

CMAAE Newsletter

COLLABORATIVE MASTERS OF SCIENCE IN AGRICULTURAL AND APPLIED ECONOMICS ISSUE No. 14, September 2009

Dear Readers,

I take this opportunity to welcome you once again to our 14th edition of the CMAAE electronic newsletters. We really appreciate for your feedbacks and comments on the CMAAE Programme. It is encouraging to note the increasing interest in the Programme from those outside our region of coverage, Francophone countries and outside of the African Continent. This attest to the increased demand the program has drawn. In this edition, we highlight some of the main achievements the CMAAE Network has witnessed in the reporting period. In this regard, events such the Agriculture for Development Conference in Mombasa, Kenya and the International Association of Agricultural Economists Conference in Beijing cannot go unmentioned. The continued successful implementation of the program has not been without hurdles. However, our ability to view every hurdle as an opportunity to learn something new has ensured we maintain the frontier in providing relevant and quality training in agricultural and applied economics. I hope that you will find this newsletter very interesting and informative.



Willis Oluoch-Kosura (Program Director)

Main highlights

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ACBF Independent review

ACBF, one of the program donors commissioned a review of the CMAAE implementation progress since inception. The review was done in May and June 2009. The mid-term evaluation covered management of the program, progress made in achieving program objectives and potential impact of program outputs. The consultant hired for the assignment held consultation with a broad spectrum of all stakeholders (teaching faculty, students, CMAAE Secretariat and employers of graduates from the program). The CMAAE management would like to thank all those who took part in this important exercise by way of discussions with the consultant.

The recommendations of the review report will go along way in helping the program improve on its operations to better serve the region.



Prof. Willis Oluoch-Kosura (Program Director), Ms Emmy Wade (ACBF) and Prof. George Abalu (Mid-term review consultant) during the launch of the ACBF independent review process

IBE technical workshop for non-accredited departments

After a successful IBE technical workshop for the accredited departments in January 2009, a similar workshop was organized for the CMAAE non-accredited departments. The workshop was held in May 2009 at the University of Pretoria. The purpose of the workshop was to develop a common understanding amongst participants on how to deliver the Institutional and Behavioural Economics (IBE) curriculum and course. By the end of the workshop, all participants were able to internalize the delivery of the IBE curriculum. The workshop was successful, with all participants invited turning up for the workshop. The resource persons for this training were Prof. Johann Kirsten, Dr. John Mburu and Colin Poulton.

Shared Facility for Specialization and Electives (SFSE) 2009 Launch

The 2009 Shared Facility for Specialization and Electives (SFSE) was launched at the University of Pretoria South Africa in August 2009. All students and lecturers arrived in time and were well prepared for the course. The 2009 SFSE recorded the highest number of students since inception, with the students totalling 78 in number. The third semester will run from August to end of November 2009. As part of the orientation activities for the visiting students, Prof. Per Pinstrup-Andersen gave an orientation seminar to the students and the staff with a more focused talk to students who elected the Agricultural Policy and Trade option. The Programme would like to thank Prof. Pinstrup-Andersen first for taking time out of his busy schedule to come to grace the now institutionalized SFSE Orientation Seminar for 2009 and secondly for donating textbooks and CDs on case studies in food policy for developing countries. These books have been received by the secretariat and will be distributed to the participating universities for use by the students accordingly. The books address real policy situations and problems in developing countries and as such will be very useful for CMAAE students, especially those taking the Agricultural Policy and Trade option. While at the SFSE, the students will benefit from a number of seminar series, field visits and lecture talks from guest speakers. The students are also expected to prepare and present their research proposals and will be assisted by the program lecturers to refine their concept notes/proposals.

While at the SFSE all the students will undertake a foundation course within their specialized fields of study, as well as two electives within or outside their fields. All students with the exception of those from Universities of Zimbabwe and Pretoria will not undertake the Institutional and Behavioural Economics (IBE) course as is the norm. This is due to the decentralization of IBE to mother



CMAAE Students follow proceedings during the launch of SFSE 2009 at the University of Pretoria.

universities where it was taught in the second semester. An important feature of the SFSE is its ability to bring together students from varying backgrounds together. It is at the SFSE that students get the opportunity to improve on their research proposals through the graduate seminars held every Friday afternoon, where lecturers and other students attend and make contributions.



CMAAE students share a light moment with the Programme Director during the SFSE 2009 launch break.

Agriculture for Development Conference in Mombasa, Kenya

The Agriculture for Development Conference was organized by AERC/CMAAE in collaboration with University of California at Berkeley, with support from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the Ford Foundation. The conference, that preceded the AERC Biannual Workshop attracted participants from all over the world and was graced by Kenya's Deputy Director of Agriculture in charge of Policy and External Relations, Ms Anne Onyango.

