both national and county levels and learn about the topical policy issues of the day and how they could engage and inform the policy making processes in the country. The arrangement was an excellent opportunity for the learners to combine theory and practice.

Evaluations were carried out at the end of each training workshop. The evaluations show that trainees were highly satisfied with the contents and logistics of the workshops.

In addition to playing the role of mentors discussed in section 2.1 above, the resource persons provided capacity development support to the network by developing and delivering training materials.

All workshop presentations and reference materials were uploaded on the portal https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1WViR8LibyIwaNtMhgY431kgLoX3aEzGg?usp=sharing. The post-docs were also required to respond to short surveys regarding the level of learning achieved.

4. Online Instructional Materials

Online resources were added to the policy workshops. The online system delivers resources and monitors access. Presentations from the workshops were uploaded and used as the online resources for participants of the policy workshops. In addition to the presentations there was also a self-assessment questionnaire. To provide markers of achievement badges were awarded on completion. Presentations were collected from the workshops and uploaded to SlideShare, these presentations were added to the online platform and made into a learning path. Participants were enrolled on the platform and the learning path together with the achievement badges were assigned.

Eighteen participants were registered on the platform which included mentors and speakers from the workshops. Thirteen participants started the learning path. The majority continued to review the material however this number fell to 9 participants who completed the learning path. One participant did not complete the final feedback but completed the path. All data of interactions was recorded through the online platform (in the form of the standard xAPI statements).

In general, the online support has been able to support revision of workshops and can be used in any further policy workshops as a structured foundation. There is also the opportunity to provide support for the participants to revise workshop outputs later. This should reactivate parts of the workshop knowledge and help to embed some of the information they were exposed to in the workshops.

There will be an opportunity for targeted follow up for those who started but did not complete the path. This will be done through the mentors and a future extension of the project where the trainees are expected to become the mentors.
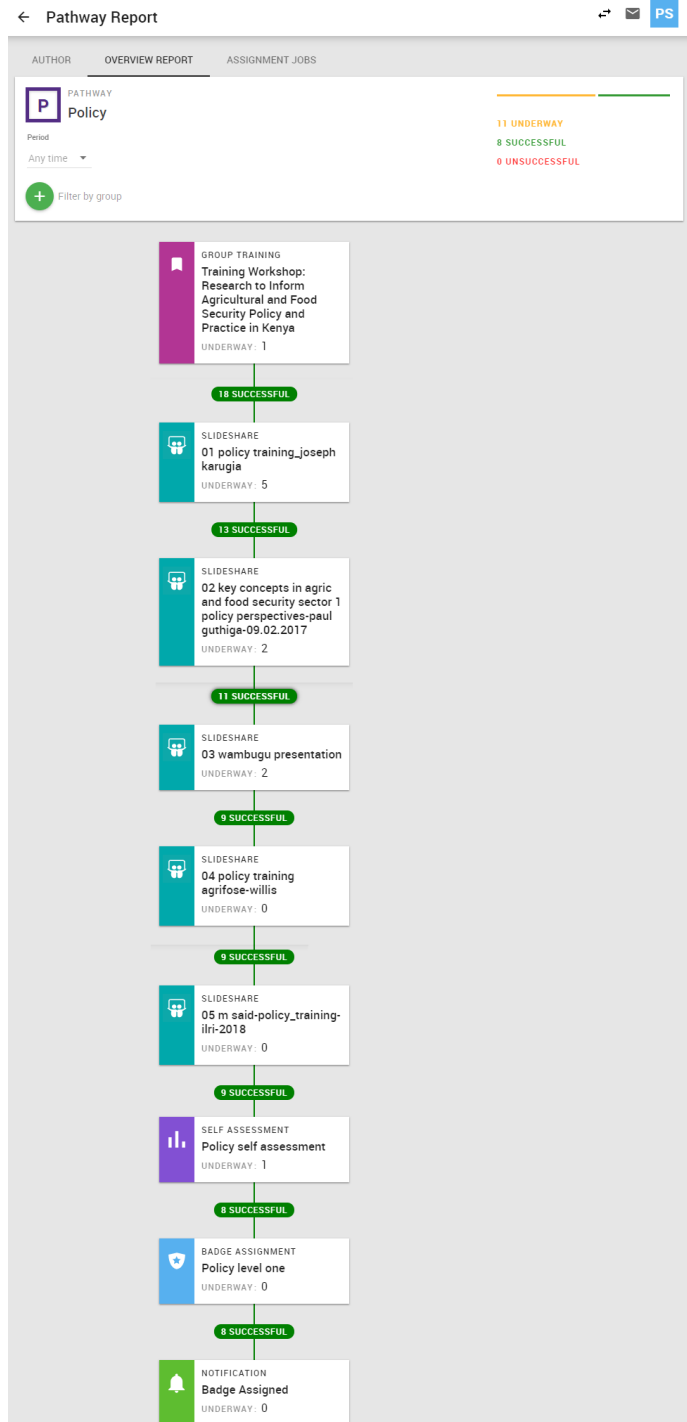
5. Policy Briefs, Dialogue and Dissemination Forums

