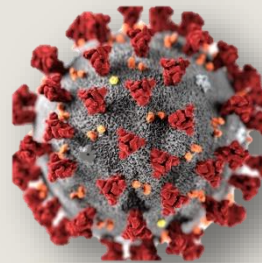


A Rapid Assessment of the Impact of Covid-19 on Food Systems and Rural Livelihoods in Africa

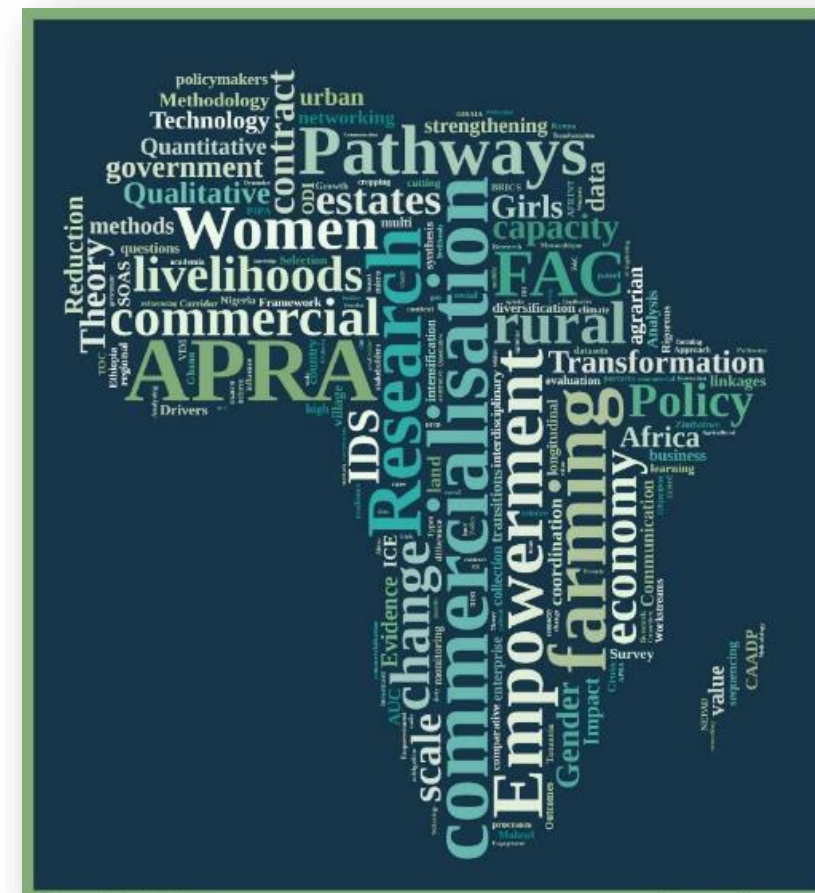
John Thompson, Deputy Director, Sussex Sustainability Research Programme (SSRP),
Senior Fellow, Institute of Development Studies (IDS) and CEO, Agricultural Policy Research in Africa (APRA) Programme

Presentation for the SSRP 2020 Symposium – 15-16 September 2020



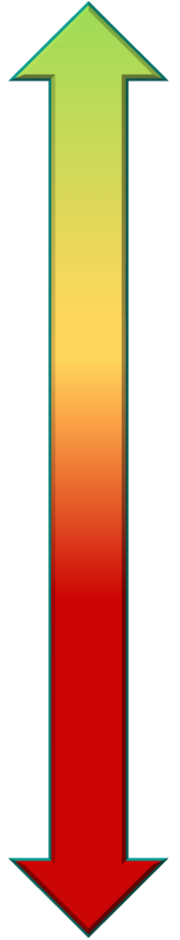
Before the Storm: Agricultural Policy Research in Africa (APRA) Programme

- **APRA** – £7 mil, 5-year, research programme – 2016-21
- **Funded by UK FCDO** (formerly DFID) Research & Evidence
- Building on **‘Future Agricultures Consortium’ (FAC)** – alliance of >100 African and UK researchers conducting independent research on the political economy of agricultural policy processes in Sub-Saharan Africa since 2005
- **APRA / FAC Directorate at IDS**
- APRA carrying out comparative, mixed methods research on **‘inclusive agricultural commercialisation’**
- **Dedicated website:** www.future-agricultures.org/apra/

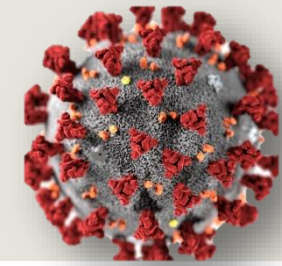


Understanding Livelihood Trajectories through Agriculture

1. **‘Stepping in’** – returning / moving into commercial agriculture from a non-farm base, rise of medium-scale farmers
2. **‘Stepping out’** – accumulating, diversifying and creating alternative, non-farm economic activities
3. **‘Stepping up’** – improving and investing in existing agricultural activities and engaging in the market
4. **‘Hanging in’** – maintaining subsistence level
5. **‘Dropping out’** – moving away or slipping into destitution due to shocks and stresses



