



INTERNATIONAL FOOD
POLICY RESEARCH INSTITUTE
sustainable solutions for ending hunger and poverty
Supported by the CGIAR

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ASARECA and WECARD/CORAF

Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa (ASARECA), and West and Central African Council for Agricultural Research and Development (WECARD)/CORAF.

Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) remains the only region of the world where food insecurity and malnutrition are growing. It is estimated that 50-60 percent of the countries will fail to achieve the hunger and poverty targets of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

SSA policymakers have been called on to allocate more resources and to design strategies to accelerate agricultural growth in order to meet the poverty and hunger MDG. However, regional groups and developing countries face numerous challenges when designing these strategies, such as determining the sectoral and regional growth priorities and levels of investment needed to achieve desired growth and poverty targets, mobilizing the required resources, and deciding how to efficiently allocate and use those resources across a wide portfolio of potential investments. Designing an effective development strategy—a highly complex task—must be tailored to local conditions and needs, embrace the interests of a diverse group of stakeholders, and be flexible and dynamic so as to accommodate refinements in its design and objectives as socioeconomic and political conditions change over time.

The Strategic Analysis and Knowledge Support System (SAKSS) program of the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) has been specifically established to address this task. SAKSS is a collaborative network that compiles, analyzes, and disseminates data, information, and tools to help design, implement, monitor, and evaluate rural development strategies to achieve economic growth and poverty reduction. Three regional SAKSS (ReSAKSS) nodes have been established in East Africa, southern Africa, and West Africa in collaboration with Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) partner centers and regional economic communities in the region (ASARECA, COMESA, SADC, and ECOWAS). To this end, for each node, networks of individuals and organizations are being estab-

lished to bring together the data sources, knowledge, analytical approaches, and tools that will help shape country and regional agricultural strategies. Integral to this, the nodal activities are promoting greater collaborative research and analysis within the networks to strengthen national capacities and transfer tools.

IFPRI has collaborated with ASARECA and WECARD to develop and adopt comprehensive regional research strategies. The research results submitted to both regional organizations were incorporated into their strategy documents for the two regions. Such research was used by regional stakeholders in the development of strategic options and priorities for future research and development investments at both the national and regional levels. Moreover, the results on the linkages among different growth options and levels of poverty reduction have significantly contributed to policy debates on development strategy priorities, both within the international community and in some of the countries in which the studies have been conducted.

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