IS AGRICULTURE A BUSINESS OR A SOCIAL ACTIVITY?

AN ASSESSMENT OF THE US FEED THE FUTURE INITIATIVE IN HAITI (AND ELSEWHERE)

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ORIGINS OF FEED THE FUTURE
FOOD PRICE SPIKE OF 2007-08

- Maize
- Wheat
- Rice
- Oil (right scale)
PROTESTS, VIOLENCE, & REGIME CHANGE

• Protests over more expensive food in at least 60 countries in both the Global South & North
• Sometimes violent
• Collapse of Alexis government in Haiti
GLOBAL POLICY RESPONSE

- Increased aid to agriculture in developing countries seen as key in medium- and long-term


- G8 L’Aquila Food Security Initiative
  - US pledge of $3.5 billion in aid to agriculture, became Presidential Feed the Future Initiative (FtF)
A QUANTUM BREAK FROM THE PAST

Past aid to agriculture based on monetized food aid

- Procure food in US
- Transport on US-flagged vessels
- Sell in recipient country markets
  - Try not to undercut local farmers
- Use proceeds to support local agricultural development

FtF provides direct cash resources for ag
KEY FTF PRINCIPLES

• Ownership
  • Paris Principles of Aid Effectiveness (2005)
  • Country Investment and Implementation Plans

• Inclusivity
  • Inclusive agriculture sector growth
  • Women’s Empowerment
  • Broad partnerships and participation

• Sustainable results
STUDY SITES & RESEARCH METHODS

- Five study countries
  - Haiti
  - Ethiopia
  - Ghana
  - Senegal
  - Tanzania

- Qualitative research methods
  - Aimed at understanding process
  - 125 key informant interviews
  - 69 focus group interviews with male and female farmers

- Research supported by Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
DATA: HAITI

• Assessment of Watershed Initiative for National Natural Environmental Resources (WINNER) Project
  • Data collected March, June, & July 2013
  • Did not look at more recent FtF AVANSE project in Northern Haiti

• 12 focus group interviews with men and women farmers in Western Haiti

• 40 key informant interviews in Haiti and Washington, DC

• WINNER focuses on both food and export crops
  • Rice, corn, beans, plantains
  • Mangoes
  • Watershed rehabilitation
# DATA ELSEWHERE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Data collection period</th>
<th>Focus of intervention</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>Sept 2013 – Jan 2014</td>
<td>Wheat, teff, livestock value chains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>June/July, September 2014</td>
<td>Rice &amp; horticulture value chains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senegal</td>
<td>April/May, July 2012</td>
<td>Climate change adaptation; natural resource management; productivity; access to markets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanzania</td>
<td>February/March, May–early July 2013</td>
<td>Rice, maize, horticulture crops</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

• Ownership
  • Alignment with national agricultural plans
    • Use of country systems
    • Donor coordination
  • Interactions and stakeholders involved
    • Stakeholder engagement in program design
    • Beneficiary engagement in implementation

• Inclusivity
  • Food security model
  • Beneficiaries
  • Gender equity & women’s empowerment
USE OF COUNTRY SYSTEMS

• All study countries have medium-term agricultural development plans
• Haiti’s National Agricultural Investment Plan (PNIA) heavily influenced by donors
• In Haiti, “Beltway Bandits” remain prime contractors
• Haiti lacks a strong donor coordination platform
  • In contrast with Ethiopia, Ghana, & Tanzania
  • Does have *tables sectorales* at Department level
• Project orientation
  • Can undercut national strategic plans
  • Little direct budget support provided to local institutions or development agents in any of the countries
INTERACTIONS & STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED

• Prior consultation pre-implementation (Haiti)
  • Some consultation with MARNDR & Department-level officials
  • Little-to-no engagement with BACs or CASECs
  • Zero involvement of beneficiaries in program design

• Farmers participate only in implementation (Haiti)
  • Put choices into place from pre-cooked menu
  • Not seen as partners in strategic priority setting
  • Does not mean projects do not meet needs
  • Many low-income farmers welcome any support
  • Weak beneficiary feedback mechanisms

• Consistent with findings in other study countries
FOOD SECURITY MODEL

• Increased production in high-potential areas
  • Artibonite Valley the focus in Haiti

• Areas with high numbers of poor and hungry people not targeted
  • Ghana the exception

• Market-oriented approach (all study countries)
  • Focus on potential commercial farmers
  • Poor, but not the poorest of the poor
  • “We want to make them see agriculture as a business, not a social activity”—US official on FtF objective in Haiti

• Key goal across countries: reduce consumer prices
BENEFICIARIES

• All farmers in project villages invited to participate
• No minimum land holding or level of education
  • In Haiti, “master farmer” candidates must be literate
• Participation via groups
  • In Haiti, mainly existing associations & cooperatives
• Training in marketable skills
  • Tractor operators
  • Greenhouses
  • Input store management
PRODUCTIVITY GAINS

- Increased productivity in all study countries, including Haiti
- Mix of high-external input & agroecological approaches
  - System of Rice Intensification in Haiti
- High-input the default in all five countries
- Questions of sustainability
  - Do gains continue in the absence of FtF resources?
  - Master farmer extension approach in Haiti particularly problematic
  - Ministry of Environment not engaged to ensure sustainability of watershed rehabilitation
EMPOWERING WOMEN?
EMPOWERING WOMEN? (2)

- Significant number of women beneficiaries in all study countries
  - Some all-women participating farmer groups in Haiti
  - But few mixed-gender associations had female leaders
- WINNER lacked up-front gender strategy
- In Haiti, most training resources (73%) went to men
- USAID-supported tools on women’s empowerment not used for M&E in Haiti
  - Gender research (Alexis Gardella)
  - Women’s Economic Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI)
CONCLUSIONS

• Ownership
  • FtF generally well-aligned with national plans in all study countries
  • Virtually no stakeholder participation in program design
  • Projectized approach does not build institutional capacity

• Inclusivity
  • Focus on intensification in high-potential areas & ready-for-market farmers tends to be exclusionary
  • Main food-security pathway is indirect
CONCLUSIONS (2)

• To answer the business vs. social activity question:
  • Agriculture is still the #1 employer in Haiti, engaging 57% of the labor force in 2014
  • Official social safety nets remain weak and underdeveloped
  • 600,000 people (6% of all Haitians) left the earthquake zone for rural Haiti in 2010
• Impossible and undesirable to separate these two agricultural functions in Haiti
RECOMMENDATIONS

• Broaden stakeholder engagement in all phases of program, including design, implementation, & evaluation
  • Can enhance sustainability of results
  • Treat farmer groups as active citizens, not just program implementers
  • Improve feedback mechanisms
• Greater focus on less-favored areas and more marginalized farmers for direct impact on poverty and hunger
• Better integrate gender empowerment tools like WEAI into programming (promised for AVANSE) and develop ex ante gender strategy
• Farmer field schools instead of master farmers (done for AVANSE)
• Provide direct budget support to local institutions