



Agricultural Policy Research in Africa



PUBLISHING EVIDENCE: APRA'S CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE ON THE PATHWAYS TO INCLUSIVE AGRICULTURAL COMMERCIALISATION IN AFRICA

Martin Whiteside

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Martin Whiteside is an independent environment and rural development consultant with over 40 years' experience in Africa, Asia, Europe and the Caribbean. He led the evaluation of the Future Agricultures Consortium (FAC) Programme in 2014 and is currently working on the Accompanied Learning for Relevance and Effectiveness (ALRE) component of APRA programme.

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ACRONYMS

| | |
|-------------|---|
| ALRE | Applied Learning on Relevance and Effectiveness |
| APRA | Agricultural Policy Research in Africa |
| FAC | Future Agricultures Consortium |
| ICE | Information, Communication and Engagement |
| PIPA | Participatory Impact Pathways Analysis |
| ToC | Theory of Change |

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



In relation to performance indicators, the Agricultural Policy Research in Africa (APRA) has massively over-achieved its publications and download numbers. It has exceeded its stakeholder-assessed quality benchmark and looks set to meet its peer-reviewed publication target.

The quantity published and the range of issues covered in APRA's various publications has been enormous. This has been backed up by a very solid social media presence on Facebook and Twitter, with a large and expanding reach over the lifetime of APRA that has worked effectively to promote each publication. In addition, over 200 blogs have been produced, which raised issues covered in the APRA research and further drew attention to the longer publications.

The evidence produced by APRA add geographical and/or confirmation evidence to emerging bodies of knowledge. Some of the findings challenge existing perceptions. The topics covered by APRA publications span the important issues that were the focus of the research. Significantly, when these topics are searched on the internet, APRA publications feature prominently and frequently, which suggests that they represent a visible and accessible contribution to knowledge on these topics.

The research itself and its recording in working papers and published journals is considered to be rigorous. Readership surveys and stakeholder feedback suggest that APRA publications as a whole are trusted and relevant. There was, however, little opportunity for individual readers to provide feedback on specific publications. The translation of research-generated evidence into policy recommendations was supported by [Participatory Impact Pathways Analysis \(PIPA\)](#) planning, stakeholder engagement and peer support, but still proved challenging, as policy formulation is a different skill to research. Overall, 82.2 per cent of APRA outputs are authored or co-authored by Southern research partners, and 43.8 per cent are authored/co-authored by women.

All the publications are accessible and free to access through the [Future Agricultures Consortium website](#),

including the journal articles. They are well publicised through social media and easily found through internet searches. This seems to have translated into high levels of actual access. The 210 blogs, for instance, have received 105,000 views, with an average of 500 views each. There have been 58,000 downloads of longer research documents (such as working papers) from the website, and this has risen substantially in the final year of the programme.

The quality and reach of publications has been significantly enhanced by support from the Information, Communication and Engagement (ICE) team, who were available throughout the programme and highly valued by the Africa-based research teams.

Overall, it is considered that APRA has contributed a significant body of additional, rigorous, trusted and accessible published knowledge on the effect of agrarian change on women, youth and poorer households, which is both available and being accessed. It is, however, too soon to judge the impact of this knowledge on policies and practices that affect the beneficial inclusion of women, youth and poorer households in this change.

Lesson 1 – The blog format is appropriate for enabling rapid and accessible dissemination of emerging findings and enabling researchers to express opinions on their implications.

Lesson 2 – Policy development involves different skills to research and often requires stakeholder participation and knowledge of similar policy experience elsewhere. Time, processes and resources need to be included within plans and budgets to move from research-generated evidence to policy recommendations. Where these resources are not available, it may be preferable to publish policy-relevant research implications, rather than recommendations.

Lesson 3 – In order to increase reader participation and provide feedback for monitoring and quality assurance, future evidence to policy programmes could explore how best to elicit reader feedback on publications and blogs.

Lesson 4 – Future evidence to policy programmes could use publication download and social media reach data to monitor uptake, to provide evidence-based feedback to authors and to incentivise them to build readership.

Lesson 5 – Effective communications support can add significant value to publication quality and reach.

1 INTRODUCTION



APRA¹ is a six-year (2014–22) comparative research programme across nine African countries. Interdisciplinary research teams aim to generate high-quality evidence and policy-relevant insights on more inclusive pathways to agricultural commercialisation. The research teams are supported by small ICE and ALRE teams.

This outcome study looks at the quantity, quality, accessibility and use made of the publications produced from APRA's research.

1 APRA is a programme of the Future Agricultures Consortium which is based in the Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, UK.

2 APRA CONTRIBUTION TO PUBLISHED KNOWLEDGE

The evaluation question is:

Has APRA contributed a significant body of additional, rigorous, trusted and accessible published knowledge on the effect of agrarian change on women, youth and poorer households,² which is both available and being accessed?

To judge this, the following subsidiary questions need to be answered:

- How much of the body of knowledge is additional and can be attributed to APRA?
- Is the knowledge significant in content and coverage in relation to the APRA Theory of Change (ToC)?
- Are the publications rigorous and trusted?
- Are the publications accessible?
- Are the publications being accessed?

2 New knowledge in relation to the intersection between COVID-19 and the rural economy is addressed in a separate case study.

3 CONTEXT FOR THE CHANGE

The APRA Logframe gave targets of publications to be produced. At the time of writing this case study, it looked probable that the targets would be exceeded soon after the end of the programme, in some cases by significant margins, as shown in Table 3.1.

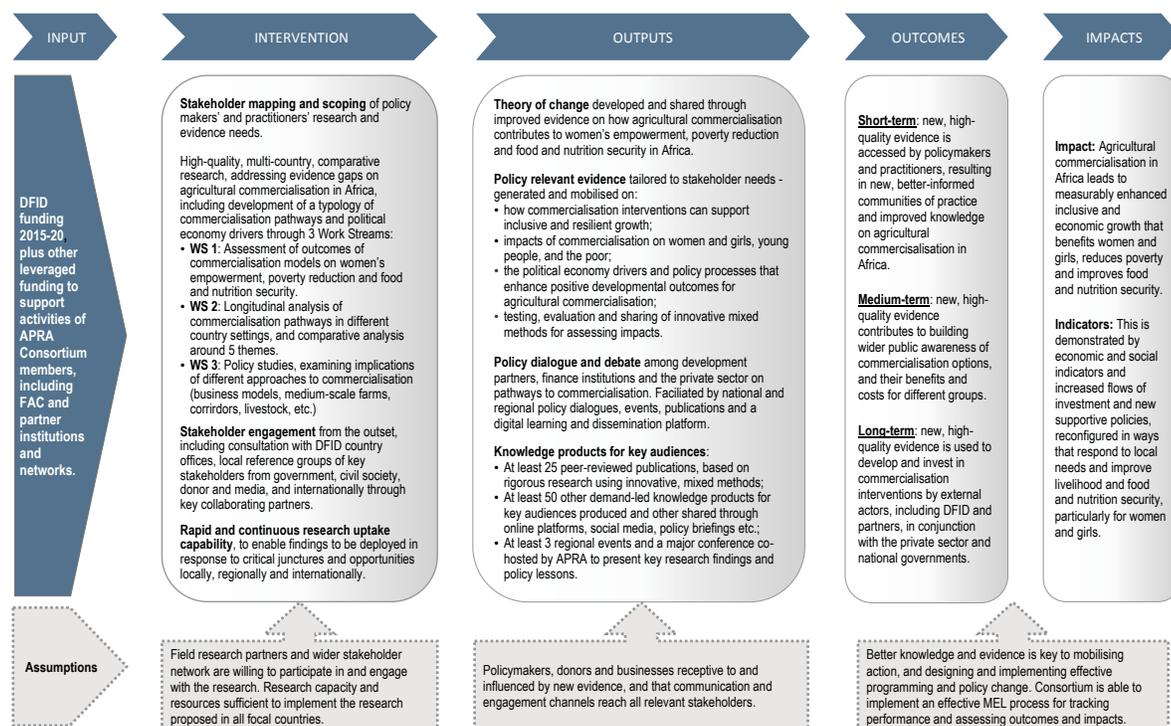
The APRA ToC was focused on evidence generation at the intervention level and on evidence interpretation, stakeholder dialogue, knowledge product publication and presentation at the output level. The outcome was expected to be knowledge being accessed, adopted

Table 3.1. Achievement of publication targets

| Indicator | Target | Achieved as of 28/02/22 |
|---|-----------------------|---|
| Quality of APRA knowledge products as assessed by relevant stakeholders | 66% high or very high | Working papers – 85% scoring 7/10 or more and 63% scoring 9/10 or more |
| Downloads of APRA knowledge products from the Future Agricultures Consortium website | 1,050 ³ | 57,802 ⁴ (and 105,000 for the blogs) |
| Peer-reviewed publications | 35 | 26 (+ further 4 submitted with more in the pipeline) |
| Working papers and briefing papers for broad audiences, produced and shared through online platforms and social media | 100 | 150 (84 working papers, 28 policy briefs, 5 research notes, 28 COVID-19 reports, 5 ALRE papers). Plus 210 blogs |

Source: Author's own

Figure 3.1. APRA ToC



Source: APRA programme documentation

- 3 This is a strangely low target and perhaps indicates a lack of benchmarking on what would be an acceptable number in a programme of this type.
- 4 Downloads from OpenDocs as of 14/03/2022.

and used by a variety of stakeholders over different timescales.

To achieve the ToC, APRA had a publications strategy based on producing a number of different formats of mutually reinforcing publications, performing different complementary functions and aimed at a variety of audiences. These publications were supported with guidelines and other intensive support from the ICE team. The ICE team took responsibility for style and editing, and to some extent, also for content coherence. The ICE strategy is given in Annex 2.