This conference was a follow-up on the World Development Report 2008 on Agriculture for Development. The objective was to present research on the competitiveness of smallholder farming in Sub-Saharan Africa in the current global context for agriculture and rural development, and to explore avenues for future research. It is remarkable that out of the 100 submissions of papers for competitive selection of 12 papers, three were from research associated with the CMAAE Network.

The papers presented at the conference have been recommended for a special issue of the African Journal of Agricultural and Resource Economics (AfJARE) the Journal of the African Association of Agricultural Economists



Participants follow proceedings during the Mombasa Agriculture for Development Conference in May 2009

IAAE Conference in Beijing

After the historical Olympic Games of 2008 in Beijing, the city was left to Agricultural Economists. In August 2009, all roads led to Beijing for the International Association of Agricultural Economists (IAAE) triennial Conference. IAAE is a worldwide confederation of agricultural economists and other professionals concerned with agricultural economic problems, including problems related to the use of renewable resources and the environment. Its broad goal is to make a difference through: Fostering the application of agricultural economics principles to improve rural economic and social conditions; Advancing knowledge of agriculture's economic organization; Facilitating communication and information exchange among those concerned with rural welfare. The IAAE conference is held every three years. The theme of the Beijing Conference was "The New

Landscape of Global Agriculture". About 1000 delegates participated at the meeting.



Conference participants during one of the agricultural tours

CMAAE Program Director honoured

During the IAAE Beijing conference, the CMAAE Program Director was one of the Agricultural Economists awarded a **Honorary Life Membership** in recognition of his outstanding service to IAAE and its objectives. The CMAAE Network and the entire agricultural economics fraternity takes this opportunity to congratulate the Program Director for this exemplary achievement.

CMAAE Showcasing event in Beijing

The program had a showcasing event in Beijing where stakeholders from various backgrounds were invited to participate. The PD gave a presentation on CMAAE and its contribution to the agricultural economics field through capacity building initiatives. The meeting was attended by representatives from the donor community, universities,

research institutions, public and other private sector players, and CMAAE network members. During the showcasing event, the participants gave very encouraging feedback about the CMAAE Program and its prospects for scaling out to other parts of the Africa.



(L) Program Director makes a presentation during the showcasing event, (R) participants follow the presentation at the event

CMAAE Network members at the conference

It is remarkable that five of the CMAAE students managed to have their papers emanating from their theses research accepted for presentation at the conference. Similarly four of the faculty members associated with the CMAAE Network were identified to chair sessions at the conference. To add to this achievement, its worth mentioning that the overall Conference Program, which was hailed as one of the best, was organized by the Vice President, Professor Johann Kirsten, one of our own. The CMAAE network would like to congratulate Johann for this remarkable success.

Grantee Dinner with DFID, BMGF

During the month of June 2009, the CMAAE through the Program Director was invited to a grantee dinner hosted by the Alliance for Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) at the Serena Hotel, Nairobi. During the event, the Program Director was invited to make a presentation on the important role of CMAAE in building intellectual capacity in African agricultural training and research. The event further served an important role of showcasing CMAAE to the other potential donors who could be brought in board to support the noble course of the program.

Introducing the Association of African Agricultural Professionals in the Diaspora (AAPD)

The Association of African Agricultural Professionals in the Diaspora (AAPD) is a new organization with a mission to strengthen human and institutional capacity for African agricultural RET institutions and build strong linkages between these institutions and counterpart institutions worldwide, starting in the US and Canada. Specifically, AAPD will help catalyze Africa's agricultural transformation by facilitating agricultural information and technology exchange; encouraging public-private RET investment and collaboration; and advancing agricultural policy dialogue that enhances smallholder farmer productivity and rural business development. African professionals in the Diaspora are increasingly recognized globally for their skills asset, financial resource transfer and impact, and better understanding of Africa's development opportunities that are transformational and sustainable. Like Indians and Chinese, many African professionals are ready to give back and partner with institutions in the continent, and AAPD will lead in harnessing their skills, resources and networks for Africa's development.

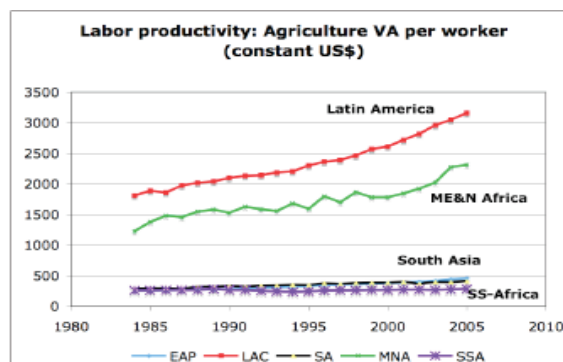
Focus on African Agriculture

The agriculture-based countries have, by definition, a high share of total poverty in the rural sector and a high share of GDP growth originating in agriculture, the latter fundamentally because agriculture accounts for a large share of GDP. They include all the SS-Africa countries else than South Africa as a transforming country and some mineral-rich countries. In these countries, agriculture has multiple functions for their development in helping trigger growth at early stages, reduce poverty, increase food security, equalize gender status, reduce rural-urban income disparities, conserve resources, and provide environmental services.