All post-docs embarked on preparation of policy briefs and other knowledge products from completed research projects after attending the first workshop. According to the capacity needs assessment survey completed at the beginning of the project implementation, this was the first time that some of the post-docs were engaging in preparing policy briefs from their research. Eighty per cent of them were keen to enhance their skills in this area. Continuous tracking of the outcome of this capacity building project and an evaluation carried out at the end of the third workshop indicated that all the post-docs significantly improved their skills in preparing and communicating policy messages (refer to section 6 of this report). Twelve policy briefs have been published on the AgriFose website (https://www.slu.se/en/collaboration/international/slu-global/agrifose/the-agrifose-themes/social-and-economic-dimensions-of-smallholder-based-agriculture-and-food-security). They will soon be published on the websites of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Irrigation and the Council of Governors. Other knowledge products prepared by the post-docs as result of the training were posters and presentations in policy forums.

Progress reports and final presentations turned in by the post-docs show that all the mentees identified and attended at least one policy forum where they presented their work. Eleven post-docs presented their policy briefs at a policy forum held on 25th September 2018, organized by the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Irrigation in collaboration with the Kenya Strategic Analysis and Knowledge Support System (Kenya SAKSS) and the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI). The forum was attended by 55 participants drawn from government ministries and departments, universities and private sector representatives. The event was opened by the Cabinet Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Irrigation. The policy forums also provided the post-docs with opportunities to network with policy makers which was an important achievement of the training programme. A brief on the September policy forum is embedded below.

Brief on Policy
Dialogue and Disser

6. Quality Assurance and Monitoring Learning Outcomes

6.1 Quality Assurance

A needs assessment among the post-docs was carried out in December 2017- January 2018 period to identify capacity gaps. The survey results clearly indicated skill gaps in the following arears:

   i)   Understanding basic policy concepts
   ii) Understanding the policy landscape in the agricultural sector
   iii) Preparation of policy briefs and other policy knowledge products
   iv) Identifying and undertaking policy relevant research
   v)   Basic analytical tools/models for undertaking policy analysis

vi)   Undertaking policy advocacy work and disseminating policy messages

As noted above, the first workshop was designed with these skill gaps in mind and the curriculum was developed to address these gaps. The workshop agenda was reviewed by resource persons and comments/suggestions for improvement were made. Individual resource persons were assigned specific topics and the materials they developed for the training were shared with fellow resource persons for peer review. Comments and suggestions for improvement were provided.

6.2 Project Monitoring and Evaluation

6.2.1. Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) was an important activity throughout the project. Monitoring data was gathered to track progress in the achievement of project results. Sources of M&E data were the quarterly progress reports prepared by the post-docs, informal gathering of feedback from the trainees and post-workshop evaluation reports. The monitoring data was instrumental in informing the subsequent activities during project implementation. They facilitated the project management team to know whether things were going in the right direction or whether redirection was required. Adaptive management approach was used in project implementation where the project implementation plan was enhanced over the project life time based on the increased understanding from knowledge generated by M&E.

The workshop evaluation reports presented in Section 2 above not only assessed the level of satisfaction of the trainees with the workshop content but also assessed the level of learning achieved after the workshops. Table 3 below presents a summary of the evaluation of the level of learning achieved as a result of participating in the training programme. Results show that the training programme made significant contribution to addressing and closing the skill gaps of the participants identified during the capacity gaps assessment survey.

Table 3: Evaluating learning experience from the series of workshops

How would you now rate your knowledge and understanding of:	Rating (n, %)	
	Significantly improved	Moderately improved
i) Aligning your research to and engaging in policy making process (getting the science right) compared with the situation before the training?	12 (100)	-
ii) Building alliances to influence policy (through networking and negotiating) compared with the situation before the training?	9 (75)	3 (25)
iii) How to communicate with policy makers (policy communication and advocacy skills) compared with the situation before the training?	10 (83.3)	2 (16.7)
iv) Proposal writing, and M&E skills compared with the situation before the training?	10 (83.3)	2 (16.7)

