

# **STRATEGIES AND ANALYSES FOR GROWTH AND ACCESS (SAGA)**

## **PROGRESS REPORT**

Cornell University and Clark Atlanta University  
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### **I. INTRODUCTION**

We are approaching the end of the first year of SAGA. In this semi-annual report, which also serves as the basis for discussions at our annual Advisory Board meeting, we focus on the work during the previous six months, and the plans for the months ahead. There are three major sections of the report, corresponding to the research, technical assistance and competitive grants portions of SAGA.

### **II. RESEARCH**

Most of this section is organized by the activities being planned and implemented in SAGA countries. During the previous six months, lengthy deliberations between Cornell University (CU) and USAID were devoted to selecting a geographic focus for SAGA activities. The selection was made from countries with USAID country missions and groups of countries that comprise regional missions. The choice of countries/regions in SAGA was determined based on a set of criteria that included: The mission commitment to working with the local SISERA institute; an indication that Mission and/or SISERA institute is able to bring the proposed research topics into the policy-making arena; the topics proposed by the Mission and SISERA institution have a strong policy orientation and are "cutting-edge" topics; the quality of presentation of mission and/or local SISERA institute's submission; the topics are cross-sectoral or multi-disciplinary in coverage; the topics proposed are informative to current or upcoming mission program/strategy in economic growth and the social sectors; the Mission is in a Francophone region; the feasibility of success in research collaboration and institution building, including SISERA institutes capacity to conduct and benefit from collaborative research; and the proposed research is consistent with major themes of SAGA. The countries receiving the highest scores were Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, South Africa, and Uganda as well as the West Africa region.

We next proceeded to define broadly which of the four SAGA research themes would be the focus in each of the countries/regions, in consultation with our SISERA partners, USAID Missions and USAID Washington. This demand process is still evolving, and we expect that it will continue to do so over the next few years. Part of our task as principal investigators is to ensure that we have coverage at the country level of all the SAGA themes, recognizing that not all themes will be emphasized in each of the countries.

In considering the details below on each of the countries/regions, it is apparent that the pace and nature of the process in each of the countries and regions differs

markedly. Beyond the fact that the event of 9/11 had an adverse affect on the pace of start-up in general, circumstances on the ground in each country inevitably have important implications for our progress and prospects. For example, political events in Madagascar have slowed the pace of SAGA implementation there; and the recent coup attempt in Côte d'Ivoire has resulted in considerable uncertainty as to our the future of our planned activities there. Each of the countries/regions also presents different challenges and opportunities that shape the research program, and these are largely conditioned by the nature and capacity of our SISERA partners. The strength of researchers at DEPRU in South Africa contrasts markedly, for example, with the limitations of other SISERA institutions. Similarly, ISSER's breadth of research expertise and longstanding involvement at the highest levels of policy dialogue in Ghana enables certain options not found elsewhere. On the other hand, some of the SISERA partners have more limited expertise and capacity that narrows somewhat the potential scope of activities. This is well illustrated, for example, by the case of CREA in Senegal and CEE in Madagascar. Data availability also, in part, drives the research agenda at the country level. Data availability for Uganda and Ghana with repeated integrated household surveys (modeled after the living standards surveys) contrasts with Senegal where there are no such data sources, implying the need to include data collection as an activity in the case of the latter. There is also markedly different policy environment across countries and government policy priorities that contribute to different types of SAGA activities. The considerable variation in scope and content of the research and training activities described below, thus, reflects all these factors.

One final note concerns the resource constraints faced by each of the activities described below. SAGA's research funds, spread across years and activities need to be supplemented to implement many of the plans described below. In virtually all cases we expect to pursue other sources of financing, such as Mission buy-ins, SISERA research grants, funding from other international organizations, and so forth, to realize the ambitious objectives of our collaborative work.

## **1. Ghana**

The SAGA-Ghana discussions have only recently started, owing in part to impending personnel changes in the USAID mission and to the absence abroad of key personnel in the SISERA partner institution, ISSER. However, the new mission economist is now in place, and the key counterpart is now back in ISSER. A series of meetings will take place in Accra during the week of October 7-12, to discuss and sharpen an overall research plan proposed by ISSER. From these meetings, there should emerge an outline of the research plan after which the specifics of funding can be discussed.

The October meetings will not, however, take place in a vacuum. Cornell and ISSER have already co-hosted two workshops that predate SAGA. The second of these, in particular, focused on research needs in light of key policy issues in poverty reduction. An overview of that conference is attached (see [Attachment 1](#)). On this basis, ISSER has prepared a preliminary document on its SAGA involvement.

The key research themes highlighted in these preliminary consultations and workshops involve addressing the following issues:

- While the perception abounds that **poverty** in Ghana is worsening, survey data suggests that it may be declining. It is important that proper studies are carried into understanding the disconnect between perception and survey results. This would require more careful studies of **regional variations** of poverty and their causes and how these may be more accurately linked to public expenditure programs and private agents' responses.
- The role of **credible institutions in governance** was highlighted as extremely important for **development**. This involves sound regular national economic management that takes **poverty reduction** as its main goal at the top of a number of compatible objectives. Noting that credible institutions evolve only over time, and encompass a broad range of factors, including **culture**, research has to be undertaken to ascertain the most appropriate ways, within a feasible time frame, of making Ghana's institutions more responsive to its development needs, especially within the context of a rapidly **globalizing** world.
- It is established that development is the outcome of **institutional system changes** that respond to the demands of **private agents** through **innovation** and **technology** development. **Human capital** development is paramount to this process, as is the platform for the organizations of private agents to interact and be coordinated by **functioning markets** that work closely with **the state**. The state is the coordinator of the institutional environment. Research into **science and technology** and other relevant areas must assist the problem of enhancing the innovativeness of Ghanaian institutional organizations.
- While it is acknowledged that the **decentralization** of key governance structures is crucial for improving the effectiveness and efficiency of public services, it is important to study the strengths and limitations of such decentralization in order to develop the appropriate scope and structures.
- **Social policy** in Ghana is implicit and has only evolved as a spin-off from economic policy reform. It is important that relevant social policy studies are carried out to develop a proper orientation for social policy goals that complement economic policy goals in a more meaningful way, keeping in mind the overall goal of a stable economy and improving standards of living for a growing population.

ISSER intends to collaborate with SAGA researchers to address a number of the areas identified above. Three possible themes already emerge as likely candidates for ISSER's research program: (1) monitoring of public expenditure programs in the context of decentralization in Ghana; (2) poverty reduction in an economy with pervasive micro and macro level vulnerability; and (3) the disconnect between the poverty reduction

shown by household surveys, and the popular and strongly held perception that poverty has increased. The final decisions, however, will have to await the October meetings.

In terms of methods, ISSER and Cornell University researchers have stressed the importance of employing a mix of approaches that combine quantitative and qualitative methods, including triangulation, sequential mixing, and simultaneous mixing. These are of considerable interest to ISSER which is generally known in Ghana as the premier institution for undertaking field research in the social sciences. ISSER boasts of a good crop of researchers from a number of social science disciplines who have learned over the years to work in a multi-disciplinary manner, relying on both quantitative and qualitative techniques. These include economists, agricultural economists, sociologists, demographers, political scientists, planners, and statisticians.

### **Institutional linkages**

ISSER is quite well placed to collaborate with SAGA to undertake studies in Ghana as outlined under the SAGA research themes. It proposes to make available a team of researchers led by Professor Ernest Aryeetey, an economist, and made up of other economists, agricultural economists, sociologists, political scientists and demographers to the project. Through excellent relations with other faculty members at the University of Ghana, ISSER is well placed to invite other social scientists from other departments of the university to complement its own research staff in this undertaking. In similar fashion, researchers in other Ghanaian institutions would be invited to team up with ISSER and other SAGA researchers in order to enhance the character of the teams that undertake various studies. ISSER expects such a broad-based team to lead to research outcomes that are of high quality and also make it easier to “sell” to a larger Ghanaian public.

### **Activities anticipated over the next six months**

Over the next six months, ISSER will formalize its research program and submit components to different, appropriate, donors, including SAGA-SISERA. SAGA-Cornell will help in the overall proposal, with seed-financing for it and with financing for key components.

## **2. Kenya**

By African standards, Kenya enjoys relative abundance of good quality primary data for economic analysis and of skilled researchers doing rigorous, policy-relevant research. SAGA seeks to exploit this comparative advantage through a decentralized design that draws in work from several able economic research institutions in Kenya. The program is also targeted toward informing debate on high profile policy questions highlighted in the new Kenya Rural Development Strategy (KRDS) and Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) processes in the aftermath of impending national elections. The PRSP has identified agricultural and rural development as Kenya’s

number one priority for poverty alleviation and economic growth. The KRDS has emphasized problems of risk and vulnerability, market access, and smallholder empowerment as central to agricultural and rural development. USAID-Kenya is actively addressing these issues through its own program of work (under mission SOs 6 and 7). Toward those ends, the SAGA-Kenya research program is organized as a set of subsidiary research projects conducted by a consortium of research institutions around two core, interrelated themes: “Reducing risk and vulnerability in rural Kenya” and “Empowering the rural poor.”

While the exact details remain under discussion within the team, with plans to consult with the broader SAGA team and USAID-Washington, the broad contours of the SAGA-Kenya workplan are emerging as follows. Under the theme “Reducing risk and vulnerability in rural Kenya,” the team will pursue interrelated sub-projects on the following sub-themes:

- *The role of producer organizations in reducing smallholder vulnerability:* Led by Tegemeo, this sub-project will analyze the impact of producer organizations on smallholder market access and vulnerability to income shocks, price and yield volatility, identifying what organizational functions prove most effective and how these are most efficiently and reliably provided, especially to poorer smallholders.
- *Agricultural marketing systems, price volatility, and vulnerability of smallholder producers and poor consumers:* Led by KIPPRA, this sub-project will study changing marketing systems and household strategies for coping with market risk, seeking in particular to explain and identify effective strategies to reverse the apparent widespread retreat toward subsistence production by many smallholders.
- *Improving factor market access to reduce rural vulnerability:* Led by the University of Nairobi’s Department of Agricultural Economics, this sub-project will focus in particular on rural land and finance markets, and how increasing land pressure and conflict and the changing shape of liberalizing financial sectors affect smallholders’ security of access to land.
- *Safety nets in marginal areas:* Led by Cornell and Clark Atlanta University (CAU), with collaboration from Syracuse University (all with non-SAGA funding), this subproject will focus on the interrelationship between public safety nets such as food aid and livestock destocking/restocking programs, and private assistance schemes based on social insurance mechanisms, informal lending and altruistic transfers, particularly in arid and semi-arid areas especially prone to climate, conflict, and market shocks.

