

***HIV/AIDS and New Agricultural
Strategies for sub-Saharan Africa***

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HSRC RESEARCH OUTPUTS
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The impact of HIV/AIDS on agriculture has been known for some time:

- HIV/AIDS has decimated sub-Saharan Africa's agricultural labour force – and will continue to do so
- HIV/AIDS is depleting the region of food producers and farmers,
- HIV reduces the productive capacity of the rural poor,
- HIV/AIDS limits their ability to buy agricultural inputs,
- HIV/AIDS generates a spiral of acute poverty, and
- HIV/AIDS reduces the time spent on maintaining agricultural infrastructure - as it hinders the medium and long-term sustainability of agriculture.

Objectives

- Review what is known about smaller-holders' efforts and strategies to adapt to the conditions caused by HIV/AIDS
- Review previous work on agricultural policies/strategies related to HIV/AIDS,
- Review regional HIV/AIDS-oriented programmes and interventions,
- Identify promising developments in terms of new agricultural strategies, and
- Propose a research agenda for policy analysis.

The basic methodology of the paper was:

- literature review
- electronic communication
- personal interviews

In addition, a major source of information was derived from a workshop on “Mitigating the Impacts of HIV/AIDS in Agriculture and Rural Development”

The impacts of HIV/AIDS on the rural household engaged in small-scale production have been usefully differentiated by the FAO:

- **Decrease in the agricultural labour force**
- **Chronic illness or death of a household member**
- **Change in household composition**
- **Increase in the number of orphaned children**
- **Change in household nutritional status**
- **Acute decline in household income**
- **Decrease in credit availability and use**
- **Decrease in aggregate community income and assets**
- **Loss of agricultural knowledge, practices and skills and their transmission from one generation to the next**
- **Decrease in access to natural resources, especially land**
- **Exacerbation of gender-based differences in access to resources**
- **Change in social resources**
- **Increase in social exclusion**
- **Decrease in tangible household assets**
- **Degradation in public services**

The response of Small-Scale Farmers to HIV/AIDS

(Lessons from case studies):

Building on existing institutional forms

The role of targeting

Building on the needs of smallholders

The need for integrated policy responses that combine relief, rehabilitation and development

Therefore a combination of relief, rehabilitation and development is required

Review previous work on agricultural policies / strategies related to HIV/AIDS:

New strategies imply that the sector cannot continue with "business as usual". The sector will therefore have to:

1. be more creative in the delivery of services;
2. work multi-sectorally with other stakeholders;
3. provide a co-ordinated response;
4. providing a decentralised process in which the local capacity of rural institutions are strengthened and local safety nets supported to promote community-based initiatives.

Review previous work on agricultural policies/strategies related to HIV/AIDS:

The Experience of "Mainstreaming" HIV/AIDS in Malawi

Social & Economic Safety Nets

Agricultural Technologies (Farming Support & Farming Technologies)

**Regional HIV/AIDS-oriented Programmes within
the Agricultural Sector:**

Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa

The Southern African Development Community

Commonwealth Development Corporation

Promising Developments in New Agricultural Strategies:

The use of participatory methods to design interventions is highlighted, as is **working with existing local structures** to enhance community involvement.

Local political support for projects

Need for capacity building to help strengthen these groups

Need for resources to develop a sustainable cadre of staff and **build training capacity.**

Scaling up has significant resource and support implications and also raises the question as to **how effectively projects can be replicated** from one region to another.

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Promising Developments in New Agricultural Strategies:

For many community-based organisations, responses to the local impacts of HIV/AIDS have evolved to include a range of activities

Trust which is built from a positive engagement through participatory processes.

Recognition that there are likely to be some vulnerable groups, which are severely affected by the HIV/AIDS epidemic but, due to their lack of access to some of the most basic resources (e.g. land, labour, capital), are not able to benefit from certain interventions.

In such cases targeted welfare support will be necessary to ensure that these groups do not fall further into poverty.

Promising Developments in New Agricultural Strategies:

General Recommendations:

- *Development, relief and rehabilitation must be addressed together.*
- *Policy should encourage and be influenced by local implementation.*
- *Better targeting and participation helps affected people take charge.*
- *Focus on multi-sectoral partnerships at district and village level.*
- *Beyond 'labour saving' technologies and practices.*
- *Base policy and practice on experimentation and evidence of success.*

A New Research Agenda:

- *Information-Sharing Clearing House*
- *Capacity-Assessment: Impacts of HIV/AIDS and Ability to Respond*
- *Action Research on Mitigation Interventions Related to Agriculture, Food and Nutrition*
- *Research on the Agriculture, Food, and Nutrition Policy Process and Influence of HIV/AIDS*
- *Dynamics of HIV/AIDS Impacts: Focus on Intergeneration and Spatial Effects*

Thank You

with appreciation for your contribution