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APRA brochure: Kenya



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 Kenya

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

1. **Examine how investment corridors are reshaping agricultural commercialisation pathways** and rural livelihoods, looking at what the impacts have been – and for whom;
2. **Analyse the political economy of changing livestock marketing and trade** in northern Kenya.

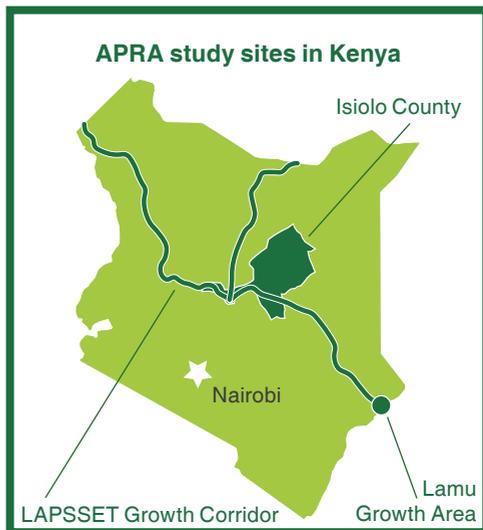


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Investigating the political economy of changing livestock marketing and trade in northern Kenya

Research objective

This study aims to describe recent livestock commercialisation trends in and around Isiolo, an emerging hub for northern Kenya that is experiencing rapid growth fuelled by outside investments as well as local elites. The study intends to analyse the drivers and political economy of livestock commercialisation, as well as its impact on rural transformation.

Study questions

- What are the drivers pushing pastoralists in Isiolo 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 the 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 analysis of official livestock market statistics over time and other secondary data;
- ii. Extensive key informant interviews will be conducted from community levels 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, Ethiopia and the Institute of Development Studies, UK in the region, and will engage livestock traders, brokers, local government officials and aid practitioners in northern Kenya.

Research contact

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Investigating how investment corridors are reshaping agricultural commercialisation pathways and rural livelihoods in Kenya – and with what impacts for whom

Research objective

This study explores the political economy of investment corridors across four countries: Kenya – Lamu Port, South Sudan, Ethiopia Transport Corridor (LAPSSET); Mozambique – The Logistics Integrated Corridor of Nacala (CLN) and Beira Agricultural Growth Corridor (BAGC); and Tanzania – Southern Agricultural Growth Corridor of Tanzania (SAGCOT).

Study questions

- In the four corridors across the three study countries, what has been the history and timeline to their development?
- What difference do investment corridors make to commercialisation pathways in particular places?
- How do government/private sector alliances reshape the local political dynamics and influence land access, markets and livelihoods?

Methodology

- i. Explore changes to livelihoods and social economics, for example, through a qualitative assessment, which will include interviews with actors involved in investment corridor development, i.e. government members, NGOs, businesses and donors;
- ii. Explore the commodities (both illegal and formal; export-oriented and not) and people (as labour, migrants, etc.) that flow along each of the four corridors, and look at who controls this flow.

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Funded by UK Aid from the UK government, APRA will run until 2021. The consortium – which draws on expertise in sub-Saharan Africa, Sweden, the UK and USA – is based at the Institute of Development Studies (IDS), UK, and has regional hubs at the Centre for African Bio-Entrepreneurship (CABE), Kenya, the Institute for Poverty, Land and Agrarian Studies (PLAAS), South Africa, and the University of Ghana.

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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).