Working papers are the longest and most technical APRA publication, which have been produced at various stages in the evidence gathering process. A number cover the political economy context of the subjects being researched, others outline the research methodology proposed and the majority focus on research results. In work stream three, which focused on policy studies, most of the working papers drew on existing knowledge, augmented by qualitative enquiry, data collected by APRA researchers and author reflection. Each working paper went through a review process and was assessed by a combination of independent external reviewers and internal reviewers before publication. By the end of February 2022, a total of 84 APRA working papers were published, with several more still in the editorial and production pipeline. All APRA publications are freely accessible on Open Docs.⁵

Blogs were an important and prolific output from APRA researchers, with a total of 210 produced, often one-two per week. These were produced in a timely and relatively informal way and proved an important means of sharing preliminary research findings, as well as providing report-backs from conferences and other events. The blog style appears to have enabled researchers to present both views and results quickly and informally. Blogs were also often used to draw attention to other publications like working papers and, in some cases, these were picked up by the media, resulting in significant exposure. There was little formal independent quality assurance of blogs beyond the ICE team but, to an extent, they were considered to be the opinion of the authors, rather than being a recommendation of APRA or the Institute of Development Studies.

APRA briefs were short (around four pages), accessible summaries of evidence and associated policy implications. They were meant for a less academic and more policymaker/implementer audience than the working papers. Initially, the briefs were closely linked to individual working papers, but then later evolved to provide more of an overview of several working papers with policy insights. Some researchers struggled with the shorter, less academic style of the briefs and found the transition from detailing research evidence to formulating policy recommendations difficult. This generated a need for additional quality assurance, which was identified and addressed in the latter part of the programme. By the end of February 2022, 29 briefs had been published, with several more in preparation.

Alongside APRA's own published outputs, there were a number of journal articles and book chapters generated by APRA research and led by APRA researchers. By February 2022, this amounted to 24 journal articles published, two accepted and awaiting publication, and four submitted and going through review. All the journal articles were open access.

A number of other publication formats were used for particular purposes, including COVID papers (28), research notes (5) and ALRE papers (5). The COVID papers are discussed separately as part of another case study. Overall, 82.2 per cent of APRA outputs are authored or co-authored by Southern research partners, and 43.8 per cent are authored/co-authored by women.

In addition to written outputs, APRA has produced 10 talking head videos of APRA personnel available through YouTube and the website. They range from one to eight minutes long and with views ranging from 10 to nearly 200.

All publications, as well as engagement events like conferences and e-Dialogues, were actively promoted through social media by the ICE team and the quarterly APRA newsletter. This integrated media strategy seems to have been successful in developing APRA's communication reach. From February 2018 to February 2022, Facebook followers grew from 2.8k to 5.1k and Twitter from 16.6k to 21.6k, with monthly Twitter impressions increasing from 20.9k to 96.5k.⁶

5 OpenDocs is the Institute of Development Studies' [digital repository](#).

6 Twitter impressions – a total tally of all the times the Tweet has been seen. This includes not only the times it appears in a followers' timeline but also the times it has appeared in search or as a result of someone liking the Tweet.

The Twitter engagement rate⁷ has also increased from 0.4 per cent to an extremely impressive 5.7 per cent. In effect, this means that, with monthly impressions of 96.5k, there are over 5,000 engagements with APRA information on Twitter every month.

In comparison to the growth in social media reach, the circulation list of the monthly APRA email bulletin declined from 3,375 in December 2017 to 2,400 in December 2021. This seems to be due to the GDPR regulations coming into force during the programme period, necessitating stricter rules on circulation lists.

Social media was effectively used around e-Dialogue events. A good example was the e-Dialogue held on 20 January 2022 on Agrarian Change and Rural Transformation in Sub-Saharan Africa, attended by over 120 participants, mainly from Africa. In the two-week period building up to and following the event, there were 73,000 impressions on Twitter, with a high 2.9 per cent engagement rate, 116 likes, 77 retweets and 26 link clicks.

Lesson 1 – The blog format is appropriate for enabling rapid and accessible dissemination of emerging findings and enabling researchers to express opinions on their implications.

7 Engagement rate – out of everyone who saw the tweet, what percentage of people interacted with it, which is the sum of link clicks, retweets, likes, detail expands, Media engagements and profile clicks.

- An engagement rate between 0 per cent and 0.02 per cent is generally considered to be low.
- Between 0.02 per cent and 0.09 per cent are considered to be good.
- Between 0.09 per cent and 0.33 per cent is considered to be high.
- Between 0.33 per cent and 1 per cent is considered to be very high.

4 HOW MUCH OF THE BODY OF KNOWLEDGE IS ADDITIONAL AND CAN BE ATTRIBUTED TO APRA?

The vast majority of APRA evidence and publications can be attributed to APRA-funded and organised research. In a few cases, there have been explicit partnerships with other institutions, such as Michigan State University, which collaborated with APRA on research into medium-scale farmers in Nigeria. Frequently, APRA researchers were already involved in research and publishing with their host institutions, however the APRA-funded and coordinated research was additional (and usually complementary) to their existing work.

In some cases, publications and academic presentations were produced for, or as a result of, conferences organised in partnership with other organisations. For instance, the 2021 East Africa Rice Conference was delivered in partnership with the Africa Rice Centre, the Centre for African Bio-Entrepreneurship, the Coalition for African Rice Development, the International Rice Research Institute, and the Japan International Cooperation Agency. The 2022 e-Dialogues, presenting some of the consolidated results from APRA, were organised in partnership with the collaborative networks of Foresight4Food

and the United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network, however, the content delivered was fundamentally APRA research. The partnership approach followed by APRA is considered to be a strength, particularly in relation to communications.

Some of the political economy output was a reframing and bringing together of existing knowledge. However, this process does produce important new insights, which are relevant and valuable to the policy context. This is corroborated by high download figures for many of the political economy papers.

The key policy-relevant evidence generated by APRA and communicated in the publication portfolio are listed in Annex 1. Overall, it is clear that the publications produced were generated from APRA research and where there was partnership contribution, this is very clearly stated. In most cases, the evidence is additional although the information may not always be new. It is therefore judged that the publications and the detailed content is additional and can be attributed in full or in part to APRA.

5 IS THE NEW KNOWLEDGE SIGNIFICANT IN CONTENT AND COVERAGE IN RELATION TO THE TOC?

In relation to the ToC, the publications need to provide evidence on:

- how commercialisation interventions can support inclusive and resilient growth;
- impacts of commercialisation on women and girls, young people, and the poor; and
- the political economy drivers and policy processes that enhance positive developmental outcomes for agricultural commercialisation.

Table 5.1. Main foci of APRA publications⁸

| Focus | Working papers | Policy briefs | Journal articles ⁹ | Conf. present. (incl. online) |
|-------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Context/political economy | 25 | 9 | 5 | 1 |
| Method | | 1 | | 1 |
| Mechanisation | 5 | 1 | 6 | |
| Youth | 3 | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| Farm-size | 5 | (2) ¹⁰ | 7 | 2 |
| Corridors | 2 | 2 | 4 | |
| Land tenure | 2 | | 6 | 2 |
| Labour | 1 | | 1 | |
| Conflict | 2 | | 1 | |
| Rice | 9 | 5 | 6 | 5 |
| Processing | 1 | | | |
| Inclusion/gender | 7 | 1 | 2 | 4 |
| Contract farming/agribusiness | | 2 | 1 | |
| Pathways to commercialisation | 4 | 1 | 1 | 4 |
| Climate change | 4 | 1 | | 1 |
| Pastoralism/livestock | 4 | 1 | | 1 |
| Food systems | | | | 3 |
| Cocoa | 4 | (1) | | 3 |
| Oil palm | 4 | | | 1 |
| Sunflower | 3 | | | 2 |
| Tobacco | 1 | | | |
| Groundnuts | 2 | | | 1 |
| Resilience | 1 | | | 1 |
| COVID-19 | 28 ¹¹ | 1 | | 3 |

Source: Author's own

8 Note – individual publications may have more than one foci – this table just reflects the key subjects of focus in each publication.

9 This includes published and submitted articles.

10 Brackets – indicate not published at time of writing.

11 These are reports rather than working papers.

Table 5.1 shows that the publications cover a wide range of topics relevant to the ToC. It should be noted that the table reflects the overall focus, usually identified from the points highlighted in the abstract or summary, and that many publications also cover a wider range of interacting issues in less depth.

will be found frequently by anyone trying to access information in these domains.

Judging the significance of a vast quantity of publications like this is challenging – are they a minor addition in relation to the overall existing body of knowledge, or do they comprise a significant additional resource? This was assessed by whether APRA publications feature prominently in a simple internet search of the topics covered by APRA.¹² APRA publications came up on the first one-two pages¹³ of the following searches:

- Agricultural growth corridors, Africa
- Agricultural mechanisation, Africa
- Medium-scale farmers Africa farm size and commercialisation in Africa
- Land reform Zimbabwe agriculture (but not Africa agriculture)
- Agriculture, rice, Ethiopia (and Tanzania)
- Inclusive agricultural commercialisation in Africa
- Women in agricultural commercialisation in Africa
- Agricultural commercialisation and climate change
- Pathways to African agricultural commercialisation
- Contract farming commercialisation in Africa
- Inclusive cocoa production in Ghana
- Inclusive oil palm production in Ghana (but not Nigeria)
- Political economy of agriculture in Africa
- Agricultural growth corridors, Africa
- Climate change agriculture commercialisation, Africa
- Livestock and commercialisation, Africa
- Sunflower, Tanzania
- Tobacco, Zimbabwe
- Groundnuts, Malawi
- COVID and African Agriculture

But not:

- Youth and agriculture, Africa
- Farm labour, Africa
- Climate resilience African agriculture

The ‘near top of page’ internet ‘hits’ by a search engine of APRA publications suggests that these topics are not ‘overcrowded’ and that APRA publications comprise a significant and relevant proportion of the information on offer. It also means that APRA evidence

12 The search engine used was Google on 10/01/22.

13 In nearly all cases the APRA reference was on the first page.

6 ARE APRA PUBLICATIONS RIGOROUS AND TRUSTED?

APRA research was designed with significant rigour, and several rounds of quality assurance in relation to the methodology took place. In many cases, the research methodology was described and made transparent in working papers at a relatively early stage in the process. Working papers were subject to review by an internal and independent reviewer in advance of publication. A significant proportion of the most relevant APRA research is also being published in peer-reviewed journals, which have their own independent review processes.