Inconvenient facts about the Comparative performance of SSA

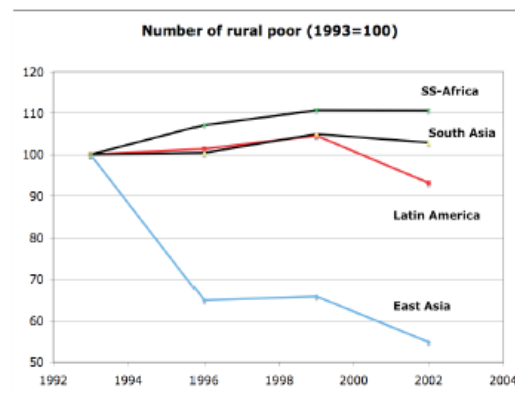
Agricultural growth in SS-Africa has been lagging relative to other regions of the world, especially in value added per capita (Figure 1).

Similarly, there has been lack of progress in labor productivity in agriculture, when labour productivity gains are essential for poverty reduction in the farming population (Figure 3).



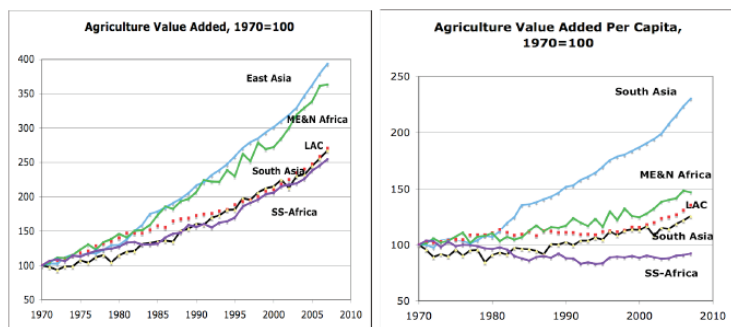
The intense displacement of the labor force out of agriculture that has been experienced in SSA has not been associated with growth in GDP per capita, resulting in truncated structural transformations compared to normal patterns of growth as observed cross-sectionally and in East and South Asia.

Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire, Cameroon, and South Africa are illustrative of large scale labor displacements out of agriculture without GDP per capita growth. China shows the opposite pattern with rapid GDP per capita growth but delayed official transfers of labor out of agriculture. As a consequence, rural poverty has been persistent, with an actual absolute increase in the number of rural poor (Figure 4), and 70% of the poor remaining rural.

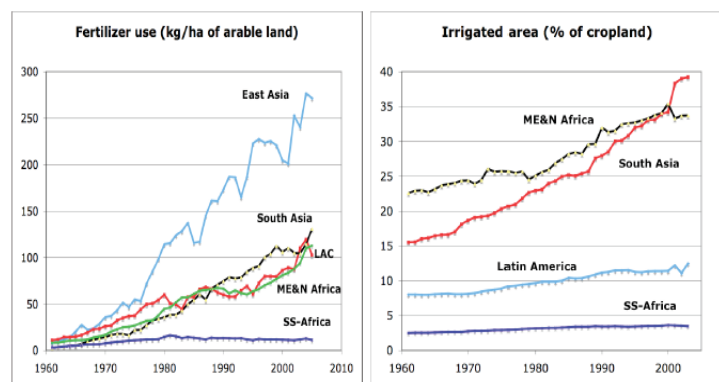


Relative to population growth, land and labor productivity gains in the recent period have not been associated with a reduction in rural poverty, again compared to what productivity growth has achieved in South Asia and especially East Asia.

Adopted from the introductory paper presented by Prof. Alain de Janvry during the AERC/CMAAE Agriculture for Development Conference in Mombasa, Kenya in May 2009.



Unlike in East and South Asia where rising yields were the main source of growth, in SS-Africa area expansion has been the main source of output growth in cereal production. However, more than in most other parts of the world, rising land scarcity has become a stark reality for SS-Africa, compromising reliance on area expansion as a future source of growth, and calling for emulation of the Latin American growth reversal (area expansion was initially the main source of growth but gave way to rising yields). Accelerated growth thus requires, and will increasingly require, gains in land productivity that have to this date not materialized at an aggregate level, i.e., a “Green Revolution” for Africa. Two important reasons for lack of progress in land productivity are continued low adoption of chemical fertilizers and lack of expansion of area under irrigation (Figure 2).



