

Global Forum on Agriculture

Rome, 12-13 November 2007

Key messages

General considerations

- Poverty is still a distinctive feature of most the farming communities in SSA
- Poverty is the human condition of millions of Africans
- Tailored effective policies are needed

What is the role of agriculture in rural development and poverty reduction?

- WDR states special power of agriculture in promoting growth and poverty reduction is a fact
- Recent performance of agriculture has been remarkable
- Opportunities for the development of agriculture look brighter; rise of commodity prices
- Development of the wider rural economy is key in reducing poverty in rural areas

How can ODA and public investments for agriculture can be most effective?

- Public resources should address local realities and matched with the development of national institutions
- Need to focus of provision of public goods like infrastructure, R&D, provision of extension through demand driven approaches
- New financing instruments for better performance of agricultural projects (PPP, remittances, use of CC opportunities, direct financing to local institutions, risk insurance)
- Financing private institutions: farmers organisations, agribusiness, other private sectors stakeholders

What kind of trade and agriculture policies are best suited to enhance the sector's contribution to overall development and poverty reduction?

- Negative impact of OECD policies on SSA countries and their agriculture: reduce OECD subsidies
- ODA commitments not met: need to boost AID FOR TRADE & build supply side response of SSA farming systems
- Agriculture in SSA is still taxed albeit less than in the 80s (tariffs, export taxes and price controls)
- Priority to develop domestic and regional markets
- Liberalisation is not a SILVER BULLET: need for ...
 - Enabling industry policies and the need for sequencing for opening up SSA markets (development of trade blocks first, building supply side response, liberalising SSA trade following OECD actual liberalisation)
 - Need for instruments tailored to specific realities, livelihoods, and commodities
- What sequencing?

Some findings from case studies

- Need to focus on capacity building and empowering process of both public and private institutions and stakeholders;
- Need to strengthen monitoring tools and analytical resources (data, human capital...)
- Empowering policy dialogue and processes for farmers, rural poor and women
- Need to build ownership by Government, civil society, private sector including farmer organizations, and other country partners

In conclusion, the I's

- Institutions and policies,
- Investments,
- Incentives and
- Innovations