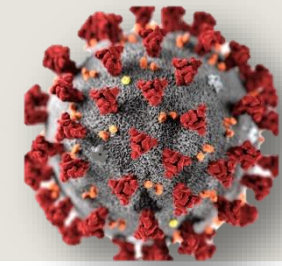
Covid-19: Off-Track to Meet SDG 2



- Five years after the world agreed the **SDGs**, we are **off track** to achieve key targets by 2030:
 - **SDG target 2.1** - ensuring access to safe, nutritious and sufficient food for all people
 - **SDG target 2.2** - eradicating all forms of malnutrition
- **COVID-19 pandemic may add 83 to 132 million people to the ranks of the undernourished in 2020**
- Food supply disruptions and the lack of income as a result of COVID-19 mean that **households are facing increased difficulties accessing adequate quantities of nutritious foods**



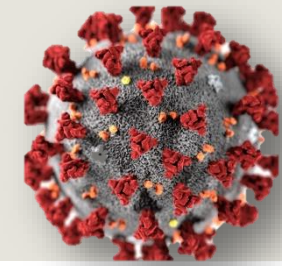
The 'Shock' of Covid: Getting Knocked Off Course



- **APRA was moving into the final 18 months of the programme** when the pandemic struck
- **Covid 'shock' seriously disrupted our plans** – research *and* engagement
- **Suspended or cancelled *numerous* activities** in mid-stream
- **Forced a radical rethink of APRA's strategic priorities**, budgets and timeframes
- **Protracted negotiations** with FCDO/DFID



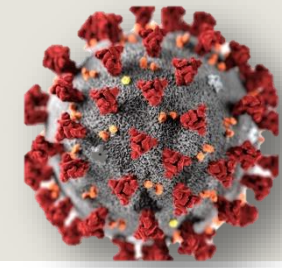
The Covid 'Pivot' – Redirecting APRA Resources and Capacities



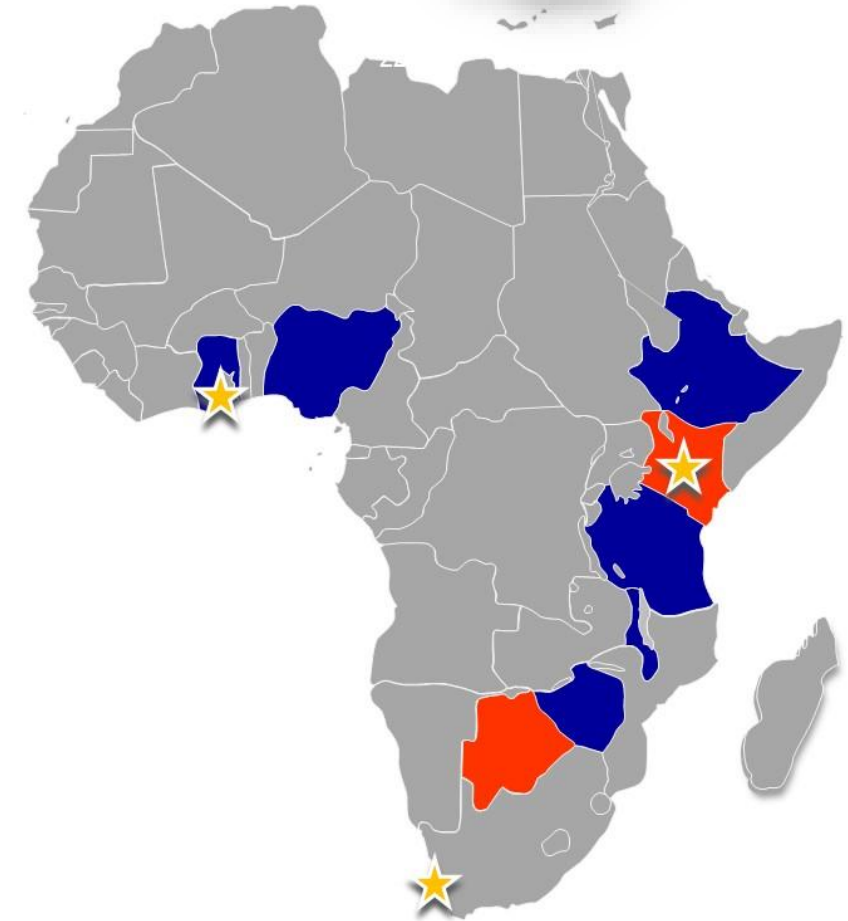
- 1. Rapid Evidence Review of Policy Interventions to Mitigate the Negative Effects of Disease Outbreaks and Other Crises on Poverty, Agriculture and Food Security**
- 2. Political Economy of Value Chain Studies** – 9 studies of 11 chains in 6 countries + a complementary set of **Rapid Market Assessments**
- 3. Rapid Assessment of the Impact of Covid-19 on Food Systems and Rural Livelihoods** – 3 rounds of 'virtual' survey research and key informant interviews in 8 countries (N=800)



