



CSD-16: Side Event

THEME: Enhancing the Economic Value of Dryland Areas Through Sustainable Agricultural Practices

TOPIC: Improving the Links between Farming and Research Communities in Southern African Drylands

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LINKING FAMERS & RESEARCHERS

The WHAT and the HOW!

- **Research:** "any systematic effort to increase the stock of knowledge"
- **Policy:** a "purposive course of action followed by an actor or set of actors"

"Policy research on African agriculture is long on prescriptions for what needs to be done – but short on how..." (Omamo, 2004)



Challenges in southern African R&D

- **Complexity:** co-existence of different policy objectives *i.e.* economic growth, social welfare and natural resource conservation.
- **Regional Integration-** poor institutional arrangements
- **Diversity:** various groups in socio-political systems, poor targeting.
- **Funding:** poorly funded, understaffed public institutions
- **Research priorities:** academic pursuit, no monitoring of impact, no think tanks
- **Policy-** link between research and policy makers is poor

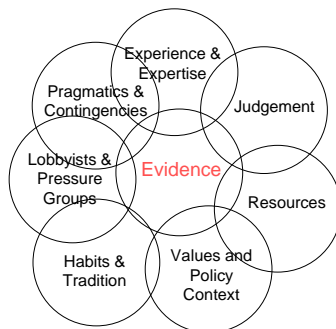
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R&D Challenges in Dry areas

- **Governance:**
 - infrastructure
 - incentives-risk mitigation, rewards for good practices
 - information on environment
- **Socio-political systems** –diverse livelihoods, limited asset base, poverty trap, HIV and AIDS
- **Economic opportunities-**limited, risky opportunistic behaviour
- **Researchers** located away from Target clients.

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Holistic approach to promoting research uptake



Adapted Phil Davies Impact to Insight Meeting, ODI, 2005

Research-Farmer Links-Entry Points?

- Agenda Setting
- Design
- Geographical focus
- Capacity of specific stakeholder groups to influence research process
- Link to Farmers livelihoods
 - Human
 - Social Networks
 - Physical assets
 - Financial assets
 - Natural Assets

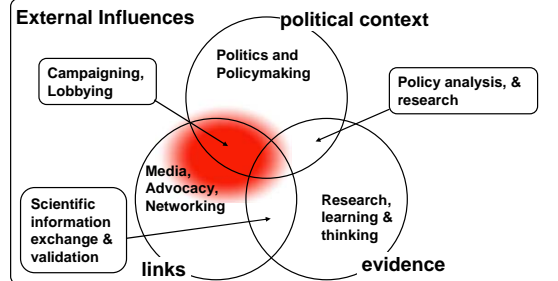


Capacitating Researchers

- Retooling the Researchers to view research as learning, embrace Innovation systems approach to development generate evidence relevant to development needs package evidence to attract policy makers
- Effective communication with farmers Combining conventional media/ICT to facilitate participation and engagement Media work: development of materials and relationships From information management to knowledge management

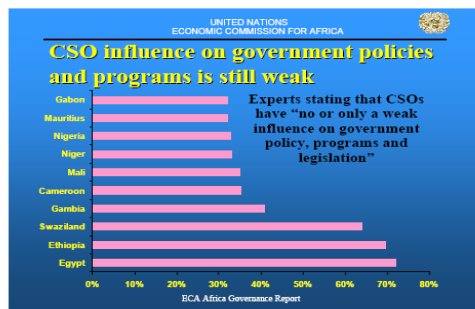
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A Multi-stakeholder Framework for promoting R&D



Source: The Rapid Framework: Research and Policy in Development Programme Briefing Paper No1, October 2004

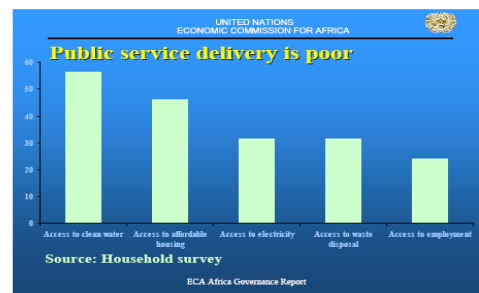
CSO Influence



Experts stating that CSOs have "no or only a weak influence on government policy, programs and legislation"

ECA Africa Governance Report

Public Service Delivery



Source: Household survey

ECA Africa Governance Report

Recommendations

- Tools for Farmers and Researchers to talk to and listen to each other
- Investment in tools and processes of technology transfer
- Strong Farmer organisations with strong leadership
- Documentation and scaling up of good practices at national and regional level
- Increased and consistent Funding for R&D
- Enabling Policy Environment

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Capacitating Researchers

- Funding for Research and Development**
- Researchers Psyche**
 - Learning by experimenting, from experts (farmers, other researchers)
 - re-tooling to embrace Innovation systems approach
 - generate evidence relevant to farmer needs
- Effective communication with farmers**
 - Combining conventional media/ICT to facilitate participation and engagement
 - Information management to knowledge management
- Linking research to the whole value chain**
inputs-productivity-agro-processing-wholesaling-retailing

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Capacitating Farmers

- **Capacity to demand space in research processes**
- **Capacity to document and communicate experiences**
Combining conventional media/ICT to facilitate participation and engagement
From information management to knowledge management
- **Capacity to evaluate research outputs and provide feedback, reward good researchers**
- **Demand a share of the national research budget**

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AN Enabling Environment & Action by Rural Community in Southern African Drylands: WHAT TO HOW

POSSIBLE TOOLS & Lessons

1. **Theatre for Community Action**-Zimbabwe
2. **Village Knowledge Centres**-Swaminathan Foundation, India
3. **Farmer Commissioned R&D**-Uganda
4. **Multi-stakeholder policy networks**-FANRPAN

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Policy Networks

- Invest in Regional and national multi-stakeholder networks
- Promote platforms for policy dialogue –African Oral Culture
- Sharing knowledge interaction with policy makers
- Promote Innovation Systems Approach -Cultivate and promote interactions between research, knowledge use and policy development -