Overall, it is considered that the APRA evidence as reported is robust and trusted. This is corroborated by the readership feedback survey, which rated 85 per cent scoring 7/10 or more for quality and 63 per cent scoring 9/10 or more.

More challenging to assess for rigour is the interpretation of some of the evidence and derived from this, the APRA policy recommendations. Translating research findings into relevant and realistic policy recommendations often requires different skills and experience from that of conducting the research. In some cases, this has stretched the skill set of the research teams.

The policy development process was supported in advance and during the process by a number of rounds of PIPAs. However, COVID-19 restrictions, time constraints and budget cuts did put limits on the rigour of the participatory development and final field assurance of some policy conclusions.

Interpretation and policy recommendations have typically been communicated through blogs, policy briefs and presentations at communication events. The formal quality assurance mechanism for approving policy briefs and conference presentations appears to be less consistent, with no independent reviewers with specialist knowledge of the local policy context. However, in a number of cases, the proposed policy recommendations were discussed with local

stakeholders (often farmers and agricultural officers), which did provide grassroots quality assurance.

Where research teams struggled to develop rigorous policy recommendations from their evidence, it was found preferable for researchers to publish clear 'research findings' with accompanying 'policy implications', while leaving it for 'policy developers' working in the sector to use the research evidence to develop policy, in conjunction with those that will implement the policy. An e-Dialogue involving over 100 researchers and practitioners in March 2022 acknowledged the challenges of policy implementation, and the need for implementers to be involved in its formulation.¹⁴

APRA has, at times, raised important and contentious debates, and this is an important function of the programme. APRA's extensive portfolio of blogs (210) has been particularly successful. The blog format has enabled researchers to be slightly more outspoken and less constrained in presenting their opinions. Blogs therefore provide a useful communication channel, with minimum delay between data collection and publication of the results. In most cases, blog readers are expected to understand that the researcher is expressing their own opinions, and appreciate the views expressed on that basis.

APRA-organised events generally included recording of attendees (including gender disaggregation) and a feedback mechanism for internal learning and donor reporting. There was also a qualitative [stakeholder survey](#) on effective communication methods and identifying policy issues requiring better quality evidence.¹⁵

Initially there was no feedback mechanism provided for those who had finished reading individual APRA publications or blogs. However, from early 2019, a link was provided at the end of working papers inviting feedback, although this was not in a particularly

14 APRA e-Dialogue: Transition Pathways and Strategies for Supporting More Equitable and Resilient Food Systems in Africa. 23 March 2022

15 ALRE stakeholder survey analysis key findings.

prominent position. The process of using any feedback for learning or monitoring was never however institutionalised. No feedback mechanisms were provided for readers of other publications or blogs.

The feedback from the form at the end of specific working papers gave the results as shown in Table 6.1.

The lack of feedback opportunities from individual publications was a missed opportunity for a number of reasons:

- Failure to engage with the reader may perpetuate the ‘expert’ vs ‘learner/reader’ divide.
- Authors get little genuine reader feedback on their publications (with missed opportunities for clarifying misunderstandings or correcting errors).
- Evaluators/quality assurers get little feedback on who is reading different publications and what different readers find useful across the portfolio.
- There may be missed opportunities for new collegiate collaborations and creating communities of practice.

The APRA project design included a programme-wide readership survey as a Logframe requirement. The methodology for achieving this feedback in a robust manner proved very challenging. Random readership surveys tend to have extremely low response rates with a risk of respondents being clustered at either end of the ‘love’/‘hate’ spectrum – with difficult to interpret results. In practice, those people prepared to respond to a generalised APRA publications feedback survey are likely to be those with some loyalty to APRA.

To meet the Logframe requirement, APRA conducted a mid-term and end-term readership survey. Results from the end-term readership survey in January 2022, which garnered 27 responses, is shown in Table 6.2.

Some of the free text replies that accompanied the survey give a flavour of some of the feedback received:

The publications have brought new insights on how farmers can adopt a paradigm shift from being traditional subsistence farmers to commercial farmers.

This kind of support is very informative and allows us to learn about policy and strategic issues happening in other countries. This service should continue as long as possible as policy change and influencing is a long-term undertaking.

We have used it [the material] for discussions and evidence in policy discussion with the leadership at national and subnational levels.

Informative and thought provoking on various work. One blog on COVID-19 vaccines influenced me on how I mobilised people to receive COVID-19 vaccine when the same was availed to Malawi.

Useful [policy briefs] that explain the mismatch between policy outcomes and experience of people on the ground. The work should be adopted in formulation of even better policies.

APRA outputs have been used as main input for the revision of the National Rice Development Strategy.

Table 6.1. Reader feedback on individual publications

| Criterion | Mean score (max = 10) ¹⁶ |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| How interesting did you find the working paper? | 8.8 |
| How relevant do you think it is for your work? | 8.9 |
| How would you rate the quality of the working paper? | 8.5 |

Source: Author’s own

Table 6.2. Results from readership survey, January 2022

| Criterion | Mean score (max = 10) ¹⁷ |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| How relevant do you think APRA’s working papers are for your work? | 7.9 |
| How would you rate the quality of APRA’s working papers? | 8.1 |
| How relevant do you think APRA’s policy briefs are for your work? | 7.7 |
| How would you rate the quality of APRA’s policy briefs? | 8.0 |

Source: Author’s own

16 With one being lowest and ten being highest.

17 With one being lowest and ten being highest.

Overall, the research results published by APRA are robust and trusted. The policy recommendations are more challenging for quality assurance. In some cases, policy implications have been more appropriate than recommendations.

Lesson 2 – Policy development involves different skills to research and often requires stakeholder participation and knowledge of similar policy experience elsewhere. Time, processes and resources need to be included within plans and budgets to move from research generated evidence to policy recommendations. Where these resources are not available, it may be preferable to publish policy-relevant research implications, rather than recommendations.

Lesson 3 – In order to increase reader participation and provide feedback for monitoring and quality assurance, future evidence to policy programmes could explore how best to elicit reader feedback on publications and blogs. This could be something like two closed and one open question in a prominent position at the end of each publication:

- ***Closed on category of reader (researcher, policymaker, NGO, farmer, private sector, donor).***
- ***Closed on usefulness (or other subjective ranking according to purpose).***
- ***Open comment (depending on purpose, but something like ‘What would make this publication more useful to you?’).***

There was ad hoc monitoring of blog and social media reach by the ICE team. However, due to various systems, APRA publication and blog download data wasn't particularly easy to access or sort by category. Moreover, if a document was revised then the download data started again at zero – which was a dis-incentive to making small amendments. The download numbers were used to report to the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office at the end of the year, but weren't routinely reported back to authors or actively used for learning about why some are much higher than others (perhaps due to a fortuitous mention in a re-tweet, the timing of a publication,¹⁸ or a particularly enticing title).

With hindsight, there were more opportunities to systematise the use of download data further in order to consolidate the learning about what seems to work and why, to spread the learning in the wider APRA team and to provide a gentle competitive incentive among writers to think smarter about moving beyond content to building readership.¹⁹

Lesson 4 – Future evidence to policy programmes could use publication download and social media reach data to monitor uptake, to provide evidence-based feedback to authors and to incentivise them to build readership.

18 E.g., the blog linking tobacco and climate change at the start of COP26.

19 This was done informally in the 2019 annual APRA workshop in Ghana – when blog download numbers were ranked in order and the reason for some very high numbers discussed (e.g., the World Bank re-tweeting a link). This was both valuable learning and incentivising.

7 IS THE KNOWLEDGE ACCESSIBLE AND BEING ACCESSED?

All APRA (353) publications are freely available through the Future Agricultures Consortium website on OpenDocs,²⁰ and every journal article has been published with open access. Individual publications are promoted through Twitter (21,700 followers), Facebook (5,100 followers) and through the APRA quarterly newsletter (2,400 subscribers). In addition, most publications have been further publicised through accessible blogs linked to individual publications. Research-generated knowledge and publications have also been highlighted in individual countries in the local media and at presentation events with local stakeholders. In some cases, printed versions of policy briefs have been made available for engagement events.