Source: Survey of trainees

6.2.2 Reporting on Learning Outcomes

This sub-section documents progress towards achievement of outcomes of the project. Usually, the outcomes of a capacity development intervention have a time lag, they tend to be realized overtime as the beneficiaries continue to make use of the skills acquired. It is however eencouraging to see that many early (short term) outcomes have already been recorded. These are; i) Enhanced awareness and knowledge; ii) Change in behaviour (such as approaches to teaching, research, way of doing things and outreach); iii) Application of the new skills learnt; iv) Involvement of the beneficiaries in influencing others; v) Being nominated/co-opted to some subcommittees/initiatives that influence policy; vi) Increased confidence and professional visibility; and vii) Engagement in policy dialogue events at country level. Table 4 below gives a snapshot of the outcomes as gathered from the training beneficiaries.

Table 4: Outcomes of the ILRI/AgriFose2030 policy training initiative

Outcome of interest	Examples of outcomes achieved as reported by the training beneficiaries
Enhanced /improved skills, awareness and knowledge	• The policy training has enhanced our awareness on the role of scientific evidence in policy formulation. We became more aware that the policy formulation process relies on quality evidence generated from scientific investigations to inform the process. Hence, as scientists we need to undertake high quality research that will generate indelible evidence to support the policy formulation process. • We appreciated that influencing policy effectively requires more than the research and scientific skills we possess. We have come to appreciate the importance of other skills such as communication, negotiation, advocacy and networking. We learnt that these additional skills are critical because the process of policy formulation and influencing is not a straight forward path. It requires one to have multiple skillsets to effectively participate in it. • Initially I thought the policy formulation process was a preserve for those in specific positions within government. I thought others, especially scientists at the universities, had nothing to do about it. However, after our engagement with the various policy makers who participated in the training workshops in Nairobi, I am now convinced that as scientists we have a role to play in the process. More importantly, the research we conduct is the source of evidence to inform the policy formulation process. • I now understand and have knowledge on the importance of key data necessary for policy support. • I have gained a lot of skills in writing briefs and other knowledge products. • My knowledge before policy and practices workshop was very minimal. Now am all set and confident to participate in policy processes and brief writing. • I am very aware of the policy issues and how to contribute to policy better. • I am now more aware of the use of twitter and other social media channels in research dissemination and communication. • My knowledge in M&E and use of Theory of Change (ToC) has significantly improved, I can develop a ToC for my research project. • My presentation skills are now better than before this programme. • I have acquired skills in policy processes in Kenya; how these policies can originate from regional or continental level initiatives (e.g. CAADP) and get operationalized. This has helped me appreciate that research should find its place in the policy cycle. • Increased awareness on the need for a multi-disciplinary approach if science has to make a meaningful impact to policy. This was well captured during the Policy-dialogue workshop on Sept 25, 2018. • The training workshop has created awareness and changed my attitude towards collaboration with other researchers. • I gained new knowledge on key policy issues in Agriculture Africa and in Kenya such as the CAADP process, Agricultural Sector Growth and Transformation strategy, National Agriculture Investment Plans, County CIDPs and budget process. • The online learning session made me get knowledge of sites that I did not know existed.

Changes in behaviour (Change in approaches to teaching, research, way of doing things)	• One participant said "This capacity building programme has really changed the way I will do supervision of my post-graduate students". • I purpose to include the theory of change in all my future research projects to enhance planning and execution of projects to enhance impact and provide evidence for policy formulation. • I will use the networking and advocacy skills acquired in this training in my work to support the process of policy formulation and influence as I engage with policy makers. • In projects that I am involved in at the University of Embu, we will factor in development of policy briefs and other policy relevant dissemination materials as one of the project outputs (we never used to make use of such tools before). • I have included issues of policy and research dissemination in all new proposals I have written. • The training has helped me appreciate the centrality of policy in informing research - at both conceptualization of the problem or recommendations after research. This has become my guiding principle in my research. • The training has significantly improved my writing skills for publications. Thanks to the presentations and circulated reading materials.
Increased Confidence and Professional visibility	• My knowledge on policy before policy and practices workshop was very minimal. Now am all set and confident to participate in policy processes and brief writing. • My visibility as a researcher has increased, gained self-confidence, and I feel very motivated to pursue research that will inform policy on control of tick diseases.
Application/ utilization of skills learnt/ the knowledge gained	• The skills gained during our training will be helpful not only in engagement with policy makers but also in other spheres of our professional life. • Many noted that they have been applying skills learned in knowledge syntheses and communication to policy and practice in their research, teaching and outreach activities. • I have tried as much as possible to employ the ABC principle in the policy brief writing. • I hope to use all the networks I have established to do more collaborative research with researchers from different disciplines for more policy impact. • I developed theory of change pathways for a proposal and I was successful (after workshop 2). • I have applied the theory of change in a proposal submitted recently for funding. • The skills I acquired in Theory of Change have been very useful. I now use them in developing project proposals. The training, especially on theory of change has helped me to identify stakeholders whom I will invite to participate in an urban agriculture stakeholder meeting/discussion. • Below are some quotes from the participants: *"Before the training we were not very clear about how to articulate the change we wanted to achieve, but now I try to involve my team to develop a theory of change—the change we want and how to get there'. This helps clarify the changes we plan to achieve".* *"The knowledge gained has enabled me to change the way I deliver my lectures to graduate students, I now incorporate the role they can play as researchers in informing agriculture and food security policy and practice".*