CMAAE and the MDG # 8: Developing a Global partnership for development



In order to achieve reasonable development especially in the developing countries, there is need for collective responsibility by various countries in collaboration with the development partners. The success of the MDGs will require greater international

cooperation and assistance by the industrial countries. While much will depend on the actions of developing countries and on the policy frameworks they have in place, the support of the international community is critical. This is particularly so for most Africa countries—that faces serious resource constraints and enormous challenges in meeting the MDGs. CMAAE currently involves 12 countries in Eastern, Central and Southern Africa and consist of 16 participating departments (of agricultural economics) across the region.

The program was therefore founded on the basis of co-operation by the respective departments of the various universities involved. Over the last few years, since its implementation began, the program has been making partnership arrangements - with other stakeholders including governments, private sector, NGOs and Research Institutes so as to ensure the relevance of the program to their needs. Through collective responsibility and partnerships in training professionals in the region to spearhead agricultural and economic development, the program automatically makes available a range of benefits for the participating countries and respective program partners. These benefits include access to human capital, infrastructure necessary for training and research, and exchange of new ideas and teaching methods. As acknowledged widely, institutional failure is a major contributor to the slow pace of development and, extreme poverty and hunger in Africa. The program is therefore offering training to all the students in *Institutional and Behavioural Economics* in order to improve on governance.

Students Corner



I learned of the CMAAE program through the internet when I was working with Aga Khan Agency for Microfinance at which time I was engrossed with the challenges most of the program clients were facing. Most of the clients we were serving were engaged in Agriculture and agriculture-related entrepreneurial ventures. Thus knowledge of agricultural economics is a neces-

sity to enable one to advice the said clients on how best to allocate the credit advanced to them and how to market

their products. Although microfinance is generally viewed

as a vital tool to take the small scale entrepreneurs out of their liquidity constrained situations, it is worth noting that the said service in itself though necessary, is not sufficient. There is thus the need for the organizational skill to enhance the proper and optimal allocation and utilization of factors of production. The CMAAE course is thus enhancing the said organizational skill by bringing in to the traditional/classical economics the dynamism of the real economic situations facing the production units (firms). The course in itself appreciates the various phenomena that affect the environment in which production takes place as well as

equip one with the fundamental skills of the various areas of specialization provided in the program. It thus goes without saying that given the dynamic nature of the program, there is need for diverse expertise on the trainers which the program has provided for in a remarkable way. The resources in the shared facility is also enhancing and the bringing together of students from the participating African countries though diverse in certain aspects creates a common front for the articulation of aspects facing economic development of the said countries.

I would thus recommend the course to all persons participating in the economic development irrespective of their areas of specialization. This is supported by the fact that my first degree which is in education and work experience in accounting profession could not make the course irrelevant to me. Infact it brought in the missing link between my classical economic theories and the reality of the dynamic economic situations facing those engaged in economic production activities.

Jackson K Langat, C/o Agricultural and Agribusiness Management Department,

Egerton University, Kenya

Other Communications

PEC and Academic Board meetings and workshop

The Academic Board meeting is scheduled for 5th October 2009 at the University of Pretoria while the PEC meeting is scheduled for 7-8 October 2009 at the same venue.

On October 6 and 7, the Program has planned for a technical workshop on Living Standards Measurement Studies (LSMS) to be facilitated by the World Bank. This workshop will serve to give exposure to the Heads of department of the CMAAE Network before the technical (retooling) workshop for the staff from the respective departments who will make use of the dataset or collaborate with the LSMS team in Africa sometime in February 2010.

IBE Book release

The Institutional and Behavioural Economics Book entitled Institutional Economics Perspectives on African Agricultural Development is now available. Three copies of the book have been contributed to all participating departments for use by the students and staff. Additional copies are available at a cost of about USD 25 per copy. Contact the Secretariat for further information.

CMAAE-AGROCURI technical workshop

The CMAAE in collaboration with the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) and International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) are planning a technical workshop on the Agricultural Open Curriculum and Learning Initiative (AGROCURI), focusing on Agribusiness Management curriculum open delivery system from October 12 -16 in Nairobi. All the CMAAE participating departments will be required to nominate one person from the department to attend the workshop. The participants will get exposure to the initiative and will be expected to subsequently implement the methods of the curriculum delivery in their respective home institutions. The participants are expected to be those handling the Agribusiness related courses in the respective departments and with some basic computer skills.

For further information, please email us at cmaae@aercafrica.org

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