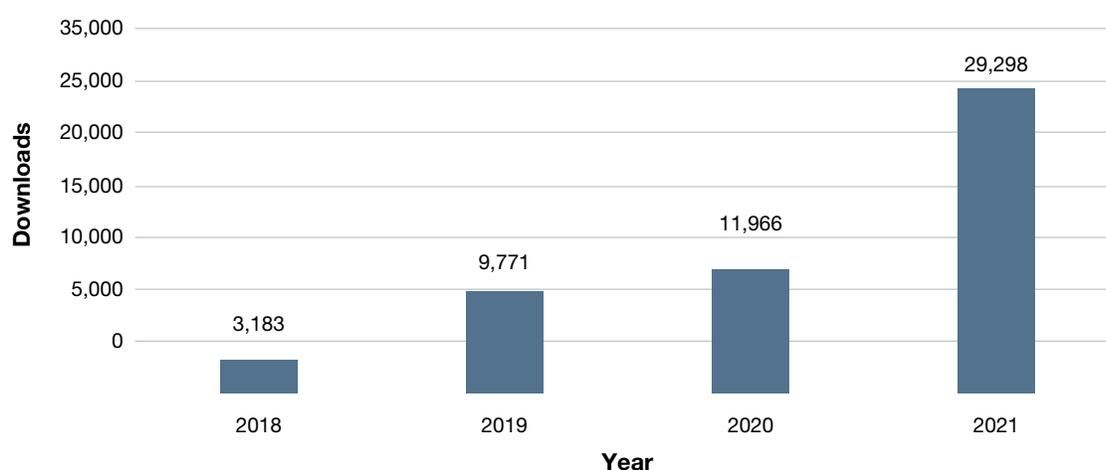
In terms of access, the most widely viewed documents have been the APRA blogs. There are currently 210 different blogs and they receive 46 per cent of all APRA page views, with 105,000 views in total and an average viewing of 500 per blog. The average viewing time is

over four minutes, which suggests that a significant number of views actually represent a full read. The top 20 blogs received an average of 1,500 views, with a similar average view time. The most read blogs cover both the country-specific topics and global issues. Although difficult to analyse exactly, it seems a high proportion of blog readership is from within Africa.

Access to the other APRA publications, principally working papers and briefs, can be assessed by the number of times they are downloaded. This means the potential reader has gone beyond the title and introductory paragraph and decided to download the whole document. As can be seen from the graph below, the numbers of downloads have been steadily rising as more publications have been added. The total number of downloads in the last four years is extremely impressive, at 58,000.²¹

The majority of the OpenDocs downloads are working papers. By the end of February 2022, there had been

Figure 7.1. APRA publication downloads from OpenDocs²²



20 OpenDocs is a digital repository of research on international development provided by the Institute of Development Studies.

21 Including 7,000 for the first 2.5 months of 2022.

22 2018 figures from google analytics, with the rest from OpenDocs download data.

Table 7.1. Working paper downloads (2019-2022)

| Quartile | Mean downloads | Range |
|--------------------------|----------------|-----------|
| 1 st (older) | 1,252 | 2,816–626 |
| 2 nd | 497 | 623–360 |
| 3 rd | 251 | 356–154 |
| 4 th (recent) | 74 | 154–10 |
| All | 513 | 2,816–10 |

Source: Author's own

84 working papers published with a total of 39,480 downloads, giving an average of over 500 downloads per working paper. Some papers are more recent than others, so have had less time to accrue downloads. However, most, apart from the most recent, have generated significant downloads as shown by the quartile figures:

Overall, these download figures seem to suggest a significant readership of these quite detailed documents. The complete list of working papers with their download data is given in Annex 2.

The APRA policy briefs are shorter (four-page) documents, aimed at a more general audience, with a particular focus on the policy implications of APRA research findings. Many have been published more recently, so the number of downloads has not had time to build at the time of writing.

Both the quality and the reach of APRA publications were significantly enhanced by the ICE team. This included monitoring and following-up of writing deadlines, editing and content advice, organising independent reviews, layout and promotion. Field teams placed a high value on the support provided.

Lesson 5 – Effective communications support can add significant value to publication quality and reach.

ANNEX 1 – MAIN EVIDENCE NUGGETS OF APRA WORK STREAMS

1. On the Fogera Plain in Ethiopia, commercialisation of rice contributed to improved livelihood trajectories and agrarian changes but diversification of livelihood options of rice farmers is hindered due to poor marketing systems. Rice processors, as key actors in enhanced rice commercialisation, face diverse challenges that need specific policy and development interventions.
2. In Kilombero, Tanzania, rice commercialisation through intensification and area expansion is contributing to household income improvement; but intensification is the more gender and age inclusive than area expansion, and the way income was spent determined livelihood improvement levels. Processors are natural value chain leaders, but support for them should also promote equity, as well as efficiency and quality of processed products.
3. In Tanzania, sunflower commercialisation has improved livelihoods for most people but with significant social differentiation and a need to enhance the competitiveness of domestic sunflower oil production. Sunflower growing has enabled enterprise diversification, reinforced by market dynamics and climate change.
4. Groundnut commercialisation in Malawi is leading to male dominance in households in terms of control over resources and income, decision-making and ownership, with men misusing the income. In cases where women try to participate more in markets, they may be considered rebellious, which can affect their marriage, while in other cases, women let men take control, lead and make all the decisions.
5. In Zimbabwe, former farmworkers can now be best described as 'working people' due to combining the sale of labour on farms, tilling their own pieces of land and participation in commodity trading.
6. In Ghana, livelihood gains in the smallholder oil-palm sector have been short-lived due to the lack of policy institutionalisation. Smallholders are highly responsive to market incentives and have higher than expected commercialisation rates; yet 40 per cent experience seasonal food insecurity. Inequality deepens where land is vested in chiefs rather than household heads, with chiefs selling to wealthy newcomers.
7. In the Ghana cocoa belt there is a lack of working capital, increasing costs of production and scarcity of land, leading to higher yields on smaller plots, but also increasing marginal returns. There is a critical need to address disease and pest issues in agroecological frameworks rather than focusing solely on yields and re-planting.
8. In parts of Nigeria, medium-scale farming is associated with increasing productivity for farm sizes between 12-25ha among medium-scale farms that stepped up from small-scale, and for farm sizes above 25ha among medium-scale farms that stepped in from outside of farming. Medium-scale farms are providing spill-over benefits to small-scale farmer productivity and welfare, through improved management practices and the opportunity to sell their outputs for more competitive prices.
9. In most African countries, medium-scale farms of 5-100ha have, over the past 15 years, accounted for a rising share of national farmland, the value of farm production, and the value of crops sold off the farm. Their growth is concentrated in areas with access to land. The increase in medium-scale holdings is associated with farm labour productivity growth and underappreciated benefits to smallholder farmers. However, the rise of African investor farmers is also contributing to the commodification of land, escalating land prices, and restricted land access for most local people. A better understanding of these trends and linkages could help resolve long-standing policy debates and support strategies that accelerate agricultural transformation.
10. Inadequate access to hired labour is a key constraint to market orientation among many farm households. Increasing mechanisation could remove this constraint on the proportion of farmland allocated to crops produced primarily for the market.

| APRA work stream (WS) | 1-3 'new knowledge' contributions | Include link to APRA publication(s) where the 'new knowledge' is described | Impact on policy/practice, if any – note here |
|-----------------------|--|--|--|
| Ethiopia WS 1 | Commercialisation of rice contributed to improved livelihood trajectories and agrarian changes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> APRA Brief 24: The White Gold of Wereta: A City Raised on Rice: https://bit.ly/3uVtiVO | <p>Ministry of Agriculture decided to have a stand-alone rice flagship programme</p> <p>Rice is considered among five priority commodities in the new National Agricultural Investment Plan (2021–2030)</p> |
| | As key actors for enhanced rice commercialisation and its impact, rice processors face diverse challenges that need policy and development interventions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> APRA Working Paper 74: The Role of Small-Scale Processors in Supporting Agricultural Commercialisation Among Smallholder Rice Farmers in East Africa: Lessons from Ethiopia and Tanzania: https://bit.ly/3ufJvVL | <p>Ministry of Agriculture decided to have a stand-alone rice flagship programme</p> <p>Rice is considered among five priority commodities in the new National Agricultural Investment Plan (2022–2030)</p> |
| | Diversification of livelihood options for rice farmers is hindered due to poor marketing systems | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> APRA Research Note 4: Responses of Rice Farmers Engaged in Vegetable Production: Implications of the Collapse of Vegetable Prices in the Fogera Plain: https://bit.ly/3r9Slgr | Ethiopian Commodity Exchange decided to consider rice in its trading platform |
| | The relative success of rice commercialisation in the Fogera Plain has not yet expanded into other parts of the country, and rice self-sufficiency is continuously declining | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> APRA Working Paper 44: The Emerging Importance of Rice as a Strategic Crop in Ethiopia: https://bit.ly/37r31Wn | <p>MoA decided to have a stand-alone rice flagship program</p> <p>Rice is considered among five priority commodities in the new National Agricultural Investment Plan (2022–2030)</p> |
| Tanzania WS 1 | i. Rice commercialisation through intensification and area expansion has accelerated during the last ten years, contributing significantly to household income improvement, but intensification is more gender and age inclusive (working paper (WP) 30, WP 63, WP 34; APRA brief 23; various blogs) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> APRA Working Paper 30: Does Rice Commercialisation Impact on Livelihood? Experience From Mngeta in Kilombero District, Tanzania: https://bit.ly/3NPVSzM APRA Working Paper 63: Rice Commercialisation Effects in Mngeta, Kilombero District, Tanzania: Identifying the Underlying Factors: https://bit.ly/3JjroTo APRA Working Paper 66: Yield and Commercialisation Effects of SRI Interventions in Mngeta, Kilombero District, Tanzania: https://bit.ly/3x8NkOY APRA Brief 23: Does Rice Commercialisation in Mngeta, Kilombero, Tanzania Impact Livelihoods? https://bit.ly/3JjN2Xz APRA blog: How SRI Technology and Irrigation Has Transformed Anita's Life: https://bit.ly/38DkMTJ APRA blog: Herbicides: Opportunities and Challenges for Commercial Rice Production in Kilombero Valley: https://bit.ly/3uj6VtH | <p>Raised awareness among policy makers and stakeholders at national and local government level on commercialisation pathways and their implications on inclusion of women and youths, as well as medium and long-term environmental impacts</p> |

