ABSTRACT

Agriculture is an important sector for Fiji’s economic progress providing rural employment and food security. Apart from commercial production, currently significant amounts of food crops are grown as subsistence. With global comparisons, the scale of agricultural production in Fiji is small with rudimentary farming practices. However, some technological inputs and modern methods are evident in recent times with increasing government support for new initiatives. Attempts have been made by government to strengthen the sub-sectorial linkages through commercialization of agriculture and re-implementation of policies but real success seems scantly, where the contributions of agricultural sectors to GDP are declining, sugar being the key one. Even performance of small scale commercial enterprises in agriculture is waning off. This paper examines Fiji’s agricultural development policies with specific attention to their successes and failures. A few relevant government projects and schemes are analysed to establish their development rationale and to link them to the underlying fault-lines that lead them to their failures. The lack of capacity in monitoring and evaluating projects combined with weather calamities and bad governance have resulted in poor outcomes of numerous agricultural projects.

Key words: Agriculture, economic development, commercialization, development programmes, capital investments