Under the theme “Empowering the rural poor,” the team will pursue interrelated sub-projects on the following sub-themes:

- *The role of producer organizations in enhancing smallholder market participation:* Led by Tegemeo, this sub-project will identify appropriate

institutional frameworks for producer organizations so as to enhance small farmers' participation and efficiency in input and output markets.

- *Decentralization and participation*: Led by IPAR, this sub-project will focus on social funds in the education and health sectors, examining the level, scope, nature and quality of popular participation in decentralized allocation mechanisms, fiscal accountability under these arrangements, and the factors that determine the capacity and effectiveness of the poor participating in and benefiting from these programs.
- *Community groups and networks*: Led by Cornell (with non-SAGA funding), this sub-project will study social networks and community groups and their effects on risk-taking, technology adoption, and livelihood strategy choice in rural communities.

Each sub-project will deliver policy briefs and at least one publishable conference paper. Tentatively, we plan two major policy conferences based on this work for July, 2004, subsequently summarizing key findings in two published volumes. The team remains quite interested in pursuing related policy research on health shocks and on insecurity related to crime and political violence. However, these topics would require considerably more primary data collection and existing resources are insufficient to cover these topics well. The team will explore add-on possibilities with USAID-Kenya and USAID-REDSO that might allow incorporation of these topics as well, perhaps with a lag.

### **Institutional linkages/collaborators**

Institute of Policy Analysis and Research (IPAR); Kenya Institute for Public Policy Research and Analysis (KIPPRA); Tegemeo Institute of Agricultural Policy and Development; the University of Nairobi Department of Agricultural Economics (Kabete campus); Clark Atlanta University; Syracuse University.

As Kenya's lone SISERA member institute, IPAR will be "first among equals" and coordinate the SAGA-Kenya program, serving as host or co-host for prospective SAGA small grant awardees, primary contact point for communications between the Cornell and Kenya teams, and the logistical coordinator for SAGA events in Kenya. IPAR will receive a small subcontract for these functions. IPAR, KIPPRA, Tegemeo, and the University of Nairobi will each receive a separate subcontract from Cornell for research under SAGA-Kenya, based on which institution leads a given sub-project, many of which will be jointly staffed.

### **Activities over previous six months**

The emerging research program that SAGA is pursuing in Kenya has been developed collaboratively over the past six months through repeated consultations, both in Kenya and via email and by telephone, between Cornell, Clark Atlanta, IPAR,

KIPPRA, Tegemeo, the University of Nairobi, USAID-Kenya, and USAID-REDSO. Initial meetings in January in Nairobi between SAGA-Kenya team leader Chris Barrett and Kenyan partners were followed by electronic discussions and exchanges of draft concept notes. Following Kenya's selection as a core country under SAGA in late March, further electronic deliberations ensued, supplemented by a group meeting in Nairobi run by Mesfin Bezuneh (Clark Atlanta), and culminating in a series of two intensive team meetings in June in Nairobi co-chaired by John Omiti (IPAR) and Chris Barrett (Cornell) at which the principals from each of the organizations jointly established a general workplan. Each institution has since drafted a concept note, terms of reference and budget for its portion of the broader workplan. These have been reviewed by Cornell and Clark Atlanta, comments offered, and they are presently being revised by the Kenya partner institutions. Mesfin Bezuneh traveled to Kenya again in September, during which time he held further consultations with the SAGA-Kenya team on research design and timing.

### **Activities anticipated over the next six months**

We expect to have final terms of reference agreed upon with Kenyan partners and initial funding disbursed, enabling the research to begin before the end of the calendar year. In-country research partners will commence their specific field research and data analysis activities at that time. Chris Barrett will travel again to Kenya in January to consult with the Kenya-based team. In the meantime, we are in regular contact via email.

## **3. Madagascar**

### **Activities over the previous six months**

Political turmoil and civil unrest have resulted in our delaying the initiation of SAGA activities over the past six months. Informal conversations with the Mission and other research collaborators in Madagascar have taken place, however, and we have preliminarily focused on the thematic areas of risk and vulnerability, and empowerment and institutions, as the focal point for much of the work.

### **Activities anticipated over the next six months**

In March, we are planning a planning workshop in Madagascar to launch SAGA.

## **4. Uganda**

Definition of a research program for SAGA in Uganda has progressed considerably, the result of three visits by Steve Younger to Kampala in November, 2001, June and August, 2002. During these visits, Younger met with a many researchers, government officials, and USAID/Uganda staff to discuss possible foci for the research program. During the last visit, the Economic Policy Research Centre (EPRC), the

SISERA partner in Uganda, held a consultative meeting with multiple stakeholders to discuss the SAGA research program in Uganda.

Before discussing possible themes, it should be noted that the most striking observation made in the meetings in Kampala is that virtually everyone commented that there is an abundance of good data in this country, but few good researchers to use them. In response, Cornell and the EPRC conducted a two-week workshop on the use of household survey data for policy analysis, from August 26 to September 6. While primarily a technical assistance activity, we sought to augment the Uganda research program. In particular, by showing the workshop's participants both research topics and the methods to address them, we tried to stimulate the interest of a group of researchers who might participate in the SAGA research agenda. Another way in which the workshop related to SAGA research activities was by including the participants in the day-long consultative meeting that included representatives from the government, USAID, the World Bank, and other stakeholders, such as university faculty.

Based on all of our discussions, EPRC and Cornell decided that SAGA research should not be a single, large research project, but several papers, written by different authors, that attempt to make the most of existing data that are largely untapped in Uganda. At a wrap-up meeting on September 6, 2002, we agreed to prepare research prospecti on the following themes (task manager appears in parentheses). Stephen Younger will travel to Uganda in November, at which time we will review these research ideas and launch the projects that seem feasible and appropriate.

- *Decentralization and district budget procedures (Peter Mijumbe)*: There are two topics of interest here. First, to maintain overall macroeconomic balance, the central government often reduces revenue sharing to the districts during the fiscal year to below the amounts stated in the annual budget. These cuts are not uniform, so the first question is, which districts suffer the largest cuts? In particular, we are interested to know if they tend to be the poorer districts.

A second issue is the progressivity of each districts budget. To pursue this, we will use existing survey data to look at which households benefits from each district's budgetary decisions, and compare the progressivity of those decisions to central government decisions. As an extension that follows on the first question, we are also interested in understanding that expenditures districts cut when their overall revenue sharing is reduced unexpectedly.

- *Universal Primary Education and the demand for schooling (Steve Younger)*: Appleton (2001) has pointed out that virtually all schooling demand functions for developing countries, including Uganda, estimate very low price elasticities, even for the poor. Yet when Uganda introduced the Universal Primary Education program, which basically banned school and PTA fees, attendance soared. Tanzania and Malawi have had similar experiences with UPE. This study would attempt to reconcile this contradiction by estimating demand functions using two or more samples that span the UPE period (1997). The goal is to obtain a more



accurate estimate of price elasticities, and also to look for lagged effects on enrolments, which seem to have fallen off somewhat in recent years, perhaps because of reduced quality.

- *Changes in multidimensional poverty in Uganda, 1992-2002* (Godfrey Bahigwa, Steve Younger): Uganda has seen rapid economic growth over the past 15 years, and this growth has been accompanied by similarly rapid declines in income poverty (Appleton, 1999). Yet there is concern in Uganda that other indicators of well-being are not improving at a comparable pace. In particular, infant mortality rates actually increased between 1995 and 2000 (Ministry of Finance, Planning, and Economic Development, 2002). Analysis of children's nutritional status yields ambiguous results. This project would examine poverty in multiple dimensions, focusing on children's welfare. Its main goal is descriptive, but we also hope to shed light on the apparent contradiction between rapid improvements in income poverty and the lack of a clear direction for non-income welfare measures.
- *The poverty impact of "strategic export" promotion* (Godfrey Bahigwa, John Okidi): The government of Uganda has recently proposed an export promotion scheme focused around eight crops. This research will evaluate the likely poverty reduction consequences of this scheme. We are particularly interested in (1) which crops may have the greatest poverty reduction, and (2) the extent to which a shift to these crops might affect farmers' risk and vulnerability by exposing them to markets with different volatilities.
- *Agricultural service delivery, and poverty reduction* (Godfrey Bahigwa, John Okidi): The market for agricultural services has changed dramatically over the past decade. Responsibility for extension has been decentralized to districts. The private sector has entered some service markets. And transportation has improved. To what extent have these factors affected rural poverty in Uganda? This study will examine this question, focusing on a panel of households that is available in the national household surveys (1992, 1996, 1999). We will describe changes in agricultural services that households use, and model the poverty impact of these services.
- *Budgetary accountability and school performance* (Steve Younger): Uganda was the site for Ablo and Reinikka's (1998) pathbreaking study on accountability and school budgets. Reinikka is currently planning a further study in Uganda on the same theme, in which public information about school budgets will be provided to a randomized group of communities. Her interest is to estimate the impact of this information on the share of budgeted resources that actually reach the school. We would like to push that study one step further and estimate the impact of budgetary expenditures on children's performance in school, using the program as an instrument for expenditures. The dependent variable will be results on standardized tests given to all schoolchildren in third and sixth grades in Uganda.

### **Institutional linkages**

The Economic Policy Research Centre (EPRC) is the only SISERA affiliate in Uganda and will be our principal collaborating institution for SAGA research. While independent of Makerere University, EPRC is housed on the Makerere campus and can facilitate the participation of university faculty on SAGA research by granting them temporary appointments as adjunct researchers. Our discussions with the World Bank also suggest that there may be several opportunities for useful collaboration in Uganda.

### **Activities over previous six months**

The principal research activities over the past six months all relate to the participatory definition of suitable themes for SAGA's research in Uganda. Steve Younger, John Okidi, and various USAID/Uganda staff met separately with government officials, donors, and other stakeholders during Younger's June visit to Kampala. The September 5 consultative meeting brought many of these parties together with EPRC researchers at a single roundtable discussion of research interests and possibilities. And the August 26- September 6 workshop on survey data analysis generated interest in poverty research among participants, many of whom may eventually be involved in SAGA research.

