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APRA brochure: Nigeria



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 Nigeria

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

1. **Document the pace at which farm size distributions are changing in Nigeria**, with particular focus on the rise of medium-scale farms and their influence on agricultural commercialisation;
2. **Characterise the potentially diverse pathways by which individuals become commercialised medium-scale farmers**;
3. **Explore whether medium-scale farms are making small-scale farmers more productive and commercialised**;
4. **Examine the outcomes of various agricultural commercialisation pathways**;
5. **Assess the causes and consequences of changing farm size distributions.**



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Agrarian change and commercialisation in the Nigerian cocoa sector

Research objective

This study will explore the historical pathways and dynamics of change in cocoa production, in Osun, Ogun and Ondo States of Nigeria. It will examine different livelihood trajectories with relation to employment, nutrition, poverty, gender relations and women's empowerment.

Study questions

- To what extent are there different patterns of development in cocoa, in different areas and over time, and what accounts for these?
- What are the origins of investments and the nature of capital accumulation in the cocoa sector?
- How does the decline of forest frontier land affect the cocoa sector and investments in cocoa?
- How have the economy and livelihoods changed in relation to cocoa?
- What impact does cocoa cultivation have on food crop cultivation, and on relations between those who cultivate both food crops and cocoa (and other cash crops) within the same household?
- What political-economic factors have shaped the cocoa sector?
- How have state and non-state interventions influenced cocoa commercialisation pathways?
- How have changing gender roles influenced livelihood outcomes?
- What are the differential impacts on income, food security and nutrition, poverty and women's empowerment?

Methodology

- i. The research will be carried out in two phases in Osun, Ogun and Ondo States. There will be an extensive review of the development of the cocoa economy over time using literature reviews, archival studies, key person's interviews, an evaluation of past studies and surveys, etc. This will be followed by qualitative and quantitative formal surveys;
- ii. Emphasis is placed on qualitative data collection, which will inform the quantitative survey and the final qualitative survey.

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Causes and consequences of changing farm sizes in Nigeria

Research objective

This study will assess the rate of farmland expansion by medium- and large-scale farms in two states of Nigeria, and the impacts of this expansion on youth employment and migration patterns as well as the development of markets for land, labour, and other agricultural inputs and commodities markets.

Study questions

- Does the increased acquisition of farmland by local investor farmers contribute to land scarcity and accelerate out-migration from densely populated rural areas?
- Does increased land acquisition by medium- and large-scale farms give rise to greater informal wage employment among landless people?
- Is the rise of commercialised medium-scale farms – with greater surplus production – attracting new investment in grain markets that influence market access for local smallholders?

Methodology

- i. Primary data will be collected from the farming households of six local government authorities in Kaduna and Ogun States – three from each state;
- ii. The fieldwork has been conducted in two phases; the first is a complete listing of all medium-scale farms and holdings in the surveyed areas. The second is a survey of a random sample of the population lists;
- iii. In the second phase, about 1,000 smallholders and 1,000 medium and large farms will be systematically sampled for interviews to be carried out in March-April 2018.

Research contacts

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How are medium-scale farms influencing the productivity and welfare of small-scale farmers?

Research objective

This study assesses how medium-scale investor farmers in Ogun and Kaduna States are influencing the behaviour and welfare of surrounding smallholder households.

Study questions

- Are land acquisitions by investor farmers displacing or constraining access to land by youth and other local people?
- Are new land acquisitions by investor farmers attracting providers of agricultural inputs and services that offer new employment opportunities and improve market access for local small-scale farmers?
- What is the net effect of local investor farmers on the productivity and commercialisation of small-scale farming households?

Methodology

- i. Individuals within households will be surveyed at two or more points in time over the project period to monitor changes in their livelihoods. We utilise other survey information and spatial information linked to GIS databases to identify the influence of various commercialisation schemes on individuals' behaviour and welfare;
- ii. Qualitative and key informant surveys will also be employed to contextualise the findings from statistical analysis.

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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).

