Abstract

This study focused on gum Opoponax and Myrrh that are harvested from Commiphora holtziana (Ehrenb) Engl. and C. myrrha (Nees) Engl. in the drylands of Kenya. The aim was to assess and fill information gaps on gum Opoponax and Myrrh market structure, conduct and performance in Wajir County. A total of 104 randomly sampled collectors, processors, commodity dealers and consumers were interviewed. The two commodities exhibit an oligopoly market structure which is characterised by a few big wholesalers with gross profit margins of between 5% and 16%. The quantity of gum resin from Wajir County averaged 450,000 kg per year accounting for about 25% of the national trade volume of 3.3 million kg between 2011 and 2015. The producer price was US$ 1.2 for Hagar and US$ 3.2 for Malmal. These gum resins were mainly exported to China and Vietnam which controls 60% of the international gum resin market. It is recommended that national and county governments ensure accurate and timely trade data capture, guarantee and strengthen local value addition initiatives and institutions.