### **Activities anticipated over the next six months**

In October 2002, the task managers listed above will prepare research prospecti on the topics mentioned, to be discussed electronically among stakeholders in Uganda and SAGA researchers at Cornell and Clark-Atlanta. These discussions will continue during Steve Younger's next visit to Uganda in mid-November, 2002. At that time, we will rough out budgets for the proposed research and select as many topics as possible given budget constraints. We will also discuss possibilities for additional funding. By January 2003, we intend to have a series of projects established, with research begun on each.

## **5. South Africa**

We propose specifically, to organize the research program and its various sub-elements under five major themes.

### **A. The Evolution of Poverty and Inequality: A Base Analysis**

The purpose of this theme is to provide an empirical assessment of the altering nature of poverty and inequality in the post-apartheid South Africa. Some of the broader issues within this theme, which is essentially a measurement of the altering poverty and inequality dynamics over the post-apartheid period, would entail the following:

- Are the standard South African markers for poverty & inequality (race, gender,

location) increasing or declining as significant correlates of poverty and inequality?

- Does the inequality decomposition analysis reveal the same pattern in terms of sources of incomes and their contribution to inequality?
- The correlates of labor market vulnerability on the 1995 data are now well established. The time comparison here would allow one to test for any changes that may or may not have occurred in the prevalence of vulnerability within the labor market.
- One of the key advantages of the surveys is the sets of questions on access to services, such as health, education, sanitation and housing. Significant improvements in the access to services (controlling for quality, cost and so on) would be vital for a broader understanding of successes or failures in poverty alleviation.
- The post-apartheid period has seen an expansion in the national transfer income program of government, marked by steady increases in the value of the old age pension. One of the key considerations is that, as one of the most effective mechanisms for poverty alleviation in the society, has the overall income grant system had a significant poverty reduction effect, controlling for other sources of income?

## **B. The Economics of Education and Education Policy**

We will concentrate our research around two broad issues:

- The determinants of success in both the schooling and educational system.
- The nature and level of distributional equity (measured in a variety of different ways) in higher education and schooling and how this impacts on success.

In terms of the first of these, we would identify firstly a measure of success in both the schooling and higher educational system. In the first instance, the integrated databases would allow for a presentation of the various descriptive statistics on success rates, according to a variety of different markers including - for schools - the province that the school is located in, the dominant racial group in attendance, pupil-teacher ratios, per capita expenditure, and so on. The multivariate analysis would then try and determine, across all nine provinces, the importance of these different covariates in determining pass rates at schools.

In terms of higher educational institutions, the tracer study database would present information on the institution attended by students and the type of employment they found. The univariate analysis would isolate the success rates of various HED institutions in the sample, while the multivariate would try and combine both the supply

characteristics of the individual, with the characteristics of the institution in trying to determine probabilities of success.

The notion of equity goes to the heart of the post-apartheid debate on education policy, where the focus has been on trying to alter past unfair distribution of resources allocated to schools, universities and technical schools, as a key mechanism for altering inter-institutional inequities. Firstly, we propose to measure the level of distributional equity in the system, according to variety of markers including, per capita expenditure, pupil-teacher ratios, user fees, teacher qualifications, direct assets, and complementary assets. Each of the markers would be derived according to the nature of the school or HED institution (identified as historically white, African, urban or rural, within a high income area for schools and so on). This procedure ultimately delivers a matrix of resource distribution across the entire education system in the country.

### **C. Health and Nutrition**

The analysis of this theme would examine the access to health care, utilization of health services, and health status in relation to household poverty. Coupled to this, would be an analysis of the impact of the HIV epidemic on households.

On the first of these, given the demographic and epidemiological transition in South Africa, diseases related to poverty such as tuberculosis, child mortality and diseases related to rapid urbanization such as injury-related deaths, chronic diseases of lifestyle such as obesity, hypertension, and diabetes are on the rise. There is, however, a dearth in information that links these health status measures with socio-economic variables such as household income, access to services, and education levels. Hence, the first element of this theme would examine poverty in relation to a set of key health status indicators through univariate and multivariate analysis.

This theme would examine the relationship between access to and utilization of health services according to the standard range of socio-economic covariates, including race, gender, location, education levels, and income levels. Specific variables would be examined such as the type of service attended (private/public sector), access to private medical aids, the reasons for seeking care, and from whom care was sought. Where possible, client satisfaction and perceptions will be explored.

Finally, the HIV epidemic remains the most serious public health problem in South Africa. It is well established that the epidemic affects young, heterosexual adults. However, there is a dearth of robust information on the social and welfare correlates of the pandemic. Furthermore, the link between HIV/AIDS prevalence and the various determinants of poverty has not, thus far, been explored adequately in the South African literature. There is little information on how the distribution of HIV disease would affect employment, income distribution, savings rates, consumption patterns, poverty, and other economic variables. The purpose of this theme would be, through the use of household survey data and the HIV Antenatal Survey data sets, to provide an overview of the features of the HIV/AIDS epidemic at the household level. Specific

factors such as poverty levels, education, dependency rates and employment levels would be examined in relation to HIVAIDS.

#### **D. Risk and Vulnerability**

This theme is potentially enormous, given that it lies at the nub of much of the work on poverty traps and analyses on the dynamics of poverty. We propose to focus here on three key sub-themes that we view as pertinent for South Africa:

- Price shocks and their impact on poor households
- Crime, poverty, and inequality
- Mobility within the internal labour market and between employment and unemployment

On the first theme, there is evidence to suggest that the construction of the national consumer price index is heavily weighted in favor of the upper deciles of the income distribution. We do not therefore have a good sense, firstly of the consumption bundles of the poor and additionally, how price movements and shocks impact on their livelihoods. An examination of the IES95 and IES00 therefore, would be a first attempt at constructing these consumption patterns across the distribution, and, of course, to examine changing patterns of consumption. When matched with the disaggregated price data, we would derive estimates of the inflation rate for all deciles, focusing on poor households. The two points of price and expenditure data, would thus also allow for estimation of price elasticities of demand across the different deciles and product categories.

In terms of the second sub-theme, we would utilize the two national databases of Statistics South Africa on crime, as the basis for research here. What we will attempt to assess here is to determine the extent to which poor households are affected by crime, and the extent to which this activity serves as an unforeseen shock to household incomes and assets. While the current work on crime, inequality, and poverty is limited in South Africa, we would hope that this sub-theme could gradually form the basis for expanded work in the area and indeed the manipulation of new data sets.

One of the key elements engendering vulnerability amongst individuals and the households they reside in, is the uncertainty in employment status and earnings derived from employment. This labour market instability therefore, can be viewed as a key determinant of household risk and vulnerability over time. South Africa, since 2000, has been running a bi-annual Labour Force Survey (LFS), which has a rotating panel as a sub-sample. Currently, the LFS is in its 6<sup>th</sup> wave, and early indications are that the data is at least being released timeously. While its panel component would still need to be verified and tested, it is wholly possible that the LFS offers the advantage of undertaking dynamic panel analysis of labour market risk and vulnerability. As a starting point, for example, it would be possible to examine through a standard mobility matrix, the movement of individuals across the wage distribution, into and out of employment and across the household income distribution.

## **E. Labor Markets and Poverty**

We view this theme as having at least five sub-components, namely:

- Labor market-household dynamics in the post-apartheid period
- Education and labor market dynamics in the post-apartheid period
- Labor demand shifts over time
- The unemployed, the unemployable and household poverty traps
- Poverty alleviation and job creation strategies

### **Institutional arrangements**

The SISERA partner institution, the Development Policy Research Unit (DPRU) is a research unit recognized by the University Research Committee. In addition, the unit has a very strong record in policy-orientated, yet academically sound, research.

### **Activities over the previous six months**

After the selection of South Africa as a core country, discussions began with the SISERA partner institution DPRU in June, 2002. In keeping with the demand driven philosophy of SAGA, discussions focused on DPRU's research priorities, in light of the policy needs in South Africa, with input from the USAID mission.

The policy conjuncture in South Africa is different now from even a year ago. As confirmed by the USAID mission and DPRU, there are growing concerns in the country and in the government that the macroeconomic reforms and opening up are not delivering, or not delivering fast enough, on poverty reduction. The very high rates of unemployment are a particular concern. This conjuncture comes at a time when the government is putting together its 10 year perspective strategy, and at a time when there is discontent among the ANC's governing partners about the state of poverty.

These concerns coincide with the imminent general release of the 2000 living standard survey, a five-year follow up to the 1995 survey, which will give a snapshot of the first five years of post-apartheid government. In discussions, it emerged that DPRU's research plan for the next two or three years envisages a "post-Apartheid audit" anchored on these two major data sets, leading to detailed research on a number of key dimensions of poverty.

It should be emphasized that this is DPRU's research plan, and funding for it, will come from a number of different sources. DPRU will apply to SAGA-SISERA's competition to fund research on Poverty 1995-2000, and to the African Economic Research Consortium (AERC) to fund research on Labor Markets in South Africa. SAGA-Cornell will support the overall research strategy as well as providing initial seed financing for it. It is envisaged that SAGA-Cornell will focus its major funding on the

last three themes—on vulnerability, education and health—as the research program gets more sharply defined.

### **Activities anticipated over the next six months**

DPRU will apply to SAGA-SISERA and to AERC. SAGA-Cornell will help with these proposals. DPRU and Cornell will sign the first contract for specific use of SAGA-Cornell funds; some of this will be seed money to start work on analysis of the 1995-2000, and some of it will be funding to begin work on one of the SAGA related themes—at this stage it looks as though the initial focus will be on the risk and vulnerability theme. DPRU will also begin preparing for a training workshop for South African researchers on poverty analysis, for which they will access funds from SAGA-SISERA. SAGA-Cornell technical assistance funds will also support the preparation of this activity.

## **6. West Africa**

Numerous consultations and meetings with our partner SISERA institutions, USAID, various stakeholders, and policy-makers throughout the region have focused the SAGA research agenda on three of the four major research themes: education, health, and empowerment and institutions. Progress in defining and implementing the specific research activities is quite varied.