| APRA work stream (WS) | 1-3 'new knowledge' contributions | Include link to APRA publication(s) where the 'new knowledge' is described | Impact on policy/practice, if any – note here |
|-----------------------------|---|---|---|
| | <p>ii. Rice commercialisation has a strong poverty-reducing effect, and positive influence on food and nutrition security but, there are opportunities for improvement. . How income was spent determined livelihood improvement levels (WP 63; WP 37; APRA brief 25)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • APRA Working Paper 63: Rice Commercialisation Effects in Mngeta, Kilombero District, Tanzania: Identifying the Underlying Factors: https://bit.ly/3JjroTo • APRA Working Paper 37: Effects of Choice of Tillage Technology on Commercialisation and Livelihood of Smallholder Farmers in Mngeta Division, Kilombero District, Tanzania: https://bit.ly/3DS3o8D • APRA Brief 25: Does Rice Commercialisation Enhance or Impair Household Food Security Among Rice Producing Households in Mngeta Division, Kilombero District, Tanzania? https://bit.ly/3uZAuzw • APRA blog: Influence of Rice Commercialisation on Poverty Reductions Levels in Kilombero Valley, Tanzania: https://bit.ly/3Jjkz4f | <p>Raised awareness on the need to involve local communities to address cultural factors and norms to address factors that impede poverty reduction</p> |
| | <p>iii. Processors are natural value chain leaders to provide coordination among actors in rice value chain, but efforts to support them to consolidate that role in local and regional markets should also promote equity and efficiency along the chain. Such efforts should also ensure that processors improve the quality of processed products for sustained market demand (WP 74; Journal article – not online; various blogs)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • APRA Working Paper 74: The Role of Small-Scale Processors in Supporting Agricultural Commercialisation Among Smallholder Rice Farmers in East Africa: Lessons from Ethiopia and Tanzania: https://bit.ly/3ufJvVL • APRA blog: Political Economy of Rice Commercialisation in Tanzania: Socioeconomic Impact of Trade Policies, Strategies and Programmes: https://bit.ly/3jesAwH • APRA blog: Positioning Tanzania in the Regional Market for Rice: Lessons From the East Africa Rice Conference: https://bit.ly/3xaMD7p • APRA blog: Commercialisation of Quality Seeds Could Enhance Rice Yields in Tanzania: https://bit.ly/37uBQKE | <p>Ministry of Agriculture and Rice Council of Tanzania already working on strategies to develop rice varieties to meet the future needs of segmented rice markets (local and regional); the need for coordinated action at regional level discussed at East Africa Rice Conference in May 2021</p> |
| <p>Tanzania WS 2</p> | <p>i. There is need to enhance the competitiveness of domestic sunflower oil production through: improving sunflower yields (use of high-yielding seeds, fertiliser); promoting complementary relationship with livestock and improving sunflower processing technology (WP 49; WP 65; various blogs)</p> | | <p>Through engagement with policy makers, APRA research informed the Ministry of Agriculture on the need for improved seed development and distribution to farmers to enhance sunflower productivity, distribution of seed has already started this season 2021/22</p> |

| APRA work stream (WS) | 1-3 'new knowledge' contributions | Include link to APRA publication(s) where the 'new knowledge' is described | Impact on policy/practice, if any – note here |
|-----------------------|---|--|--|
| | ii. Sunflower commercialisation has improved livelihoods of most people but with social differentiation (WP 49; WP 59; WP 67; various blogs) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • APRA Working Paper 49: The Political Economy of Sunflower In Tanzania: A Case of Singida Region: https://bit.ly/3LKDOoS • APRA Working Paper 65: Livestock, Crop Commercialisation and Poverty Reduction Among Rural Households in the Singida Region, Tanzania: https://bit.ly/3uYOoIm • APRA blog: Sunflower Commercialisation in Tanzania: Everybody Benefits Bur With Social Difference: https://bit.ly/3xaX3Ee • APRA blog: Does Sunflower Commercialisation Empower Women in Singida, Tanzania? https://bit.ly/3uiOzss | Raised the need to support diversified livelihood options for better inclusion of women and youths |
| | iii. Sunflower commercialisation in Singida tells a story of enterprise diversification due to climate change adaptation and market dynamics. Thus, looking at sunflower in a systems dynamics perspective (WP 65; WP 67; WP 77; blog of 6/10/2021); | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • APRA Working Paper 65: Livestock, Crop Commercialisation and Poverty Reduction Among Rural Households in the Singida Region, Tanzania: https://bit.ly/3uYOoIm • APRA Working Paper 67: Sunflower Commercialisation in Singida Region: Pathways for Livelihood Improvement: https://bit.ly/3r71njG • APRA Working Paper 77: Commercialisation Pathways and Climate Change: The Case of Smallholder Farmers in Semi-Arid Tanzania: https://bit.ly/3v3plrN • APRA blog: Monocrop of Diversified Enterprise Portfolio? Lessons For Inclusive Commercialisation From Singida Region, Tanzania: https://bit.ly/3LJg708 • APRA blog: Precarious Prospects? Agricultural Commercialisation and Climate Change in Semi-Arid Tanzania: https://bit.ly/3r7SIOc | Raised awareness on the need to balance between efforts towards poverty reduction and ensuring sustainability of the fragile, semi-arid, natural resource base |
| Malawi WS 2 | Commercialisation is leading to male dominance in the households in terms of control of resources and income, decision making and ownership. In most cases, men misuse benefits from commercialisation through excessive beer drinking and extra-marital affairs. In cases where women try to participate more in markets, they are seen as rebellious and sometimes their marriages are shaken. Stability of marriage is an important factor for commercialisation at household level. Some women feel it is ok for men to take control, lead and make all the decisions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • APRA Working Paper 58: Understanding Gender and Social Differentiation in the Context of Agricultural Commercialisation and Implications for Livelihoods in Rural Malawi: https://bit.ly/3xeUtwK | There is need to promote targeted programmes for specific groups of farmers and women. There is need to promote women's agency, negotiation skills and dialogue between husbands and wives |

| APRA work stream (WS) | 1-3 'new knowledge' contributions | Include link to APRA publication(s) where the 'new knowledge' is described | Impact on policy/practice, if any – note here |
|-----------------------|---|---|---|
| Zimbabwe WS 1 | <p>Women plot managers have lower productivity in general. Further, gender bias in agricultural productivity is more pronounced in plots managed by females in male-headed households, underscoring the importance of distinguishing household types in gender analysis</p> <p>Cash crop commercialisation (tobacco based) leads to greater whole-farm input-use intensity compared to food-based commercialisation, resulting in better maize yields and hence, suggesting potential spillover effects from the tobacco crop</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> APRA Working Paper 32: Intra-household Gender Differentials in Smallholder Agriculture Productivity in Food and Non-food Crop Commercialisation Pathways: Evidence from Zimbabwe: https://bit.ly/35MXXeC APRA Working Paper 28: Agricultural Commercialisation Pathways, Input Use, and Crop Productivity: Evidence From Smallholder Farmers in Zimbabwe: https://bit.ly/3DMGiAe | <p>None yet</p> <p>None yet</p> |
| Zimbabwe WS2 | <p>Former farmworkers can now best be described as 'working people' due to the manner in which they now combine the sale of labour in farms, tilling their own pieces of land and participation in commodity trading</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Journal article: 'Agricultural Commercialisation and Changing Labour Regimes in Zimbabwe.' Journal of Contemporary African Studies: https://bit.ly/3E4zcHs | |
| | <p>COVID19 exposed extensive illicit tobacco trading and exportation to neighbouring countries</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> APRA Working Paper 55: COVID-19 and the Political Economy of Tobacco and Maize Commodity Circuits: Makoronyera, the 'Connected' and Agrarian Accumulation in Zimbabwe: https://bit.ly/3xboEFg | |
| | <p>There is a mismatch at the level of tobacco under contract farming recorded at farm level and national records</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> APRA Working Paper 55: COVID-19 and the Political Economy of Tobacco and Maize Commodity Circuits: Makoronyera, the 'Connected' and Agrarian Accumulation in Zimbabwe: https://bit.ly/3xboEFg | |
| Ghana WS1 | <p>i. Smallholders are highly responsive to market incentives; have higher than expected average commercialisation rates; yet 2 in every 5 of such households experience seasonal food insecurity</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> APRA Working Paper 43: Smallholder Farmers' Choice of Oil Palm Commercialisation Model and Household Welfare in South-Western Ghana: https://bit.ly/3uhVIPk | <p>None yet</p> |

| APRA work stream (WS) | 1-3 'new knowledge' contributions | Include link to APRA publication(s) where the 'new knowledge' is described | Impact on policy/practice, if any – note here |
|-----------------------|--|--|--|
| | ii. As pressure on land rises, commercialisation deepens intra-community inequality in places where land is vested in chiefs instead of family heads, as chiefs repossess land for sale unlawfully to wealthier migrants | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> APRA Working Paper 72: Land Tenure and Oil Palm Commercialisation: https://bit.ly/35OBMER | Raised awareness through district and community engagements for those affected by unlawful dispossessions to seek redress – first with higher traditional authorities and then government inattentions such as the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice |
| | 3. Gains in the oil palm sector have been short-lived due partly to the absence of policy institutionalisation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> APRA Working Paper 54: Political Economy of the Oil Palm Value Chain in Ghana: https://bit.ly/3x717oQ | Tree Crop Development Authority established and using APRA evidence to advocate for less direct government control over the running of the institution |
| Ghana WS 2 | Significant changes in land and labour relations in cocoa farming redefining the nature of cocoa commercialisation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> APRA Working Paper 73: Land and Labour Relations on Cocoa Farms in Sefwi, Ghana: Continuity and Change: https://bit.ly/3JeaTb3 | |
| | Increasing costs of production and scarcity of land lead to domination of cocoa by smallholders; higher yields on smaller plots; but also increasing marginal returns | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working Paper 31: Long-Term Change and Agricultural Commercialisation in Ghanaian Cocoa: https://bit.ly/3NT4OEq | |
| | The lack of working capital for most farmers is chronic, requiring innovative approaches to farmer financing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> APRA Working Paper 76: Long-Term Patterns of Change in the Commercialisation of Cocoa in Ghana: Forest Frontiers and Technological Transformation: https://bit.ly/3LKG1ka | |
| | Critical need to address disease and pest issues in agroecological and sustainable agricultural frameworks rather than focusing solely on yields and tree planting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> APRA Working Paper 31: Long-Term Change and Agricultural Commercialisation in Ghanaian Cocoa: https://bit.ly/3NT4OEq | |

