

# Agricultural Development and Food Security in sub-Saharan Africa

## Agricultural Development as Strategic Option for Achieving Food Security in SSA

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# Growth, Food Security and Poverty

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- growth is necessary but not sufficient to alleviate poverty and improve food security
  - it does lift out of poverty, especially in long-run
  - it is required for long-term sustainability
  - but distribution of the wealth generated by growth matters
- food insecurity is a result, a component and a cause of poverty. Immediate and specific measures are required.
- raising the income of the poor is the best way to improve their food security

# Growth, Food Security and Poverty: Empirical Links

- FAO Study (2001) demonstrates that:

*without undernourishment, GDP/caput in Africa would be US\$2200 per annum instead of US\$800!*

- Alderman *et al.*, (1996), Croppenstedt & Muller (2000), Strauss (1986), Thomas & Strauss (1997):

*negative impact of poor nutrition on productivity/ wages.*

- A study by Morrissey, Mbabazi & Milner (2002) shows:

*an inverse relationship between economic inequality and growth across developing countries.*

# Agriculture for poverty reduction

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A review of experience shows that, for growth to have poverty reducing effects, resources need to be allocated to:

- sectors in which the poor work
- areas where the poor live
- factors of production the poor possess (labour)
- outputs which the poor consume (food)

**AGRICULTURE MEETS THESE CRITERIA!**

# But can agriculture be a growth-engine?

Yes, depending on structure of agricultural growth and economic linkages (multiplier effects):

- *generating surplus for: (i) investment in agriculture & other sectors; (ii) steady release of labour for other sectors*
- *increases food availability & export earnings*
- *provides for stable supply & low prices of food, contributes to competitiveness of other sectors*
- *generates income & demand for local goods/ services*

*(Mellor 1986 and Timmer 1988)*

# What would the alternatives be?

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- development of exports, particularly of manufactured goods for the more advanced countries
- invest in urban areas to generate income that will also boost demand for agricultural products
- development of mining, tourism... and agriculture for the less advanced countries

# Agriculture only?

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No, of course not.

To develop, agriculture needs the development of:

- health services
- sanitary environment and safe water
- education
- infrastructure
- rural economy (services & trade, processing, etc),

# Conclusion

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- # food insecurity is a result and a factor of poverty
- # immediate measures are required to alleviate hunger
- # growth must be pro-poor, and agriculture satisfies the criteria for pro-poor growth
- # agriculture can also be a growth-engine, in the initial stage
- # rural development should be concomitant with agriculture development
- # with time, diversification should occur into non-agricultural activities