### **A. Education**

Our consultations in the West African region quickly focused our attention on issues of the low educational attainment in the region, lagging cognitive skill development, and the large gender bias in schooling. By the early 1990s, the educational system in much of West Africa had fallen into a state of crisis. Reflecting resource inefficiencies and misallocations in the composition of public spending across educational levels, and substantial degradation in the quality of schooling from elementary to higher education, gross enrollment rates both at the primary and secondary levels fell to levels that were low even when compared with the averages for Sub Saharan Africa. Teacher shortages are climbing along with the pupil-teacher ratio at the primary level. In addition to low initial enrollment, grade repetition and dropping out of primary school before completion are serious problems. Various stakeholders were also concerned with the lack of access to secondary schools that may be inhibiting primary, not just secondary, enrollments. But perhaps most important is the particular disadvantage of girls in all grades, as manifested by higher rates of repetition and dropout.

Our partner SISERA and research institutes, as well as USAID, highlighted the need for data and greater analytical work to inform policy in order to address the crisis in education. As an outcome of the formal and informal consultation process with various actors, described in our previous semi-annual report, we developed a research program that will investigate the household, community, and school-level determinants of the

following education outcomes in Senegal and Côte d'Ivoire: primary and secondary enrollment, school level transitions and progress through school, grade repetition and dropout, and learning—both academic (math and French test scores) and non-academic (“life-skills”). Combining new and existing data sources, we will investigate the household, community, and school determinants of primary and secondary enrollment and progression through school, dropout and repetition, and academic performance:

- What are the main determinants—at the household, school, and community levels—of primary and lower secondary enrollment? How do these factors affect the choice of school when there are different alternatives available to the households (e.g., public, private, community school)?
- Why do so many children drop out of primary school before completion, or interrupt their primary schooling for significant periods? Do children drop out because they perform poorly in school, i.e., obtain low grades or test scores? Or do children stop going to school (permanently or temporarily) as a result of asset, income, or health shocks to the household, such as the illness of a parent that requires the child to work on the farm or in the home? Are the same factors also associated with grade repetition?
- For those who complete primary school, what determines transition to lower secondary school and the progression through secondary school? What is the importance of the distance to school or rationing of places, of academic performance in primary school, or of household economic status (income, wealth)? How do girls' probabilities of transition to, and continuation in, secondary school differ from boys, and why? Do children who do not continue in school enter the labor market or work in productive activities in the home, and if so, in what specific activities?

For student achievement, we seek to address the following questions:

- What are the determinants of student learning as measured by test performance? At the household/individual level, what are the roles of maternal and paternal schooling and household income? Is poor health and nutrition of the child a significant deterrent to learning?
- What are the effects on learning of school and teacher factors such as teacher qualifications and gender, and how do these vary by grade level? Do girls who have a female teacher score better on tests? How do school and classroom management factors—staff management and monitoring practices, pedagogical practices, the use of double shifting and multi-grade systems, etc.—affect learning?
- Beyond standard academic skills, is schooling effective at imparting knowledge of important ‘life skills’ such as good health practices that non-schooled children



are not able to learn, or learn as well? What kinds of schools or school characteristics are associated with better acquisition of these skills?

- Do children who stop their schooling after several years of primary education, or after completing primary school, retain the skills and knowledge they have learned, or is this knowledge lost?

### **Institutional linkages**

The project will be a collaborative research effort that will involve, in addition to Cornell, institutions in Senegal such as Confemen Education System Analysis Program (PASEC), Centre de Recherche en Economie Appliquée (CREA), the Ministry of Education, the national statistics agency (Direction de la Prevision et de la Statistique), and Institut National de l'Enseignement Appliqué et de la Didactique (INEAD); and in Côte d'Ivoire, Ivoirian researchers at Ecole Nationale supérieure de Statistique et d'Economie appliqué (ENSEA) and Centre Ivoirien de Recherche Économique et Sociale (CIRES), as well as French researchers from Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique (INRA). Given the expense of data collection associated with this activity, we are also actively working with the French Ministry of Development Cooperation and the World Bank to secure funding for local survey costs.

### **Activities during previous six months**

Most of the previous six months was dedicated to working with our partners to define specifically the education policy questions on which we would focus, and the methods and data needs for the research. Most important in this regard was a formal workshop hosted by Cornell and CREA, with participants from Ministries of Education in Côte d'Ivoire and Senegal, representatives of various international organizations and donors, and non-governmental organizations. A number of other less formal consultations in Senegal and Côte d'Ivoire have taken place during the three trips that David Sahn and Peter Glick have taken to the region during this period. Most recently, David Sahn traveled to Senegal to meet with the Ministers of Education from Senegal and Côte d'Ivoire at the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) meeting of Ministers of Education. During this last visit, we also worked on final research plans based on the surveys we plan on conducting, and began discussions with the Ministry of Education and various stakeholders in terms of specific research papers that would be prepared in the first half of 2003.

### **Activities anticipated over the next six months**

Over the next three months, we will work with our collaborators to prepare the surveys scheduled to commence in January 2003. In the interim, we will complete the field test, redesign the questionnaire, and so forth, through a series of meetings, both in Ithaca and Senegal. Depending on the political situation, we may postpone our fieldwork in Côte d'Ivoire. We also plan on beginning preliminary data analysis and arranging for a team from Senegal and Côte d'Ivoire to visit Cornell.

## **B. Health**

In our initial review of the West African Regional Program's (WARP) priorities articulated in their request for participation in the SAGA project, there was a clear and overwhelming focus on HIV/AIDS among health concerns. In May 2002, David Sahn and Peter Glick traveled to Bamako to meet with the USAID Mission to discuss potential research areas that were consistent with this strong interest in the HIV/AIDS epidemic expressed by WARP as well as of the SISERA institutions participating in SAGA. Peter Glick subsequently traveled to Dakar and Abidjan for further discussions with USAID and other personnel, as described below.

A significant amount of research has been done on the macroeconomic impacts of AIDS in Africa. However, less has been done, especially by economists and other social scientists, on the demand for and effects of services that can prevent the spread of HIV. For this reason, the general focus of our meetings was research on HIV prevention. This also reflects the strong emphasis placed by WARP on HIV prevention as well as the overarching motivation of the rising concern over HIV/AIDS throughout the region.

Evaluation of Voluntary HIV Testing and Counseling (VCT) interventions quickly emerged as the most appropriate specific focus of our research. Many African countries are planning to scale up VCT, which in all but a few countries still remains largely inaccessible to most residents. Much hope is now being placed on VCT as a prevention strategy for Africa. Côte d'Ivoire is the most appropriate site for our research on VCT, at least for the first phase of the activity. Factors contributing to this are: (1) high HIV prevalence and increasing involvement of the authorities in promoting HIV prevention in Côte d'Ivoire; (2) the significant expansion of VCT sites throughout the country planned over the next several years; (3) the high level of cooperation and communication among various donor groups and research institutions operating in the country; (4) the fact that the findings from Côte d'Ivoire should have broad regional relevance, in part because other countries will experience an increase in prevalence rates and a consequent need for more testing; and (5) the wealth of local research expertise and experience in analyzing HIV and related behaviors. This includes both the SISERA institution CIRES and ENSEA. For example, a very productive meeting was held with a team of ENSEA researchers to discuss methodological and data issues. All parties expressed a very high level of interest in this research and willingness to participate or cooperate with the Cornell/SAGA efforts.

A great deal of thought has already gone into the design of the research, reflecting the inputs of these parties. A feasible methodology would be to conduct population-based behavior surveys in the catchment areas of one or more planned VCT centers. In Côte d'Ivoire, numerous urban or peri-urban sites are planned over the next few years that will be operated or funded by a range of organizations. Knowing in advance exactly where new VCT sites will be opened would allow us to conduct both base-line and follow-up (post-intervention) surveys. Communities slated to receive the services later (due to limited resources, expansion is necessarily staggered) would serve as natural controls. In terms of both survey design and the estimation of demand for

services and behavioral responses, the analytical requirements for this research are very much in line with the experience and capabilities both of Cornell and of its potential partners.

### **Institutional arrangements**

CIRES, the Ivorian SISERA institution, has enthusiastically endorsed the idea of collaborative research with Cornell on HIV prevention under SAGA. As the SISERA institution, CIRES would be Cornell's main Ivorian partner in this research. However, this does not preclude joining forces with ENSEA to take advantage of their experience in demographic and economic survey research. This collaboration would be supported by CIRES. A request has recently been made to Dr. Koffi N'Guessan, director of ENSEA, for collaboration with Cornell and CIRES.

A detailed description of the proposed research has recently been sent to several key USAID officials, including Warren Buckingham, Senior Technical Advisor for HIV/AIDS, Carleene Dei, and other experts. We are anticipating their comments and suggestions on the research.

### **Activities over the previous six months**

In May, 2002, Peter Glick and David Sahn traveled to West Africa to explore the potential for conducting HIV-related research. In Bamako, Peter Glick and David Sahn met with Carleene Dei, the director of WARP. Later, Peter Glick continued to Dakar to meet with Felix Awantang, the WARP Health Strategic Objective Team Leader. In Abidjan, he met extensively over a period of a week with Dr. Jim Allman, Project Manager of FHA/AIDS for USAID. He also met several times with personnel of CIRES, including Dr. Barry Mody, Assistant Director. (The director, Dr Quattara, was out of town). Also consulted with was Dr. Koffi N'Guessan, the director of ENSEA which has done a great deal of HIV survey related research in the country. Finally, meetings were held as well with a number of key public health officials involved in HIV prevention.

The general focus of these meetings was research on HIV prevention, reflecting the strong emphasis placed by WARP on HIV prevention as well as the overarching motivation of the rising concern over HIV/AIDS throughout the region. Evaluation of Voluntary HIV Testing and Counseling (VCT) interventions quickly emerged as the most appropriate specific focus of our research, with Côte d'Ivoire as the most appropriate site, at least for the first phase of the activity. Factors contributing to this focus on VCT, and on VCT in Côte d'Ivoire, are (1) high HIV prevalence and increasing involvement of the authorities in promoting HIV prevention in Côte d'Ivoire; (2) the significant expansion of VCT sites throughout the country planned over the next several years; (3) the high level of cooperation and communication among various donor groups and research institutions operating in the country; (4) the fact that the findings from Côte d'Ivoire should have broad regional relevance, in part because other countries will experience an increase in prevalence rates and a consequent need for more testing; and (5) the wealth of local

research expertise and experience in analyzing HIV and related behaviors. This includes both the SISERA institution (CIRES) and ENSEA. For example, a very productive meeting was held with a team of ENSEA researchers to discuss methodological and data issues. All parties expressed a very high level of interest in this research and willingness to participate or cooperate with the Cornell/SAGA efforts.