| APRA work stream (WS) | 1-3 'new knowledge' contributions | Include link to APRA publication(s) where the 'new knowledge' is described | Impact on policy/practice, if any – note here |
|---|---|--|--|
| Nigeria WS 1 | i. Small-scale farms (0-5ha) are transitioning to medium scale (5-100ha). The rate of scale expansion could substantially increase with increase in access to land and credit facilities, reduction in conflicts and increased resilience to shocks from conflict and drought, especially for women and youth farmers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> APRA Working Paper 26: Changing Farm Structure and Agricultural Commercialisation in Nigeria: https://bit.ly/3DSiF9l APRA Working Paper 45: Role of Resilience Factors in Mitigating the Negative Effects of Conflicts on Land Expansion: https://bit.ly/3uiFobR APRA Working Paper 47: How Conflicts Affect Land Expansion by Smallholder Farmers: Evidence From Nigeria: https://bit.ly/3r82iAH | Raised awareness of stakeholders at community and national level on the importance of better functioning land and credit markets for increased agricultural commercialisation through stepping up of small-scale farms |
| | ii. Medium-scale farming is associated with increasing productivity as farm size increases. We observe this for farm sizes between 12 and 25ha among medium-scale farms that stepped up from small-scale, and for farm sizes above 25ha among medium-scale farms that stepped in directly | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Journal article: 'A revisit of farm size and productivity: Empirical evidence from a wide range of farm sizes in Nigeria.' World Development, Vol. 146. | Raised awareness of stakeholders at community and national level that encouraging scale expansion in the agricultural sector could, contrary to expectation, actually result in increasing productivity |
| | iii. Medium-scale farms in our study sample are promoting small-scale farmer productivity and welfare through improved management practices, and the opportunity to sell their outputs at more competitive prices | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> APRA Working Paper 38: Spillover Effects of Medium-Scale Farms on Smallholder Behaviour and Welfare: Evidence From Nigeria: https://bit.ly/3KvMmzy | Raised awareness of stakeholders at community and national level on how the growth of medium-scale farms could actual help increase commercialisation among small-scale farms |
| Mechanisation and agricultural commercialisation in Africa | Inadequate access to hired labour is a key constraint to market orientation among farm households. Increasing mechanisation would remove the hired labour access constraint on proportion of farmland allocated to crops produced primarily for the market | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> APRA Working Paper 41: Expanding Land Area Under Commercial Tree Crop Plantation in Nigeria: https://bit.ly/3DM1mac | https://foodfarmnews.blogspot.com/2020/09/expert-disagrees-with-fao-says-nigeria.html?m=1 ; The speaker is the current advisor to the Nigerian Federal Minister of Agriculture and also a member of APRA Advisory Board.; Also Another Member of the APRA Advisory Board and the Deputy National Coordinator of Rice Farmers Association of Nigeria (RIFAN) , Prince Dasaolu, is spearheading a tractor acquisition drive funded by RIFAN for rentage to RIFAN farmers across the south western part of Nigeria. |

| APRA work stream (WS) | 1-3 'new knowledge' contributions | Include link to APRA publication(s) where the 'new knowledge' is described | Impact on policy/practice, if any – note here |
|-----------------------------|---|--|---|
| Medium-scale farmers | Medium-scale farms of 5-100ha have, over the past 15 years, accounted for a rising share of national farmland, the value of farm production, and the value of crops sold off-farm in most African countries | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Journal article: 'Are medium-scale farms driving agricultural transformation in sub-Saharan Africa?', The Journal of the International Association of Agricultural Economists, 50: 75-95: https://bit.ly/3r8z2JZ | This work might be categorised as subject matter research rather than policy analysis designed to resolve a particular policy debate. However, there is at least anecdotal evidence that this work has shaped the perceptions of policy makers and development organisations regarding viable pathways of agricultural commercialisation and transformation. It has influenced the nature of policy discussions regarding land markets and their role in supporting ag commercialisation but not necessarily resulted in any specific policy changes to my knowledge. This work has also spawned much new research on medium-scale farms by African researchers, including in the APRA team, which is amplifying the effects of our initial APRA WS3 work on this topic |
| | Medium-scale farms are growing everywhere; their growth is concentrated in areas with substantial unutilised or under-utilised land. Densely populated rural areas generally are not experiencing rapid growth of medium-scale farms | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AgriLinks: Are Medium-Scale Farms Driving Agricultural Transformation in Africa? https://bit.ly/3O4OXTA | |
| | Medium-scale farms are influencing – in underappreciated ways – the pace of food systems transformation. The increased prevalence of medium-scale holdings is associated with farm labour productivity growth and underappreciated benefits to smallholder farmers. However, the rise of African-investor farmers is also contributing to the commodification of land, escalating land prices, and restricted land access for most local people. A better understanding of these trends and linkages, which requires new data collection activities, could help resolve long-standing policy debates and support strategies that accelerate agricultural transformation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Conversation: Medium-Scale Farms Are on the Rise in Africa. Why This is Good News: https://bit.ly/3Kov3k3 APRA blog: Are Medium-scale Farmers Driving Agricultural Transformation in Africa? https://bit.ly/3xb1Mps | |

Source: Author's own

ANNEX 2 – WORKING PAPER DOWNLOADS

| # | Working paper title | Downloads | | | |
|------|--|-----------|------|------|-------|
| | | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | Total |
| WP01 | Agricultural Growth Corridors on the Eastern Seaboard of Africa: an Overview | 201 | 126 | 282 | 609 |
| WP02 | Food Security, Nutrition and Commercialisation in sub-Saharan Africa – a Synthesis of Afrint Findings | 163 | 118 | 89 | 370 |
| WP03 | Pro-Poor Agricultural Growth – Village Dynamics and Commercialisation Pathways | 146 | 104 | 106 | 356 |
| WP04 | Gender and Rural Livelihoods: Agricultural Commercialisation and Farm Non-Farm Diversification | 171 | 98 | 133 | 402 |
| WP05 | APRA Policy Processes and Political Economy: Tanzania Country Review | 148 | 76 | 86 | 310 |
| WP06 | What is Agricultural Commercialisation, Why is it Important, and how do we Measure it? | 199 | 125 | 178 | 502 |
| WP07 | Agricultural Commercialisation: Lessons from Asia and Latin America | 171 | 108 | 81 | 360 |
| WP08 | Social Difference and Women's Empowerment in the Context of the Commercialisation of African Agriculture | 209 | 217 | 160 | 586 |
| WP09 | Agricultural Commercialisation Pathways Climate Change and Agriculture | 143 | 249 | 276 | 668 |
| WP10 | Partnerships, Platforms and Policies: Strengthening Farmer Capacity to Harness Technological Innovation for Agricultural Commercialisation | 169 | 117 | 100 | 386 |
| WP11 | Rural Transitions, Economies and Rural-Urban Links | 296 | 373 | 565 | 1234 |
| WP12 | The Political Economy of Agricultural Commercialisation in Zimbabwe | 274 | 135 | 186 | 595 |
| WP13 | Agricultural Growth Trends in Africa | 180 | 284 | 232 | 696 |
| WP14 | The Political Economy of Agricultural Commercialisation in Ethiopia: Discourses, Actors and Structural Impediments | 1101 | 485 | 488 | 2074 |
| WP15 | The Political Economy of Agricultural Commercialisation In Ghana: A Review | 120 | 145 | 244 | 509 |
| WP16 | The Political Economy of Agricultural Commercialisation in Africa | 177 | 194 | 335 | 706 |
| WP17 | The Political Economy of Agricultural Commercialisation in Malawi | 481 | 306 | 533 | 1320 |
| WP18 | A Historical Analysis of Rice Commercialisation in Ethiopia: the Case of the Fogera Plain | 1100 | 552 | 264 | 1916 |
| WP19 | Zinc Roof or Mango Tree? Tractors, Modernisation and Agrarian Transformation in Mozambique | 242 | 401 | 366 | 1009 |
| WP20 | Building Livelihoods: Young People and Agricultural Commercialisation in Africa: Ghana Country Study | 269 | 70 | 131 | 470 |
| WP21 | Tractors and Agrarian Transformation In Zimbabwe: Insights from Mvurwi | 939 | 995 | 882 | 2816 |
| WP22 | Tractors in Africa: Looking Behind the Technical Fix | 390 | 162 | 282 | 834 |
| WP23 | Mechanised Agriculture and Medium-Scale Farmers in Northern Ghana: a Success of Market Liberalism or a Product of a Longer History? | 266 | 148 | 121 | 535 |
| WP24 | Building Livelihoods: Young People and Agricultural Commercialisation: Tanzania Country Study | 188 | 69 | 59 | 316 |
| WP25 | Building Livelihoods: Young People and Agricultural Commercialisation in Africa: Zimbabwe Country Study | 175 | 139 | 165 | 479 |
| WP26 | Changing Farm Structure and Agricultural Commercialisation in Nigeria | 284 | 298 | 240 | 822 |
| WP27 | Divergent Terms of Market Integration of Agro-Pastoralists: Marketisation and Distress Selling of Livestock in South Omo, Ethiopia | | 193 | 607 | 800 |