Engaging in policy dialogue at country level	• All participants presented their briefs in a policy dialogue and dissemination forum on 25 Sept. 2018 which was opened by the Cabinet Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Irrigation. Various policy and decision makers of the agricultural sector in Kenya participated in this forum.
Involvement of the beneficiaries in influencing others (Change in collaboration-kind of collaborators, areas of collaboration etc)	• I have been influencing colleagues in my place of work and my students to have consideration for influencing policy while doing their work. • I have joined a new network of researchers working on development of a vaccine for a tick-borne parasite. I hope to use my new skills in the project to drive policy issues on control of tick-borne diseases in that network. • Most of the training participants have identified and encouraged some recent post-docs to join the second phase of the project which aims at upscaling the training to other beneficiaries in Kenya.
Being nominated/ co-opted to subcommittees/ initiatives that influence policy (Change in collaboration-kind of collaborators, areas of collaboration etc)	• "As a result of the skills I acquired in this training I have now been included in a technical working group on food safety at the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, and Fisheries" (by Cecilia Onyango). • "The most significant outcome of the training has been the incorporation into the membership of the Food and Nutrition Linkage Working Group in the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation/FAO. I am certain that this could not have happened without the training I have received on research to inform Agriculture and food security policy and practice in Kenya through the ILRI/AgriFoSe2030 Project" (by Cecilia Onyango). • "I was requested to join the task force working on camel milk improvement strategy in Kenya after presenting in a policy forum organised by the project". "I have also been involved in Ministry of Health, Division of Nutrition – Policy and Nutrition Capacity assessment and training of National Trainers of Trainers. The meeting was held in Nakuru County from 17th to 30th of September 2018." (by Dazel Mulwa). • Jane Mutune said, "The networking skills learned during the ILRI/AgriFose2030 policy and practice workshop trainings have earned me an appointment to the environment committee of Machakos County". • "I was privileged and honored to host the Governor, Nakuru County and his entourage for dinner at the KALRO Njoro cafeteria on 10th August 2018. Therein, and in a swift use of the negotiation and communication skills learnt during the last training I pitched about the role of wheat in the country's food security and the opportunity for irrigated wheat to reverse the historical and undesirable trend of over reliance on wheat grain importation. The Governor arranged to come and visit the KALRO Njoro Centre with his committee for Agriculture later during which further research evidence will be availed and discussed" (Godwin Macharia).
Satisfaction and utility	• Information gathered from a survey of the participants at the end of the last workshop on the extent to which the training beneficiaries were satisfied with the training showed that the training was very useful. The results of the evaluation were very impressive. All participants indicated that their skills have improved, and the training was useful (Table 3).

Source: Compiled from progress reports prepared by trainees and workshop evaluation reports

7. Conclusions

There was consensus among participants in the training programme (post-docs and resource persons) that the training programme was useful, and its objective was achieved to a high degree. Although outcomes and impacts of capacity development interventions take time to be realized, it has been very encouraging to see early short-term outcomes emerging. This raises chances that the intervention may yield important outcomes in the future. Arrangements may need to be put in place to track outcomes and impact in future.

In view of the success recorded in this initiative, it may be worthwhile to extend the initiative both in Kenya and in other countries in Africa that have placed agriculture as the vehicle for achieving the CAADP and SDG2 objectives. ILRI, AgriFose2030 and other partners need to develop innovative approaches to upscale the training initiative for greater long-term impacts.

The programme demonstrated to the trainees that all researchers in all fields can and should align their research work to generate policy relevant knowledge and information. They also identified actions that they need to take so that the knowledge gained can reach more of their peers. Those trainees working in local universities, who were the majority, developed action plans that they will implement to ensure graduate students are exposed and aware about the need to orient their research so that it is policy relevant and impart them with skills to inform policy processes. It is clear that the envisaged network of policy analysts is beginning to form but more time and resources will be needed to support it to mature.