In terms of institutional arrangements, Dr Mody of CIRES enthusiastically endorsed the idea of collaborative research with Cornell on HIV prevention under SAGA. As the SISERA institution, CIRES would be Cornell's main Ivorian partner in this research. However, this does not preclude joining forces with ENSEA to take advantage of their experience in demographic and economic survey research. This collaboration was supported by Dr Mody. A request has recently been made to Dr. N'Guessan, director of ENSEA, for collaboration with Cornell and CIRES.

A detailed description of the proposed research has recently been sent to several key AID officials, including Warren Buckinham, Senior Technical Advisor for HIV/AIDS, Carleene Dei, and others. We are anticipating their comments and suggestions on the research.

#### **Activities anticipated in the next six months**

Dr Mody and his colleagues will prepare a detailed proposal that CIRES will submit to SISERA for research funding for their part in this work. We have also been and will continue to be in contact with officials at CDC in Abidjan and Family Health International about plans for opening VCT sites around which the surveys can be conducted.

Unfortunately, the recent violence in Côte d'Ivoire has thrown these plans into doubt. Given the effort expended, and the fact that Côte had been selected as the ideal site for our HIV research under SAGA, this is very disappointing. We are in the process, essentially, of regrouping. Given the great importance of AIDS to African development, it is worth the effort to redirect attention elsewhere geographically while not losing focus on the overall topic. Therefore, we are considering other countries where similar research could be carried out under SAGA. Kenya remains a possibility, since good contacts have been made with IPAR and others, and VCT is expanding there, too, as in Côte d'Ivoire.

In addition, we are exploring another alternative, which is to analyze many HIV issues using secondary data sources from Africa. Owing to the availability (primarily) of Demographic and Health Survey data from many countries, there is a great deal of analysis that can be done. For many countries, these surveys have been fielded more than once in the past decade, with detailed modules on HIV/AIDS knowledge, testing, and sexual behavior. The existence of multiple rounds makes it possible to examine how behaviors and knowledge have been changing over time as the epidemic, and general awareness of it, has expanded. Understanding how these changes are related to

socioeconomic variables as well as location (e.g., rural, urban) will help better pinpoint gaps in knowledge and behavior that prevention and education programs can target.

### **C. Institutions and Empowerment**

As part of the SAGA agenda, we are launching a research program on community schools. This research topic cuts across thematic categories of education and empowerment and even touches on other themes as the community school is conceived as holistic. This topic has considerable potential for the discourses, with policy implications, on promising paths in the search for educational models that can promote and sustain social progress in Africa. Despite numerous official declarations about the need to provide basic education for all, many African countries still face difficulty in enrolling the last 10-25 % of the children of primary school age. Community schools are considered a viable and even more realistic alternative to reach these groups. However, while a few countries like Senegal and Mali have a longer tradition of the form of community school that is officially recognized, it is still a marginal phenomenon in other countries. Furthermore, even where it has been popularized, it is controversial in part because some perceive and treat it as the “private school” of the poor.

Besides issues of school effectiveness and general educational process, the community school offers a space for community involvement in decision-making processes. Since the 1990s, in the context of popular movements, liberal democracy and advocacy of NGOs and civil society in general, there have been a call for increased participation of the various stakeholders in public debates and decision-making processes in general. Thus, the overall community involvement in the educational process constitutes an opportunity for empowerment of the population, including the hitherto marginalized groups. Generally, the proportion of the female population that is left out of the formal school system is higher than that of the males. Women, in part as a result of their unequal access to formal education, especially at the higher educational level, are likely to be fewer in number among the school teachers and administrators and also generally among the educational decision-makers. Community schools offer possibilities of participation in the process regardless of the levels of education, gender, and the socio-economic status of the members of the community.

In the summer 2002, N’Dri Assié-Lumumba traveled to Côte d’Ivoire, with a brief stopover in Paris, in order to collect some broad information on the community schools to help prepare a research agenda on this topic. In Paris, she had some fruitful exchange of ideas with, and received documents from, Dr. Dramane Oulai, at the International Institute of Educational Planning, who has conducted research on community schools in Cameroon, Mali, Senegal and Togo, and is currently focusing on Kenya and planning to work on the same topic in Namibia in the near future. Collaboration will continue during the SAGA and IIEP respective studies.

Despite the state of the socio-political situation in Côte d’Ivoire, and in anticipation of any future resolution, it is worth summarizing the preliminary work conducted during the summer visit following a first visit in January 2002. In Abidjan,

Dr. Assié-Lumumba had several working sessions with the Ivorian Ministry of Education and worked more specifically with Mr. Kagohi Robalé, technical adviser to the Minister of Education, in charge of the “Non Formal Education” project. This early stage of the project provides a great opportunity for our research to undertake an in-depth study of the process from the first year of the experimental stage to the planned extension of the program. While the project designed by the Ministry will include some form of technical evaluation, the SAGA research will provide a more comprehensive assessment including academic/critical analysis with policy implications and recommendations.

### **Activities during the previous six months**

Dr. Assié-Lumumba had very productive meetings at CIRES, the SISERA affiliate in Côte d’Ivoire. Her meetings with Professor Mama Ouattara, the new director, were very positive. He expressed a strong interest in the different components of the SAGA project. As the CIRES acting director, Dr. Jean-Marie Manso, indicated in January 2002, and Professor Ouattara reiterated, CIRES has a long experience of hosting international students, and thus would welcome the opportunity to host and mentor any laureates of SAGA small grant program who might choose to conduct their research in Côte d’Ivoire. One of the CIRES meetings was extended to the full research personnel. A total number of 19 professors and researchers, including the Director, attended a productive meeting.

At the USAID Mission, Dr. Assié-Lumumba met Mr. Willibrord Shasha, M.D., who is Technical Director of the US-AID FHA in charge of the HIV/AIDS . They discussed the work that is being done in the West African sub-region regarding HIV/AIDS. He explained that any assistance or collaboration must include this focal point.

N’Dri Assié-Lumumba traveled also to Dakar where assisted by SAGA graduate student research assistant Marieme Lô (who is also working on community schools for her Ph. D. thesis), she had a productive visit, meeting key actors in the Senegalese experience of “*écoles communautaires de base.*” These resources have been playing key roles in the development the community schools since 1993. They include: (1) Mr. Mamadou Mara, Chef de la Division Appui au Développement (DADS), Direction de l’Alphabétisation et de l’Education de Base (DAEB); (2) Mr. Allassane Ndiaye, Director of Direction de l’Alphabétisation et de l’Education de Base who has involved in community schools for 8 years; (3) Madame Fatou Diop (with whom Dr. Assié-Lumumba had preliminary discussions on the telephone about the community schools in May 2002 while in Dakar) of Projet d’Apuppui au Plan d’Action (PAPA); and (4) Madame Rokhaya Ndoye of ADEF who played a major role in the initial stage of the community schools.

In Dakar, Dr. Assié-Lumumba also met Dr. Elias Ayuk, who is a program officer at SISERA; Dr. Gilles Forget, the IDRC Regional Director, who was acting Executive Director of SISERA; and Mr. Laurent Elder of IDRC’s project Acacia: Communities and the Information Society in Africa. Although Dr. Assié-Lumumba’s focus during this trip

was on community schools, she also mentioned her other interests in ICTs. She met with Professor Abdoulaye Diagne, Director of CREA, who reiterated the Center's general interest in the SAGA project and specific interest in taking part in the study on community schools. She also visited the USAID Mission in Dakar and had fruitful discussions with Mr. Massar Beye, the Deputy-Director.

### **Activities anticipated in the next six months**

A research proposal on the community schools in Côte d'Ivoire and Senegal is in preparation. After the research team, with representation of the Ministry in charge of the community schools and CREA, is formed the research instruments will be elaborated and tested. Despite the ongoing political situation in Côte d'Ivoire, the proposal will be prepared and necessary adjustments will be made as the situation unfolds in next six months. However, the research in Senegal will start in January according to the work plan in the research proposal.

## **II. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**

### **1. Development of the Mode of Operation for SAGA Technical Assistance Activities**

The broad parameters of SAGA technical assistance activities are set down in the technical proposal to USAID, and have subsequently been modified to include significant collaboration and coordination with SISERA's activities. Under the terms of the cooperative agreement, Cornell and Clark-Atlanta Universities are to provide technical assistance to SISERA partner institutes on a demand-driven basis. Recognizing the potential for excess demand for such assistance, the technical application establishes broad guidelines for the types of activities that will receive priority. This includes those:

- that complement the cooperative agreement's research activities;
- that complement other technical assistance activities at Cornell and Clark-Atlanta;
- that complement the cooperative agreement's small grants program;
- with potential to establish long-lived professional relationships;
- with potential to mentor young scholars; and
- with potential to redress long-standing gender inequities in support to African economic researchers.

In addition, at the initial meeting between Cornell, Clark-Atlanta, SISERA, and USAID, held in Ithaca on October 29, 2001, we agreed that Cornell and Clark-Atlanta should coordinate its own technical assistance activities with those of SISERA, which also has support for such activities from USAID under the SAGA initiative (see [Attachment 2](#), the Memorandum of Understanding dated December 10, 2001). Establishing the exact nature of this cooperation took some time, but after extensive discussions between CU/CAU, SISERA, and USAID, we circulated a memo to institute

directors to inform them of the possibilities for technical assistance under SAGA (see Attachment 3, memo dated March 26, 2002).

Parallel to these activities, SISERA developed its own, SAGA-funded, research competition for its partner institutes (see Attachment 4, Information and Invitation to Participate in SAGA). Steve Younger consulted extensively with SISERA and USAID on the design of this competition. An important feature is that institutes preparing proposals will receive “coaching” from an established scholar. These resource people will provide a critical review of an institute’s draft proposal, and suggest data sources and methods appropriate to the proposals theme. In addition, recognizing that many research resources are difficult to access from Africa, resource people will acquire relevant material and send it to the institute. Insofar as possible, this coaching will come from the Cornell/Clark-Atlanta consortium, although in cases where an appropriate resource person cannot be identified within our institutions, we will approach resource people from other institutions.

