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**EFFECTS AND RISK FACTORS FOR EBOLA OUTBREAKS ON THE PIG
VALUE CHAIN IN LUWERO DISTRICT, UGANDA**

BY

BIRUNGI DOREEN

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208005762

(BBLT, MAK)

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ABSTRACT

A cross sectional study was conducted in Luwero district in two sub counties Nyimbwa and Ziobwe which were purposively selected to determine the risk factors and effects of Ebola outbreaks on the pig value chain. A total of 229 participants were included in the study. Structured questionnaires, key informant interviews and focus group discussions were conducted to collect data. Of the 229 respondents, 95.6% could recall the occurrence of the last Ebola outbreak in their locality. At least 24.5% of respondents associated touching pigs or eating pork with acquisition of Ebola virus. Ebola virus disease was also associated with witchcraft. Traditional healers were the first line of health care providers to Ebola patients. The signs associated with Ebola virus disease by most respondents were bleeding from body openings, fever, vomiting blood and diarrhea. There was no significant association between the perceived human practices such as bush meat consumption, contact with wild animals and acquiring of Ebola virus. The number of pigs sold during the outbreak was significantly reduced ($p= 0.001$) and this normalized 2 months after the area was declared Ebola free. There was a significant reduction ($p= 0.03$) in consumption of pork, as well as the unit cost per kilogram of pork during the Ebola outbreak due to fear of acquiring the disease from pork. Since the study has shown that the pig value chain was negatively affected by Ebola outbreak, there is need to sensitize the stakeholders on Ebola in order to minimize such effects should outbreaks occur again.