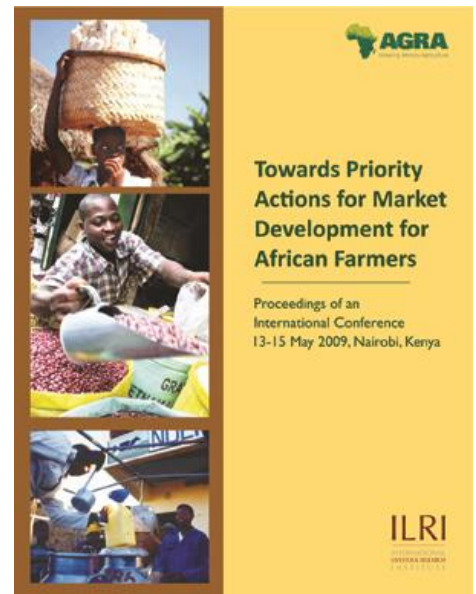




Towards priority actions for market development for African farmers

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Agricultural markets in developing countries, including sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), are undergoing rapid changes in response to strong economic growth, improved infrastructure and communication systems, and growing demand among consumers for higher quality products. Associated with and facilitating these changes are a range of new interventions and investments, from creative ways to finance value chains, to ICT solutions for the quick and reliable delivery of market information for farmers, to new organizational approaches to linking small farmers to markets.

This is the report of a meeting to document the practices, policies and investments that can drive agricultural market development in SSA.

Principles to guide priority actions:

- Actively promote a culture of evidence-based decision making by all development agents, public and private;
- Improve coordination of interventions and their evaluation to achieve generalizable lessons;
- Celebrate and encourage private sector initiative, but also recognize the critical role for government enabling functions;
- Promote and involve farmer organizations in the identification, design and evaluation of interventions;
- Carefully differentiate gross and net benefits, and the opportunity costs of using public or donor funds;
- While exports to OECD are desirable, focus on the far larger domestic and regional markets; and

- Shape modern value chains (supermarkets) where possible, but focus first on the more important traditional channels.

Priority policy actions:

- Reduce international trade barriers, both tariff and nontariff;
- Harmonize grades and standards within national and regional markets, including for seeds and other inputs;
- Monitor the need for anti-trust action where noncompetitive behavior exists;
- Land and labor (education and health) policies should facilitate smallholder productivity growth and market participation; and
- Avoid ad hoc policy processes that generate risk and uncertainty.

Priority investment actions:

- Improve access to financial services for producers and market intermediaries, especially for small-scale producers/ intermediaries and for women;
- Extend, upgrade and maintain transport and power infrastructures;
- Build independent African food policy analysis capacity;
- Advance technical skills training in value addition, new products, food standards, etc.;
- Extend, upgrade and maintain town and urban wholesale marketing infrastructures; and
- Facilitate rapid and broad roll-out of advanced ICT tools to help level the playing field.

Recent publications

Research reports

Sustainable management of globally significant endemic ruminant livestock in West Africa: Estimate of livestock demographic parameters in Senegal. Ejlersen, M., Marshall, K. and Poole, J. 2012. Research Report 29.

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Characterization and conservation of indigenous sheep genetic resources: A practical framework for developing countries. Solomon Gizaw, Komen, H., Hanote, O., van Arendonk, J.A.M., Kemp, S., Haile, A., Mwai, O. and Dessie, T. 2011. Research Report 27.

Implicit prices of indigenous cattle traits in central Ethiopia: Application of revealed and stated preference approaches. Kassie, G., Abdulai, A., Wollny, C., Ayalew, W., Dessie, T., Tibbo, M., Haile, A. and Mwai, O. 2011. Research Report 26.

Policy briefs

Review of selected veterinary public health research on pigs and pig products in Southeast Asia published between 2005 and 2012.

Classical swine fever in northeast India: Prevention and control measures.

Strategy and plan of action to mainstream gender in ILRI.

Characterization of smallholder goat production and marketing systems in Inhassoro District, Mozambique

Agriculture-associated diseases: Adapting agriculture to improve human health.

ILRI research charts ways to better livestock-related drought interventions in Kenya's drylands.

Wildlife numbers in Kenya's Mara region in decline

Exit from Bangladesh's poultry industry: causes and solutions.

Other reports

ILRI corporate report 2010–2011. Livestock matter(s): Where livestock can make a difference. ILRI. 2012.

Drivers of change in crop–livestock systems and their potential impacts on agro-ecosystems services and human wellbeing to 2030. Herrero, M., Thornton, P.K., Notenbaert, A. et al. 2012. Project Report.

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Pedagogy and adult training: A trainer's manual. Mehta-Bhatt, P. and Nyangaga, J. 2011. Training Module.

Pullet production and supply business development by women's groups in selected kebeles of Dale pilot learning woreda: Experiences from IPMS. Yilma, K., Tegegne, A., Hoekstra, D. and Yigzaw, M. 2012. Case Study.

Participatory smallholder dairy value chain development in Fogera woreda, Ethiopia: Experiences from IPMS project interventions. Gebey, T., Lemma, T., Hoekstra, D., Tegegne, A. and Alemu, B. 2012.

Rice value chain development in Fogera woreda based on the IPMS experience. Gebey, T., Berhe, K., Hoekstra, D. and Alemu, B. 2012.

Capacity for knowledge-based smallholder agriculture in Ethiopia: Linking graduate programs to market-oriented agricultural development. Tefera, T.L., Tegegne, A. and Hoekstra D. 2012.

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