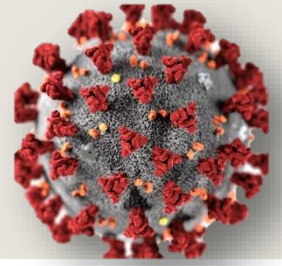
Responding to the Crisis: Kick-starting a ‘Rapid Assessment’



- ✓ Built on **long-standing partnerships**
- ✓ **Mobilised existing research** – panel studies and longitudinal studies – to identify field sites and design instruments (*‘outcome indicators’*)
- ✓ Most of these contained **detailed household rosters**
- ✓ Drew up sampling strategy to ensure **over-representation of female-household heads**
- ✓ **Used tried and tested mobile technologies** and platforms for quantitative data collection
- ✓ Designed qualitative **checklist for key informant interviews**



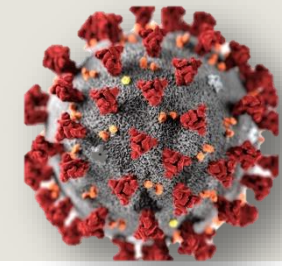
Early Insights – Initial Findings from the Assessment



- **The Covid-19 crisis was found to have differential, but largely negative impacts on food systems and rural livelihoods** in the 751 sample households surveyed for the first round assessment in Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, Tanzania and Zimbabwe (missing Zambia).
- Many households reported a **substantial increase in childcare and housework responsibilities** in the study areas in Nigeria, Zimbabwe, Kenya and Ghana –with women and girls facing the greatest burden.
- **Individuals drastically decreased their movements** both within and outside their own villages, except for Tanzania where travel restrictions were limited.



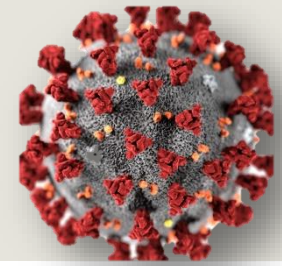
Early Insights – Initial Findings from the Assessment



- Respondents reported a **significant decrease in the number of buyers or traders coming to their village**, apart from those in Ethiopia where marketing activities were largely unaffected.
- Respondents in Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi and Tanzania reported **no changes in their farming activities but did experience a decrease in business or household enterprises**.
- Those in Ghana, Nigeria and Zimbabwe reported a **decrease in both their farming and business/household enterprises**.



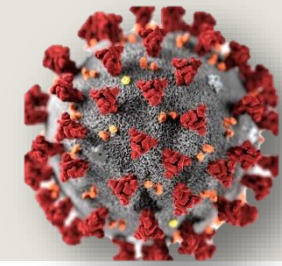
Early Insights – Initial Findings from the Assessment



- **30% of respondents in all countries reported that a decline in the availability of grains and white roots, tubers, plantains, with the exception of Ethiopia.**
- **>90% of Kenyan respondents reported significant reductions in dark green leafy vegetables and fruits.**
- **A sizeable number of households in Kenya (16%), Malawi (31%) and Nigeria (18%) “went without eating for a whole day because of a lack of money or other resources”.**



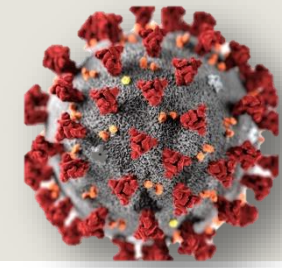
Early Outputs and Next Steps



- While Round 1 was proceeding, applied for **UKRI GCRF/Newton Fund Agile Response** call to address COVID-19
- APRA Directorate **cleaned Round 1 survey data** and returned it to the teams for analysis
- Teams now producing **2-page Country Summaries** of their key findings
- Also producing **30-page Synthesis Paper** of results
- Also **reviewing qualitative KII data** – prepping for Nvivo analysis
- Now preparing teams for **Round 2 research – end Sept/early Oct** – including Zambia
- Set up new **Covid-19 page on APRA website**

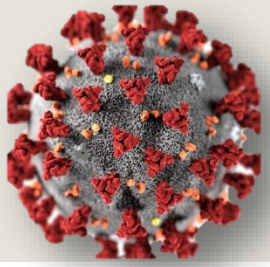


Lessons for Sustainability Research: Strong Partners, Quality Data and Agile Organisation



- ✓ **Foster strong local partnerships** – build trust and a sense of common purpose among ‘the team’, while being as supportive as possible (*times are hard for all*)
- ✓ **Invest in research capacities** to enable collaborators to conduct integrated, interdisciplinary research (costs time and money, but pays dividends)
- ✓ **‘Virtual’ research is possible: but keep excellent records** – we could only do this work because we had clean, well maintained datasets with detailed identifiers and contact information from earlier studies
- ✓ **Be nimble in your organisational set-up** to cope with shocks and respond to uncertainty; communicate regularly and clearly; monitor progress – and risk
- ✓ **Persevere** – if you think you have a good idea, fight for it: we produced 23 draft ‘Covid-19 Adaptation Plans’ before getting official approval from UK FCDO





Thank You

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www.sussex.ac.uk/ssrp

www.future-agricultures.org/apra/

www.future-agricultures.org/

www.future-agricultures.org/covid-19/

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