Africa’s Evolving Food Systems: Drivers of change and the scope for influencing them

T.S. Jayne, Lulama Traub, Ferdinand Meyer, Milu Muyanga, Jordan Chamberlin, Chance Kabaghe

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Four major trends
Trend #1

The “Youth Bulge”
Motivating fact: looming employment challenge in SSA

Age pyramid: rural SSA, 2015

62% < 25 years old
Jobs by sector, Sub-Saharan Africa

Source: World Bank (Filmer and Fox), 2014
Jobs by sector, Sub-Saharan Africa

Source: World Bank (Filmer and Fox), 2014
Trend #2

Rising global interest in Africa’s arable land
Nine countries contain 90% of Africa’s unutilized arable land

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Non-forested unutilized land(^1) (million ha)</th>
<th>Proportion</th>
<th>Cumulative Proportion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DRC</td>
<td>84.8</td>
<td>46.5%</td>
<td>46.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angola</td>
<td>18.9</td>
<td>10.4%</td>
<td>56.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congo</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>63.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zambia</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td>69.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cameroon</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
<td>75.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mozambique</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
<td>80.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAR</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
<td>84.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gabon</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>88.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sudan</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
<td>91.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rest of Africa (n=45)</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
<td></td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• Anticipate:
  – Rising land prices
  – Greater use of land-saving farm technologies (e.g., fertilizer, high-yield seeds, irrigation)

• Meteoric rise of medium-scale farms

• Question: is rapid land acquisition by medium/large farms foreclosing smallholder-based agricultural development?
Trend #3

Land degradation in smallholder farming areas
Agricultural intensification in Kenya

Figure 4: Net crop income per hectare cultivated
Note: Zone IIa is a relatively high-potential zone suitable for intensive maize production.
Trend #4

Urbanization

- 7 of 10 fastest growing economics are in Africa
- rise of an African middle class, etc...
Share of SSA’s imported processed and high-value food products from outside Africa

Source: ITC Trade Map, 2014
Food Demand Outstripping Production in Africa

High-Value Commodity Production and Consumption Change (2011/13 to 2023)

Cereal Production and Consumption Change (2011/13 to 2023)
Production in Asia

High-Value Commodity Production and Consumption Change
(2011/13 to 2023)

Cereal Production and Consumption Change
(2011/13 to 2023)
Production in Latin America

High-Value Commodity Production and Consumption Change (2011/13 to 2023)

- Sugar
- Vegetable Oil
- Beef
- Poultry
- Dairy

Cereal Production and Consumption Change (2011/13 to 2023)

- Coarse Grains
- Rice
- Wheat

Production (MT)

Consumption (MT)
The Americas are increasingly the largest net exporters

Billions of Constant $2004-06


Asia
Africa
Oth. Dev.
W. Europe
E. Europe&C. Asia
Dev. Oceania
N. America
Lat. Am.&Car.

Note: Agriculture and fish products included in the Outlook
Major message:

- Don’t accept all these “megatrends” as inevitable
  - Some trends are highly uncertain, being dependent on the time path of other trends
  - Policy can influence the trajectories of some of them / others less so
Recognize that agriculture can’t achieve economic transformation on its own

- Non-farm sectors must also create employment
- What does this mean? Increase investment in:
  1. education (including African-based policy analysis units)
  2. Agricultural R&D, agricultural extension, programs to restore long-term soil fertility
  3. Physical infrastructure to reduce the costs of production in both industry and agriculture and promote employment
  4. industrial policy -- promote private investment and job growth in local non-farm sectors, which simultaneously stimulates investment in local agri-food systems
Take-away messages

• Anticipate the ‘mega-trends’
• Consider how policy can ‘bend’ the trends
• Recognize that agriculture can’t do it all alone

• Consider agricultural, poverty reduction, and employment objectives in a coordinated manner