While the initial Memorandum of Understanding between CU/CAU and SISERA calls for CU/CAU staff to review SISERA research proposals as well as to coach them, we subsequently decided against this, for two reasons. First, there is a potential conflict of interest from being both a coach and a reviewer for a proposal. More importantly, we expect that some SISERA research activities will be coordinated with the CU/CAU SAGA research agenda. Given that possibility, there would be a serious conflict of interest if CU/CAU were affiliated with a research activity and also its reviewer. Thus, SISERA has agreed to seek outside reviewers for all proposals.

## **2. Activities**

To date, there have been three SAGA-related activities to provide technical assistance to SISERA partner institutes. We present each of those in turn, followed by a general review of other, related, activities over the course of the year.

### **Uganda Survey Data Analysis Workshop**

As part of the process to select specific topics for SAGA’s collaborative research in Uganda, Steve Younger traveled to Kampala in November, 2001, and again in June, 2002. During these visits, he held extensive meetings with the Economic Policy Research Centre (the SISERA partner in Uganda), academics, policymakers, donors, and other stakeholders in Uganda to debate the most appropriate themes for policy-oriented research in Uganda. During these consultations, a surprisingly large number of people noted that Uganda is a country rich in data, but with very few people using those data. Further, there is general agreement that the main problem is not funding for research, but a scarcity of researchers who are both interested in and capable of doing quantitative data analysis that is useful for policy making. Ugandans expressed particular concern that the main users of the data are foreign.



This technical assistance was designed to address the imbalance between abundant data and scarce researchers in Uganda. Both EPRC and Cornell have considerable experience at training researchers to analyze survey data using advanced econometric techniques and software. Thus, we had an excellent opportunity to provide a valuable technical assistance activity under SAGA. Further, our previous experience with such workshops allowed us to organize the activity quickly. In the event, the workshop was held from August 26, to September 6, 2002, with Steve Younger (CU) and John Okidi (EPRC) serving as joint coordinators and resource people.

In addition to developing general skills for survey data analysis, the workshop also aimed to generate interest in research areas relevant to SAGA's research program. By showing the workshop's participants both research topics and the methods to address them, we hoped to interest a group of researchers who might participate in the SAGA research agenda. We chose our topics accordingly. In particular, we discussed general poverty analysis and poverty comparisons; the incidence of public expenditures and taxes; agricultural development; and the demand for public social services. For each topic, we reviewed two or three key papers that use survey data to address a policy issue. We then worked through the steps of how to conduct a similar analysis with data available in Uganda. This latter activity was very much hands on. EPRC provided one computer for each pair of participants so that everyone could work through the program required for the analysis. This was followed by exercises in which each pair had to work through a similar problem with new data.

A further goal of the workshop was to inform the consultations between researchers and policymakers that are, in turn, to inform SAGA's research agenda in Uganda. To accomplish this, we included the participants in a day-long consultative meeting intended to define specific policy-relevant research topics. In addition to the workshop's researchers, this meeting included representatives from the government, donors, university faculty, and the press.

Finally, the workshop helped to encourage young researchers to become involved in the SAGA research program. Workshop participants included junior staff at EPRC and graduate students from Makerere University. In this regard, we are off to a good start: at least five workshop participants are currently preparing research prospectuses for consideration in SAGA's Uganda research program.

The workshop participants included four EPRC researchers, four Makerere University lectures, two graduate students, and one researcher from the Bank of Uganda. In addition to these Ugandan participants, six researchers from other SISERA partner institutes attended, two each from Kenya (IPAR), Tanzania (Economic and Social Research Foundation (ESRF)), and Zambia (Institute for Economic and Social Research (INESOR) of the University of Zambia).

The participants' evaluations of the workshop were quite positive. It is particularly interesting that almost all thought that the length of time was about right, despite the grueling pace of eight hours a day over ten days. (The resource people, at

least, were exhausted by the end!) We were also surprised that the responses to the infrastructure question were a little less positive than for other questions, despite the fact that EPRC's computers and networked internet access were better than anything that we have worked with in Africa before.

### **Technical Assistance for Education Analysis in Senegal**

During May, 2002, Peter Glick was in Senegal to assist the Centre de Recherche en Economie Appliquée (CREA), the Senegal SISERA institution, in the design of household surveys. In addition, Leopold Sarr, a doctoral student at Cornell and Senegalese national, who is working on his dissertation was sent to Dakar from Mid-June to early October. The technical assistance team from Cornell University worked primarily with the director, Abdoulaye Diagne, and with lead researchers Monseur Dafe and Salimata Faye. The specific area in which Cornell is providing technical assistance is in the design of household, community, and school-level questionnaires for examining education outcomes, as well as the planning and design of sampling procedures and related analytic approaches for data analysis.

While CREA has done much research on education in Senegal, the data collection efforts for their education research are very ambitious. They involve a complicated enumeration process (locating former PASEC students from school rosters as well as selecting a random sample of non-PASEC households in the same areas). The survey instruments are complex as well, in part because a great deal of retrospective data are planned to be collected in order to understand factors behind school entry decisions, dropout, and test scores. Cornell has had extensive experience with these types of surveys. Hence we were able to advise on issues such as enumeration, sample size, questionnaire design, and survey logistics. This additionally involved providing technical assistance to the Direction de la Prévision et de la Statistique (DPS), who will be working with CREA in the implementation of the survey. Most recently, Leopold Sarr was involved in the successful field test in an urban and a rural area in September. Cornell will help CREA with revisions based on the field test results in the coming weeks. The actual implementation of the survey will take place in January, 2003; the delay is due to the implementation of the national census this fall.

### **3. Other Related Activity**

#### **Review and Coaching of SISERA Research Proposals**

Since the May announcement of SISERA's research competition, partner institutes have submitted 14 research proposals for funding, with most coming in the past two months. An ad hoc committee of Elias Ayuk (SISERA), Steve Younger (CU), and Joe Abbey (CEPA, Ghana) has given each proposal a preliminary review. To date, two proposals have been sent directly to external reviewers; three have been assigned to resource people for coaching (two at Cornell and one to a former Cornell faculty now at

International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI); three proposals were returned to their authors as clearly inappropriate for the SISERA competition; and the rest are awaiting an initial decision.

### **Meetings**

October 29, 2001: Our meeting with Cornell and Clark-Atlanta SAGA principals, Rita Aggarwal, and Diery Seck discussed, in a limited way, the parameters of the technical assistance program. We agreed in principle to share these responsibilities between SISERA and CU/CAU.

November 15, 2001: David Sahn and Mesfin Bezuneh traveled to Dakar to meet with the SISERA directors to discuss the SAGA research program. This involved presenting the research agenda, discussing opportunities for access technical assistance, and the procedures and purpose of the competitive grants program.

January 4, 2002: Steve Younger, Mesfin Bezuneh, and Diery Seck again met to discuss the technical assistance program at the ASSA meetings in Atlanta.

### **Possible Workshop on Multidisciplinary Methods**

N'Dri Assié-Lumumba had discussions with CIRES in Abidjan, CREA in Dakar and SISERA about possible areas of cooperation. A common area of interest mentioned by her and which stirred considerable interest is the possibility of organizing training activities/workshops on multidisciplinary methods. While the SISERA affiliate members commonly tend to be uni-disciplinary, focusing only on economics, they all indicated that the current socio-economic challenges require multi-disciplinary approaches and cross-disciplinary dialogue.

## **III. COMPETITIVE GRANTS**

During the first year of the award we focused on four major areas: 1) establishing the necessary infrastructure and logistical support to handle the research component of SAGA at Clark Atlanta University. This included establishing a SAGA/Grants Office with telephone, fax and email facilities, and as well as recruiting a full-time assistant; 2) developing guidelines and criteria for the program; and 3) establishing a direct link between the SAGA/CAU office and the SISERA institutes (which included a visit to Senegal) and; 4) disseminating the grant announcement to relevant disciplines/departments of US universities via web-site, emails and presentations at various professional meetings (e.g., the AEA/2002 meeting in Atlanta, Georgia). Based

on the meetings at Cornell University and in Senegal, guidelines for the Competitive Research Grants Program were developed.

During this first year and first round, we received 22 proposals (April 1, 2002 was the deadline). Prior to evaluation, specific proposal criteria were developed as well as a process to apply the evaluation criteria (see [Attachment 5](#)). The SAGA office assembled all received proposal packets from the applicants. We communicated with the applicants in reference to any missing or incomplete information. Two blind reviewers were selected to participate in the evaluation process. Prior to selecting the blind reviewers, we developed criteria for the blind reviewers (i.e., evaluation criteria and scale). The blind reviewers were instructed to review all 22 proposals and to rank them. The blind reviewers were given a scale for their overall evaluation score. The blind reviewers were also encouraged to give their comments on the proposals strengths and weaknesses. The SAGA office included these comments in the acceptance packets to the awardees and encouraged the awardees to incorporate the blind reviewers comments into their research.

We also contacted all the SISERA institutes that would be hosting a SAGA researcher. We then forwarded the applicants research plan and a copy of all the deliverables to the hosting SISERA institute. A copy of this information was also sent to the awardees.

Prior to the final awards, the proposals were ranked according to the blind reviewers score. This ranking was based on the average score from both reviewers. From the final ranking, a short list was created. This short list was based on the average score of each proposal. This short list consisted of 13 proposals. Each applicant was contacted and a phone review/discussion was held. From this process, the final awardees were selected. In summary, the final awards were based on the following: 1) Blind reviewer evaluation; 2) the proposed host SISERA Institute evaluation and; 3) the evaluation of the principal review committee members (Drs. Erik Thorbecke, Cornell University and Mesfin Bezuneh, Clark Atlanta University).

We awarded nine (9) individuals, 6 students (3 females) and 3 faculty (1 female). Two other proposals that were rated highly were not funded during this cycle due to, in one case, lack of institutional support, and in the other, not being a Ph.D. student. Each awardee was sent an acceptance packet. The packet included the following items: 1) Cover letter (with instructions for deliverables due prior to fieldwork); 2) Acceptance letter; 3) Award check; 4) Reviewers comments; 5) A copy of information sent to their host institution; 6) A list of the Deliverables.

As of date, all but one, have either been in the field or are still in the field. The host SISERA institutes for the nine awardees are:

- 1) Economic Policy Research Center (EPRC), **Uganda** (2 awardees);
- 2) Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research (ISSER), **Ghana**, (2 awardees);
- 3) Economic and Social Research Foundation (ESRF), **Tanzania**;

- 4) Groupe de Recherche en Economie Appliquee et Theorique (GREAT), **Mali**;
- 5) Centre d'Etudes et de Recherches en Economie et Gestion (CEREG), **Cameroon**;
- 6) Institute of Economic and Social Research (INESOR), **Zambia**;
- 7) National Institute of Economic Policy (NIEP), **South Africa**.