| # | Working paper title | Downloads | | | |
|------|---|-----------|------|------|-------|
| | | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | Total |
| WP28 | Agricultural Commercialisation Pathways, Input Use, and Crop Productivity: Evidence from Smallholder Farmers in Zimbabwe | | 177 | 132 | 309 |
| WP29 | Political Economy of Agricultural Commercialisation in Nigeria | | 415 | 1633 | 2048 |
| WP30 | Does Rice Commercialisation Impact on Livelihood? Experience from Mngeta in Kilombero District, Tanzania | | 186 | 244 | 430 |
| WP31 | Long-Term Change And Agricultural Commercialisation In Ghanaian Cocoa | | 249 | 332 | 581 |
| WP32 | Intra-Household Gender Differentials in Smallholder Agriculture Productivity in Food And Non-Food Crop Commercialisation Pathways: Evidence From Zimbabwe | 114 | 72 | 186 | 668 |
| WP33 | Agribusiness Investment in Agricultural Commercialisation: Rethinking Policy Incentives in Africa | | 405 | 218 | 623 |
| WP34 | Does Rice Commercialisation Empower Women? Experience from Mngeta Division in Kilombero District, Tanzania | | 136 | 192 | 328 |
| WP35 | Agricultural Commercialisation in Northern Zimbabwe: Crises, Conjunctures and Contingencies, 1890-2020 | | 680 | 1076 | 1756 |
| WP36 | Small is Beautiful? Policy Choices and Outcomes for Agrarian Change for Resettled Farmers in Mvurwi District | | 322 | 201 | 523 |
| WP37 | Effect of Choice of Tillage Technology on Commercialisation and Livelihood of Smallholder Farmers in Mngeta Division, Kilombero District, Tanzania | | 56 | 119 | 175 |
| WP38 | Spillover Effects of Medium-Scale Farms on Smallholder Behaviour and Welfare: Evidence from Nigeria | | 52 | 102 | 154 |
| WP39 | Winners and Losers in Livestock Commercialisation in Northern Kenya | | 224 | 402 | 626 |
| WP40 | The Groundnuts Fairtrade Arrangement and its Spillover Effects on Agricultural Commercialisation and Household Welfare Outcomes: Empirical Evidence from Central Malawi | | 81 | 250 | 331 |
| WP41 | Expanding Land Area Under Commercial Tree Crop Plantation in Nigeria | | 103 | 130 | 233 |
| WP42 | Women Empowerment, Agriculture Commercialisation and gender relations: A value chain analysis, Mvurwi, Zimbabwe | | 53 | 528 | 581 |
| WP43 | Smallholder Farmers' Choice of Oil Palm Commercialisation Model and Household Welfare in South-western Ghana | | 75 | 173 | 248 |
| WP44 | The Emerging Importance of Rice as a Strategic Crop in Ethiopia | | 80 | 1092 | 1172 |
| WP45 | Role of Resilience Factors in Mitigating the Negative Effects of Conflict on Land Expansion | | 81 | 168 | 249 |
| WP46 | Drivers of Market-Oriented Land Use Decisions Among Farm Households in Nigeria | | 197 | 313 | 510 |
| WP47 | How Conflicts Affect Land Expansion by Smallholder Farmers: Evidence from Nigeria | | 76 | 140 | 216 |
| WP48 | The Political Economy of Land Use and Land Cover Change in Mvurwi Area Zimbabwe, 1984–2018 | | | 387 | 387 |
| WP49 | The Political Economy of Sunflower in Tanzania: A Case of Singida Region | | | 1048 | 1048 |
| WP50 | Determinants of Smallholder Farmers' Livelihood Trajectories: Evidence from Rural Malawi | | | 207 | 207 |
| WP51 | The Political Economy of the Rice Value Chain in Ethiopia: Actors, Performance, and Discourses | | | 317 | 317 |
| WP52 | Agricultural Commercialisation and the Political Economy of Cocoa and Rice Value Chains in Nigeria | | | 1008 | 1008 |
| WP53 | The Political Economy of the Cocoa Value Chain in Ghana | | | 255 | 255 |
| WP54 | Political Economy of the Oil Palm Value Chain in Ghana | | | 103 | 103 |
| WP55 | COVID-19 and the Political Economy of Tobacco and Maize Commodity Circuits: Makoronyera, the 'Connected' and Agrarian Accumulation in Zimbabwe | | 46 | 46 | 668 |
| WP56 | The Political Economy of the Groundnut Value Chain in Malawi: Its Re-Emergence Amidst Policy Chaos, Strategic Neglect, and Opportunism | | | 125 | 125 |

| # | Working paper title | Downloads | | | |
|------|---|-----------|------|------|-------|
| | | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | Total |
| WP57 | Agricultural Commercialisation and the Political Economy of Value Chains: Tanzania Rice Case Study | | | 83 | 83 |
| WP58 | Understanding Gender and Social Differentiation in the Context of Agricultural Commercialisation and Implications for Livelihoods in Rural Malawi | | | 102 | 102 |
| WP59 | The Influence of Sunflower Commercialisation and Diversity on Women's Empowerment: The Case of Iramba and Mkalama Districts, Singida Region | | | 117 | 117 |
| WP68 | Explaining the Weakness of Associational Life in Oil Palm Growing Communities in Southwestern Ghana | | | 58 | 58 |
| WP60 | The Political Economy of the Maize Value Chain in Nigeria | | | 262 | 262 |
| WP61 | Rice Commercialisation, Agrarian Change and Livelihood Trajectories: Transformations on the Fogera Plain of Ethiopia | | | 164 | 164 |
| WP62 | Agricultural Investment Corridors in Africa: Does Smallholder and Women's Participation Count? | | | 157 | 157 |
| WP63 | Rice Commercialisation Effects in Mngeta, Kilombero District, Tanzania: Identifying the Underlying Factors | | | 66 | 66 |
| WP64 | Commercial Tobacco Production and Climate Change Adaptation in Mazowe, Zimbabwe | | | 134 | 134 |
| WP65 | Livestock, Crop Commercialisation and Poverty Reduction Among Rural Households in the Singida Region, Tanzania | | | 1234 | 1234 |
| WP66 | Yield and Commercialisation Effects of SRI Interventions in Mngeta, Kilombero District, Tanzania | | | 68 | 68 |
| WP67 | Sunflower Commercialisation in Singida Region: Pathways for Livelihood Improvement | | | 68 | 68 |
| WP69 | Politics, Power and Social Differentiation in African Agricultural Value Chains: The Effects of COVID-19 | | | 154 | 154 |
| WP70 | The Rise of Medium-Scale Farms in the Northern Savannah of Ghana: Farmland Invasion or an Inclusive Commercialised Agricultural Revolution? | | | 82 | 82 |
| WP71 | The Drivers of Medium-Scale Farms and the Emerging Synergies and Contradictions Among Socially-Differentiated Farmers in Northern Ghana | | | 78 | 78 |
| WP72 | Land Tenure and Oil Palm Commercialisation | | | 24 | 24 |
| WP73 | Land and Labour Relations on Cocoa Farms in Sefwi, Ghana: Continuity and Change | | | 33 | 33 |
| WP74 | The Role of Small-Scale Processors in Supporting Agricultural Commercialisation Among Smallholder Rice Farmers in East Africa: Lessons from Ethiopia and Tanzania | | | 32 | 32 |
| WP75 | Agricultural Commercialisation and Rural Livelihoods in Malawi: A Historical and Contemporary Agrarian Inquiry | | | 50 | 50 |
| WP76 | Long-Term Patterns of Change in the Commercialisation of Cocoa in Ghana: Forest Frontiers and Technological Transformation | | | 10 | 10 |
| WP77 | Commercialisation Pathways and Climate Change: The Case of Smallholder Farmers in Semi-Arid Tanzania | | | 49 | 49 |

Source: Author's own

ANNEX 3 – APRA JOURNAL ARTICLES



| Date | Article | | Key message | Downloads | Citations |
|------|--|--------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|-----------|
| WS3 | Mechanisation | | | | |
| 1/21 | The resurgence of agricultural mechanisation in Ethiopia, Seife Ayele | The Journal of Peasant Studies | Argues for the development of a market for mechanisation, including mechanisation service provision through private and cooperative agents, to enhance smallholder access to mechanisation and unleash human energy | 1,654 | 1 |
| 1/21 | Tractors, states, markets and agrarian change in Africa, Lídia Cabral and Kojo Amanor | The Journal of Peasant Studies | Public-private partnerships for mechanisation services illustrate how private interests shape public policy. Top-down tractor programmes continue to largely bypass smallholder farmers, though some are able to benefit. Though tractors are only one element of a complex story of agrarian change in Africa, they illustrate the enduring process of commodification of land, farming and agrarian relations that benefits the few and subjugates the many | 722. 67 percentile in altmetric score | 0 |
| 1/21 | Old tractors, new policies and induced technological transformation: agricultural mechanisation, class formation, and market liberalisation in Ghana Kojo Amanor | The Journal of Peasant Studies | Questions the thesis that the recent uptake of mechanisation and emergence of medium-scale farmers reflects the successes of market liberalisation. Links agricultural transformation to processes of social differentiation and the historical role of the state in promoting agricultural commercialisation | 900. 57 percentile altmetric score | 0 |
| 1/21 | Of zinc roofs and mango trees: tractors, the state and agrarian dualism in Mozambique Lídia Cabral | The Journal of Peasant Studies | The state's push for mechanisation feeds uneven patterns of accumulation and social differentiation | 843 | 2 |
| 1/21 | The politics of mechanisation in Zimbabwe: tractors, accumulation and agrarian change, Toendepi Shonhe | The Journal of Peasant | Larger, richer and well-connected farmers draw on patronage networks to access tractors and accumulate further. Some small- to medium-scale farmers generate surpluses and invest in tractors or pay for services. Thus, accumulation from above and below feeds social differentiation | 1,108. In top 25% altmetric | 0 |

