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APRA brochure: Ethiopia



Agricultural Policy Research in Africa

The Agricultural Policy Research in Africa (APRA) programme is a five-year research consortium that is working to **identify the most effective pathways to agricultural commercialisation** that empower women, reduce rural poverty, and improve food and nutrition security in sub-Saharan Africa.

What is agricultural commercialisation?

We define commercialisation as a process occurring when farmers increasingly engage with the market, either to procure inputs and resources (such as fertiliser, seeds, hired labour, formal credit, rented land), or to process and sell their produce. Commercialisation may occur through either external investment or market specialisation and farm consolidation, or a combination of the two.

Commercialisation is successful if more people are *'stepping up'*, *'stepping out'* and *'stepping in'*, and fewer people are *'hanging in'* or *'dropping out'* of productive agriculture.

What will APRA do?

APRA researchers are examining how African farmers engage with four different types of commercial agriculture (estate/plantation, medium-scale commercial agriculture, contract farming, smallholder commercialisation) and the effects this has on the livelihoods of rural people, particularly women and young people. The aim is to help inform future policy and investment decisions to promote more inclusive forms of agricultural commercialisation in sub-Saharan Africa.

APRA's goals

- Generate high-quality evidence on pathways to agricultural commercialisation in Africa.
- Undertake policy research on agricultural commercialisation to fill key evidence gaps and define policy options.
- Ensure the sharing and uptake of research by a diverse range of stakeholders.
- Strengthen the capacity of the research team, and associated partner institutions, to deliver high-quality research and advice.

Analysing five livelihood trajectories through agricultural commercialisation

1. *'Stepping in'* – returning/moving into commercial agriculture from a non-farm base; rise of medium-scale farmers.
2. *'Stepping out'* – accumulating, diversifying and creating alternative, non-farm economic activities.
3. *'Stepping up'* – improving and investing in existing agricultural activities.
4. *'Hanging in'* – maintaining subsistence level.
5. *'Dropping out'* – moving away or slipping into destitution due to shocks and stresses.



APRA in Ethiopia

APRA is working in Ethiopia (as one of its focus countries) to conduct quantitative and qualitative research to:

1. **Explore the long-term dynamics of agrarian change** to examine how different pathways to rice commercialisation and agrarian changes have evolved over time and how these pathways influence people's livelihood trajectories in the Fogera plain of Ethiopia;
2. **Assess key policy issues** associated with changing patterns of agricultural commercialisation through:
 - a. **An analysis of policy incentives for business investment in agricultural commercialisation in Ethiopia;**
 - b. **An analysis of livestock marketing and the political economy in pastoralist areas of Ethiopia.**

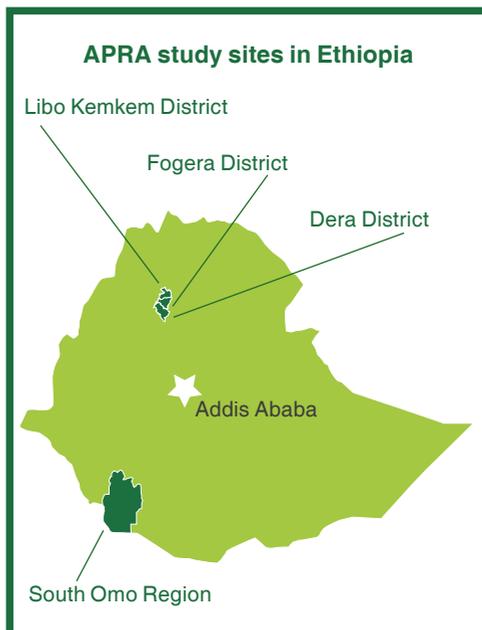


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Analysis of livelihood trajectories of households participating in rice commercialisation in Ethiopia

Research objective

This study will analyse the different livelihood trajectories focusing on smallholder commercialisation pathways in rice in the Dera, Fogera and Libo Kemkem districts in the Fogera plain, i.e. who are stepping out, stepping up, handing on and dropping out.

Study questions

- What have been the historical trends of rice commercialisation and its association with the agrarian changes observed?
- What are the political-economic factors that have affected the development of pathways to commercialisation over time?
- What have been the livelihood dynamics of rice-producing households following different commercialisation pathways?
- How has rice commercialisation in the Fogera plain contributed to agrarian change, and impacted rural transformation?

Methodology

- i. In order to generate the required data to answer the stated study questions, a combination of research approaches will be employed, including:
 - a. Qualitative survey with actors in the rice value chain, including farmers, processors, extension workers, and local traders;
 - b. Questionnaire-based survey with about 720 randomly selected rice producers from the Dera, Fogera and Libo Kemkem districts of the Fogera plain; and
 - c. Questionnaire-based formal survey with approximately 100 rice processors in the Fogera plain.
- ii. The primary data to be generated through the above approaches will be augmented with secondary data from available sources (Central Statistic Agency, local government offices, cooperatives, etc).

Research contact

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Trends, drivers and social implications of early livestock commercialisation in Ethiopia

Research objective

This study aims to describe recent livestock commercialisation trends in Ethiopia's South Omo region, an area experiencing new large-scale agricultural investments alongside sedentarisation and expanding livestock marketing by pastoralists. The study intends to analyse the drivers and political economy of early-stage livestock commercialisation, as well as its impact on rural transformation.

Study questions

- What are the drivers pushing pastoralists in South Omo to engage in livestock marketing? Who are the major traders and other actors associated with early commercialisation?
- How does longer exposure to livestock markets and increasing integration with wider markets influence pastoral production systems in the region? What elements of social difference (gender, age, ethnicity, migration status) explain differentiated impacts?
- Which markets are most relevant to women and poorer producers, and why?
- How do different actors, such as government, the private sector and aid programmes, initiate market development or control markets (at different scales), and through what means?

Methodology

- i. The research questions will be addressed using a case study approach, involving both qualitative and participatory action research techniques, complemented with an analysis of official livestock market statistics over time and other secondary data;
- ii. Extensive key informant interviews will be conducted, from community levels in South Omo through to senior policymakers in regional organisations – notably the African Union and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development;
- iii. The research will draw on the networks of Tufts University and the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) in the region, and will engage livestock traders, brokers, local government officials and aid practitioners in Ethiopia and Kenya.

Research contacts

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An analysis of policy incentives for business investment in agricultural commercialisation in Ethiopia

Research objective

This study aims to explore the effectiveness of policies designed to incentivise business investment in African agriculture (policy intent and impact, value chain structures, as well as the political economy of these processes). The study will be conducted in three countries: Ethiopia, Ghana and Malawi.

Study questions

- Which investment policies and incentive schemes successfully influence business investment in African agriculture?
- Which commercialisation pathways have emerged as a result of the investment incentivised by policy?

Methodology

- i. The research will use both primary and secondary data. The primary data will be collected mainly through qualitative surveys using key informant interviews, including with leaders/managers of medium and large agricultural enterprises, officials and experts dealing with investment promotion at different levels;
- ii. The secondary data will be collected from relevant institutions in Ethiopia (Ministry of Trade, Ethiopian Investment Agency, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Resources, etc.) on selected policies/instruments intended to incentivise investment in agricultural businesses. In addition, secondary data from selected medium and large commercial farms will be collected.

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APRA builds on more than a decade of research and policy engagement work by the Future Agricultures Consortium (www.future-agricultures.org).