The total amount released during the first round of year one was \$105,000.00 (\$5,000 provided to the hosting institution to assist in administrative costs).

#### **Activities anticipated in the next six months**

- 1) Revise the criteria of the Competitive Research Grants Program using the experience learned from Year one.
- 2) Produce a brochure of the Competitive Research Grants Program.
- 3) Distribute this brochure to all academic and research institutions on a timely manner.
- 4) Collect and assemble the trip reports from the Year one awardees.
- 5) Assist grantees in their visit to USAID/Washington, DC.
- 6) Participate in various forums and seminars with some of the returning awardees (e.g. Tuskegee University, December, 2002).
- 7) Up-date the web site.
- 8) Receive proposals, and assemble for review.

**STRATEGIES AND ANALYSES FOR GROWTH AND ACCESS (SAGA)**

**PROGRESS REPORT**

Cornell University and Clark Atlanta University  
October 2002

Attachment 1

GHANA: KEY POLICY ISSUES

# GHANA: KEY POLICY ISSUES

*Ernest Aryeetey*

1. Introduction: The Nature of Ghana's Economic Problems
  - Long-Term: High levels of poverty;  
Income distribution worsening;  
No structural transformation;  
Growth pattern is inconsistent.
  
  - Short-Term: Absorption remains high;  
Largely a consequence of the unbridled expansion of public spending on social services and other economic services;  
Inflation in the 30%-50% range is becoming 'normal';  
Rapid nominal depreciation of cedi, but considerable real appreciation for long periods;  
Debt situation has become unsustainable, hence HIPC;  
External finance is increasingly difficult;  
Urban unemployment is worsening.
  
2. There has been a tension in policy orientation and resource allocation between long-term growth and poverty-reduction on the one hand and macroeconomic stabilization on the other.
  - There has been a tendency to view them as separate issues and best dealt with by different groups of people and organizations in an uncoordinated manner;
  - The result is that recent programs for poverty-reduction have paid little attention to macro stabilization and those negotiating support for stabilization have shown very little understanding for the requirements for future growth and poverty-reduction, despite PRSP.
  
3. The most significant policy issue has thus become how to achieve macroeconomic stabilization in the shortest possible time without compromising steady long-term growth, structural transformation and significantly reduced poverty.
  - To what extent will reduced growth in public spending affect private production? [Everyone agrees (at the national forum) that it depends on where the cuts occur]; No systematic study of public expenditures.
  - Following from above, we have not focused adequately on how best to prioritize public spending with both short and long-term goals in mind (both policy and institutional constraints);
  - Also, while we 'agree' periodically on where to place cuts, albeit arbitrarily, there is hardly ever a strong commitment to this in the budget process, MTEF notwithstanding; (institutional problem?)
  - Hardly any attention is paid to essential expenditure-switches for both consumers and producers in relation to tradables and non-tradables with a view to reduced absorption; (thus not clear what the goal of the exchange rate policy is).

- The growing financing of public spending from both domestic and external sources is acknowledged to be problematic, particularly since it deprives the private sector of finance in addition to worsening the macroeconomic imbalance;
  - In the long term, there are no strong indications that the private sector is adequately prepared to make the commitments that will facilitate long term growth (significant structural problems).
4. Solving the macro imbalance problem obviously requires reduced absorption as well as exchange rate re-alignment to facilitate expenditure switching (not guaranteed!). Recent experience shows that this will achieve stable conditions in the short term. In the long term, removing structural problems will require increased investment spending and institution-building. It is not clear how this can be done except if there is a major overhaul of external financing arrangements that will include a change in the composition of external support, moving increasingly towards a greater role for FDI.
- The Noguchi Statement has several suggestions for achieving macroeconomic stabilization including the setting of inflation targets as well as targets for annual nominal depreciations of the Cedi. Emphasis is on removing waste in the public sector and strengthening Bank of Ghana.
  - Strengthening institutions that will facilitate direct investments is crucial. It will have to go beyond simply erecting new public offices to re-orienting the rules, regulations and norms that govern economic endeavor. In addition to those institutions essential for attracting foreign investment, such as the restructuring of the legal system and the existence of rule of law, it is most important that institutions governing access to domestic resources are rationalized. Examples are the inadequacies of the land tenure system and the non-existence of agricultural land markets, the dysfunctional credit market and the rigidities of the labor market due to poor human capital.



**STRATEGIES AND ANALYSES FOR GROWTH AND ACCESS (SAGA)**

**PROGRESS REPORT**

Cornell University and Clark Atlanta University  
October 2002

Attachment 2

Memorandum of Understanding between Cornell and Clark-Atlanta  
Universities and SISERA for the Implementation of the SAGA Project

# **Memorandum of Understanding between Cornell and Clark-Atlanta Universities and SISERA for the Implementation of the SAGA Project**

## **Preamble**

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has approved a project entitled Strategic Analysis for Growth and Access (SAGA). The goal of the project, which will cover the period 2001-2005, is to provide support for African economic research. For the implementation of the project, three agencies have received grants that will support their respective programs of activities under SAGA. The African Economic Research Consortium (AERC) will conduct support for individual African economic researchers, in continuation of its regular program activities. The Secretariat for Institutional Support for Economic Research in Africa (SISERA) will use part of the funding support received from USAID to conduct its core activities and the remainder to implement activities designed specifically for the delivery of the SAGA project.

The latter include the management of a research competition and of a technical assistance program to be delivered in collaboration with Cornell and Clark-Atlanta Universities (CU/CAU). CU/CAU, the third recipient of the SAGA funds, will be responsible for the implementation of three components of the project, namely a collaborative research program on African economic issues, a small grants program and a technical assistance program. The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is to provide further details on the collaboration that CU/CAU and SISERA have agreed to undertake in the delivery of their respective shares of the SAGA project. The terms of this agreement do not change or replace the responsibilities faced respectively by CU/CAU and SISERA with respect to the agreements signed with USAID.

## **1. Research activities**

Cornell and Clark-Atlanta Universities and SISERA have distinct but complementary responsibilities in the conduct of economic research activities under SAGA. In order to capture the potential synergies that can arise from active collaboration, they will cooperate in the following areas.

### **Implementation of the CU/CAU research program under SAGA**

CU/CAU have identified four major themes that will be the focus of the research program under SAGA. This research program aims to involve African economic research centres and researchers. SISERA will participate in the program by providing input into the selection of the countries and research centres that will cooperate with CU/CAU. USAID will also participate in the selection process. SISERA will play a role in the design and organization of dissemination activities by supporting seminars, conferences and workshops and by providing opportunities for publication of the research output, whenever possible. CU/CAU will keep SISERA informed about the progress of its research activities under SAGA to help facilitate planning of dissemination activities and monitor the institutional capacity building that will result from the involvement of African economic research institutions.

## **SISERA's research competition under SAGA**

SISERA will organize a research competition program aimed at supporting research project submitted by African economic research centres. As a component of the technical assistance provided for under the SAGA activity, Cornell University will serve on the Selection Panel of the program. It will also provide referee services for the projects submitted in the program. Its involvement in the research competition will also include the provision of technical assistance in the areas of coaching of research teams in the preparation of their proposals, and support for bibliographic search and access to databases. CU/CAU will attend the meetings of the selection panel and the annual conference of the research competition program.

### **2. Small grants program**

Clark-Atlanta University, will conduct as a sub-contractor of Cornell University a Grants Program aimed at facilitating visits by U.S.-based scholars to African economic research and policy institutions. Clark-Atlanta will set up facilities i.e. office, fax and telephone lines and secretarial services, in the conduct of its mission. The research themes that will be the focus for the selection process will be chosen in collaboration with SISERA. To the extent feasible, these themes will be consistent with the research themes that are detailed in Cornell's overall work plan. In this regard, SISERA will consult with its research centres and African regional organizations that may be interested in participating in the program.

The Grants Program will be governed by a Selection Committee that will include:

- One representative of Clark-Atlanta University, Director of the Program
- One representative of Cornell University
- One representative of one historically black American university
- One representative of SISERA
- One representative of AERC
- One representative of an African regional economic organization (to be appointed by SISERA in consultation with Clark-Atlanta).

The details of the selection process and acceptance procedures will be finalized through further consultations between Clark-Atlanta, Cornell University and SISERA. The Selection Committee will review the proposals and select the grantees based on virtual meetings to be coordinated by Clark-Atlanta.

The Grants Program is expected to result in a number of outputs, namely:

- A brief written report submitted by the grantee at the end of the visit to the African host institution
- A written report by the African host institution at the end the researcher's visit
- One or two seminars or workshops delivered by the grantee at the host institution, which will include the presentation of the findings of the research project
- Availability for the host institution of all data and information collected by the visiting researcher during or in connection with his/her visit

- Publication of one or two manuscripts in the SISERA Working Paper Series (co-authoring of manuscripts with researchers of the host institution will be strongly encouraged)

### **3. Technical Assistance**

CU/CAU will provide technical assistance to African economic research centres at the request of SISERA in the following areas:

- Researchers affiliated with SISERA institutions will be given the opportunity to attend training workshops organized by Cornell University outside the SAGA project. Financial support for attending such workshops will be provided by SISERA of the collaborating institution.
- At the request of SISERA, CU/CAU will contribute staff time (course design and lecturers) for workshops and other training events initiated by SISERA or in collaboration with other agencies
- CU/CAU will endeavour to provide technical assistance at the request of SISERA in areas outside the themes that are covered in its research program
- When technical assistance requests cannot be covered directly by CU/CAU staff, CU/CAU and SISERA will emphasize the need to enlist the contribution of African trainers in the delivery of the Technical Assistance Program. This contribution will seek to involve SISERA research institutions and other qualified individual's where appropriate
- Part of CU/CAU's technical assistance will be in the form of mentoring, coaching and other forms of scientific advice and supervision for African researchers affiliated with SISERA research centres
- Cornell University will serve as a member of the Selection Panel of SISERA's Research Competition and will provide scientific assistance related to the development, selection process of the proposals and final approval of the research output.
- When technical assistance is financed from SISERA funding, Cornell University will submit a pro-forma invoice for its services to SISERA for acceptance and order of services before engaging in technical assistance activities, or modification of previously agreed activities
- When technical assistance is financed from Cornell funding, Cornell will provide SISERA and the collaborating institution a estimated cost of providing the technical assistance, and will ensure that actual costs are within 10 percent of those estimated..