| Date | Article | | Key message | Downloads | Citations |
|-------|---|--|---|---|-------------------------------|
| | Youth | | | | |
| 5/20 | Hard work and hazard: young people and agricultural commercialisation in Africa, James Sumberg and Youth Theme colleagues | Journal of Rural Studies | Family and broader social relations are key in enabling young people to access the needed resources in the form of land, capital, and inputs to begin their ventures. Challenges assumption on land and training constraints and value addition engagement. Preventative social protection and formal education important | 84 captures | 15 |
| | Medium-scale farmers | | | | |
| 2/21 | Medium-scale commercial agriculture in Zimbabwe: the experience of A2 resettlement farms, Toendepi Shonhe, Ian Scoones, Felix Murimbarimba, | Journal of Modern African Studies | Examines social differentiation of medium-scale farmers, identifies ability to mobilise finance and political patronage as key drivers. Challenges existing narrative that these farms are occupied by 'cronies', are unproductive and under-utilised with a more differentiated picture | HTML 2,118, PDF 444. Tweeted by 7 in Zim, 5 in RSA and 1 in UK. In top 5% altmetric attention score | 4 |
| 7/18 | Medium-scale commercial farms in Africa: the experience of the 'native purchase areas' in Zimbabwe, July 2018, Ian Scoones, | Africa | The much-hyped policy vision of a new medium-scale commercial farm sector emerging in Africa therefore must be qualified, and divergent outcomes recognised. Pathways of commercialisation are diverse and unpredictable, influenced by interlocking conjunctures of social dynamics, generational changes and political-economic conditions. Commercialisation outcomes are dependent on the intersection of relational dynamics and more structural, political economy factors. Bursts of commercialisation on these farms are contingent on access to employment by farm owners, labour (hired, squatters and offspring) and, perhaps above all, money to invest | HTML 549, PDF 778. Top 25% altmetric attention score | 2 X 2 News paper (Zimbabwean) |
| 12/19 | Are Medium-Scale Farms Driving Agricultural Transformation in Sub-Saharan Africa? Accepted Oct 2019, Thomas Jayne and MSF Theme | Agricultural Economics | Medium-scale farms can be a dynamic driver of agricultural transformation, but this does not reduce the importance of maintaining a clear commitment to supporting smallholder farms. Increased share in crop production in Nigeria, Tanzania and Zambia, | In top 25% of altmetric attention score. 17 tweets | 22 |
| 3/19 | Revisiting the Farm Size-Productivity Relationship Based on a Relatively Wide Range of Farm Sizes: Evidence from Kenya, Thomas Jayne and Milu Muyanga | American Journal of Agricultural Economics | Finds three measures of productivity to be higher for farms of 20-70ha than <5ha. For maize reasons due to mechanisation and increased use of inputs | In top 5% of altmetric attention. | 30 |

| Date | Article | | Key message | Downloads | Citations |
|------------|--|-------------------------------------|--|---|-----------------------|
| 3/20 | Demonstration fields', anticipation, and contestation: agrarian change and the political economy of development corridors in Eastern Africa, by Ngala Chome, Euclides Gonçalves, Ian Scoones & Emmanuel Sulle. | Journal of Eastern African Studies | Shows how top-down grand-modernist plans are shaped by local dynamics, in a process that results in the transformation of corridors, from exclusivist 'tunnel' visions, to more networked corridors embedded in local economies, and shaped by the realities of rural Eastern Africa | 2078 views. In top 25% of altmetric attention score. | 11 citations |
| 3/20 | Bureaucrats, investors and smallholders: contesting land rights and agro-commercialisation in the Southern agricultural growth corridor of Tanzania, by Emmanuel Sulle | Journal of Eastern African Studies | From 3 case studies in SAGOT - argues that SAGCOT's grand modernist vision of the corridor, centred on the promotion of large-scale estates, has unravelled through contestations and negotiations on the ground. | 2468 views, In top 25% of altmetric attention score. Tweeted by 9 in Tanzania and 6 in RSA out of 34. | 12 citations |
| 3/20 | Land, livelihoods and belonging: negotiating change and anticipating LAPSET in Kenya's Lamu county, by Ngala Chome | Journal of Eastern African Studies | Based on common perceptions about land and ethnicity, and how these are intertwined with the politics of belonging and redistribution, these realities exemplify complex economies of anticipation – through which networks of patronage, alliance, and mobilization are being created or entrenched in advance of major investments. This article argues that it is these anticipations – more than official designs – that will determine the future direction of LAPSET, especially in respect to who will get what, when and how, within its promised prosperous future. | 3328 views, In top 5% of altmetric attention score. 3/22 tweets from Kenya. | 11 citations |
| 3/20 | Agricultural corridors as 'demonstration fields': infrastructure, fairs and associations along the Beira and Nacala corridors of Mozambique by Euclides Gonçalves | Journal of Eastern African Studies | Argues that agricultural corridors emerge on those occasions when international funders and investors, national elites, local bureaucrats and smallholders overstate the success of agricultural projects – demonstration fields. | 1849 views, In top 25% of altmetric attention score. 8 tweets. | |
| WS2 | Zimbabwe | | Longitudinal commercialisation pathways | | |
| 8/19 | Young People and Land in Zimbabwe: Livelihood Challenges After Land Reform, Ian Scoones, Blasio Mavedzenge and Felix Murimbarimba | Review of African Political Economy | Major challenges to social reproduction are highlighted, reflected in an extended 'waithood', while some opportunities for accumulation are observed, notably in intensive agricultural production and agriculture-linked business enterprises. The implications of generational transfer of land, assets and livelihood opportunities are discussed in the context of Zimbabwe's agrarian reform. | 597 views on the journal site | 13 citations, 2 blogs |

| Date | Article | | Key message | Downloads | Citations |
|-------|--|--|---|--|---------------|
| 8/19 | Irrigating Zimbabwe After Land Reform: The Potential of Farmer-Led Systems, Ian Scoones, Felix Murimbarimba and Jacob Mahenehene | Water Alternatives | Argues that farmer-led irrigation offers a complementary way forward to the current emphasis on formal schemes, although challenges of water access, environmental management and equity are highlighted. | No metrics on WA.RG – 542n reads. Interest in top 82%. | 12 |
| 8/19 | The Agrarian Question in Contemporary Zimbabwe Toendepi Shohne. | Africanus: Journal of Development Studies, Published | Even though export finance, accessed through contract farming, provides an impetus for export cash crop production, and the government-mediated command agriculture supports food crop production, the reinvestment of proceeds from the sale of agricultural commodities is now driving capital accumulation. | 79 | None supplied |
| 10/19 | Land reform and new meaning of rural development in Zimbabwe, Toendepi Shohne | IPADA Articles (Univ. of Limpopo) | Concludes that rural development has been reshaped in line with the new land use patterns in rural Zimbabwe. Private indigenous agrarian capital and the demands of the smallholder farmers undergird rural development as opposed to public investment and large-scale commercial farming capital of the past. | None supplied | None supplied |
| 12/20 | Small Towns and Land Reform in Zimbabwe. Scoones, I., Murimbarimba, | F. Eur J Dev Res | Highlight the importance of networks and social relationships between rural and urban areas, linked to new patterns of migration and a massive growth in the informal economy. Despite the lack of state investment in basic infrastructure, the economies of these small towns have grown significantly, with a major shift in agrarian relations generating new economic activity and employment. This suggests the potential of a territorial focus for local economic development following land reform, encompassing both urban and rural areas. | 3564. In top 92% | 3 |
| 8/21 | Agricultural commercialisation and changing labour regimes in Zimbabwe, Shohne, T. Scoones, I. and Murimbarimba, F | Journal of Contemporary African Studies, | Highlights the diversification of livelihoods. The old pattern of wage-employed, permanent farmworkers is increasingly rare, as autonomous, flexible combinations of wage work, farming and a range of entrepreneurial and informal activities emerge. Without a captive, resident workforce, commercial agriculture must mobilise labour in new ways, | Open docs – no info on downloads. In top 25% of altmetric attention score. 2 articles in Zimbabwean. | No Info. |

| Date | Article | | Key message | Downloads | Citations |
|------------|--|----------------------------|--|---|-----------|
| 22 | Private and state-led contract farming in Zimbabwe: Accumulation, social differentiation and rural politics. Shonhe, T., and Scoones, I. | Journal of Agrarian Change | Contract farming in Zimbabwe is highly dependent on the contingent, politically mediated processes of social differentiation influenced by the state, through the regulation of private sector arrangements and the establishment of a state-led contracting programme. The state-led programme boosted maize production amongst medium-scale farmers and resulted in an embedding of patronage relations. Meanwhile, the private-led contract farming has supported a widespread boom of tobacco production, mainly amongst smallholders | No information. Above average attention score. 2 citations. 6 tweets. | No info. |
| WS1 | | | | | |
| 7/21 | Insights into smallholder capacity for agricultural commercialisation: Evidence from four African contexts. Saha, A., Sabates-Wheeler, R. and Thompson, J. | Eur J Dev Res | Applying asset-based thresholds captures commercialisation 'capacity' – an indicator of the household's commercialisation potential and ability to respond to risks. Despite the possibility to increase commercialisation as well as institutional arrangements that may reduce risk, such as contract farming, benefits from linkages with medium-scale farmers or returns from specific crop types, found that households may yet be constrained by lower capacity. Hence, the need for targeted support for those at the margins and with limited assets | 689 access. 81st percentile. 12 Tweets. | 0 |

Source: Author's own

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