### **4. Management Plan**

CU/CAU have set up an Institutional Advisory Committee (IAC) whose role will be to define the strategy of their activities under SAGA and assess the degree of effectiveness of its interventions. The composition of the Committee presently includes faculty representatives of Cornell University and Clark-Atlanta University. Cornell and SISERA will add to this IAC one representative of SISERA and USAID, whose participation in annual meetings will be self-financed. In addition, we will consider expanding the membership of this committee,

where appropriate, to include one representative of an African Organization to be jointly selected by Cornell and SISERA.

The IAC will meet at least once a year and Cornell will serve as its Secretary.

December 10, 2001.

David Sahn, Cornell University

Dery Seck, SISERA

**STRATEGIES AND ANALYSES FOR GROWTH AND ACCESS (SAGA)**

**PROGRESS REPORT**

Cornell University and Clark Atlanta University  
October 2002

Attachment 3

Memorandum regarding Technical Assistance Under SAGA  
Dated March 26, 2002, to Directors of SISERA Institutions  
from Rita Aggarwal (USAID), Diéry Seck (IDEP),  
and Stephen D. Younger (Cornell)

## MEMORANDUM

March 26, 2002

To: Directors of SISERA Institutions

From: Rita Aggarwal, USAID SAGA Project Manager  
Diéry Seck, Director, Institute for Economic Development and Planning (IDEP)  
Stephen D. Younger, Cornell SAGA Project Technical Assistance Coordinator

Re: Technical Assistance Under SAGA

In addition to its support for collaborative research, the SAGA project provides funds for technical assistance to SISERA institutions. We would like for this technical assistance to be a coherent program rather than responses to a series of *ad hoc* requests. But of course, we also want the program to be as responsive to the needs and interests of your institutes as possible.

To achieve both of these goals, we would like to ask for your input as to the kind of technical assistance activities that will be the most beneficial for your institutes and for the policy making process in your country. We will circulate your comments among all the SISERA directors as a way of starting a virtual discussion of SAGA's technical assistance program. This will enable us to finalize a design when we meet in person at the next SISERA Directors' meeting.

While the eventual technical assistance will be demand-driven, there are a few parameters to keep in mind as you prepare your observations:

- 1) SAGA is a five-year project, so you should think long-term. In particular, our experience is that the best technical assistance programs involve repeated interaction between participants, so that each new activity can build on its predecessors.
- 2) We generally do not view large, international seminars as cost-effective. Travel budgets quickly balloon out of control in Africa. Instead, we prefer a series of in-country activities, which may well include seminars or short courses. However, in cases where international seminars are a more cost-effective option – for example, seminars designed for small numbers of participants from many countries – we will consider them.
- 3) In all SAGA technical assistance activities, we will prefer research themes that are consistent with the research component of the CU/CAU SAGA project,<sup>1</sup> but our support is not limited to those themes.
- 4) SAGA technical assistance activities can draw on the considerable breadth of research experience at Cornell, Clark-Atlanta, and SISERA.

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<sup>1</sup> See <http://www.saga.cornell.edu/saga/research.html> for an overview of these themes.

As David Sahn explained at the November meeting in Dakar, the collaborative research activities involving Cornell and Clark-Atlanta universities will focus on a core of five or six countries. SAGA's technical assistance, however, is available to *any* partner institution, emerging center, or collaborating center. Thus, we are interested in input from each and all of you.

The types of technical assistance that you might consider include support to your on-going research and policy outreach activities, and short courses or seminars on research themes and methods relevant to SAGA. But we do not want to limit the possibilities at this point, so please feel free to propose any and all ideas that you have.

Please send your responses to Steve Younger, the CU/CAU technical support coordinator, at [sdyl@cornell.edu](mailto:sdyl@cornell.edu) or at fax number 1-607-255-0178.



**STRATEGIES AND ANALYSES FOR GROWTH AND ACCESS (SAGA)**

**PROGRESS REPORT**

Cornell University and Clark Atlanta University  
October 2002

Attachment 4

All SISERA Partner Institutions:  
Information and Invitation to Participate in SAGA

CALL FOR PROPOSALS



## **STRATEGIES AND ANALYSES FOR GROWTH AND ACCESS (SAGA) PROJECT**

### **All SISERA Partner Institutions: Information and Invitation to Participate in SAGA.**

#### **CALL FOR PROPOSALS**

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is implementing an economic research and training program entitled Strategies and Analyses for Growth and Access (SAGA), covering the period October 2001- September 2006. The overall goal of SAGA is to increase African capacity to produce high quality, policy-oriented research on key issues affecting economic growth and access in Sub Saharan Africa. In support of this goal, SAGA has four main objectives: (1) strengthening of selected African economic research institutes; (2) expanding the pool of highly trained African economists; (3) conducting policy oriented research on economic growth and access issues; and (4) facilitating linkages between U.S. and African researchers.

The Secretariat for Institutional Support for Economic Research in Africa (SISERA) has received a grant that will support its programs of activities under SAGA. SISERA will use part of the funding support received from USAID to conduct its core activities and the remainder to implement activities designed specifically for the delivery of the SAGA project.

#### **SISERA's research competition under SAGA**

SISERA is organizing a research competition program to support research projects carried out by African economic research institutes. The purpose of this research competition is twofold: to strengthen the internal workings of the institute so that its ability to function effectively as an institute is increased, and to strengthen an institute's visibility in providing the analytical underpinnings for various government policymaking. Specifically, proposals that help build an institution's reputation in a particular area of research and/or include collaborative research amongst researchers at institutes are very desirable. In addition, indication of support for the research from the policymaking community or other important civil

society constituencies is highly encouraged.

The competition is open to researchers or team of researchers of SISERA and non-SISERA member institutions. Researchers or team of researchers from non-SISERA member institutes must submit proposals through a SISERA member institute in their country. All proposals should be submitted through the directors of SISERA member institutions. In countries where there are no SISERA member institutions, applicants may submit their proposals directly to SISERA.

### **Themes and specific research topics**

Multidisciplinary teams are encouraged to submit an application. The topics for research are open to any area of economics. The topic(s) must address an issue with current policy relevance in the respective countries or region. Proposals will be evaluated on the basis of set criteria, including contribution to institution building, policy relevance of the research, the soundness of the theoretical framework and methodology and cost effectiveness. **Potential applicants should note that the overall goal of this competition is to support capacity utilization rather than capacity building.** That is, the competition expects to draw very solid and technically sound proposals that can feed into the policy process in a timely manner.

SISERA will host an annual meeting for researchers in the research program to present interim and final reports.

### **Application guidelines**

All proposals must be prepared employing the following guidelines. Institutes may submit multiple applications.

- **Title of proposal**
- **Principal Investigator(s):** Your name(s), Institution, telephone number, fax number, mailing address, and email address on the cover page of the proposal.
- **Abstract of the proposal**
- **Project summary:** Provide a brief description of your proposal. This summary should be approximately 6-10 pages. The title of the proposal, names and affiliation of principal investigator(s) and the abstract will be your page 1.

**Follow standard approach. This includes:**

1. Introduction and problem statement
2. Objectives
3. Data and Research methods
4. Application of the research results—indication of demand for this research by policymakers or other domestic constituencies should be included here
5. Anticipated impacts
6. Project timeline including seminar presentations and reports and working papers preparations
7. Proposed Budget with detailed budget notes. Also show contribution by research institute
8. Bibliographic references
9. Curriculum vita of principal investigator (s) or team leader (s)

All grantees are expected to present the results of their work in seminars at their local institutions and at SISERA's annual meetings and submit a final report to SISERA at the completion of the research. The final report has no page limit. In addition, grantees are expected to prepare working papers and relevant policy briefs out of their final reports. The working papers should not be more than 20 pages (double-spaced) in length and should follow the format of SISERA working papers. The working papers and policy briefs will be published at SISERA's website. The dissemination of research results is an important aspect of the SAGA program. Therefore, applicants should include it as a key component of their proposal and reflect this accordingly in the budget. Researchers are also encouraged to prepare journal articles to be considered for publication in regional and internationally refereed journals. SISERA will explore the possibility of publishing some of the work as a special edition of selected journals.

**Project Preparation.**

Cornell University and CEPA (collectively called support institutions hereafter) will be available to assist on research themes and methods and to provide support for bibliographic search and access to databases. Specifically, the assistance includes, among others, (1) identifying and locating data sources; (2) providing suggestions for literature review on the subject of interest, and help in acquiring that literature; (3) suggestions for methods appropriate to a given problem; and (4) suggestions for

appropriate data collection methods. The SAGA program covers the cost of these consultations. Researchers or teams of researchers are therefore encouraged to make use of these services.

*Contact persons at the respective support institutions are:*

**Cornell University:** Dr. Stephen D. Younger, Cornell University, 3M4 MVR Hall, Ithaca, NY. 14853, USA, email: [sdyl@cornell.edu](mailto:sdyl@cornell.edu)

**Centre for Policy Analysis:** Dr Joseph Abbey or Dr. Charles Jebuni, Centre for Policy Analysis, No. 30A Josif Bros Tito Ave, Switchback Rd, Accra, Ghana, email [cepa@ncs.com.gh](mailto:cepa@ncs.com.gh).

### **Project Duration**

There is no specific duration required for the projects and multi-year submissions will be accepted. However, no award will be made within nine months, which falls on January 2006, to the end of the project. For multi-year projects, whether or not the timeframe is realistic will be an important criterion in the decision to grant an award.

### **Procedures for preparation and submission of project proposals**

1. Researcher or team of researchers develops concept for research project in consultation with head of institutions or director of centers. The consultation is important to ensure that research topics reflect institutional research priorities. Researchers or team of researchers are expected to demonstrate that such consultation actually occurred.
2. Interact with support institutions on assistance needs (if applicable and desired).
3. Researcher or team of researchers writes up project and corresponds with support institutions for comments on drafts, etc (if applicable and desired).
4. Researcher or team of researchers prepares final draft
5. Researcher or team of researchers sends copy of project proposal to director of SISERA member institution and a copy to SISERA for its records. SISERA will not act until an official submission is received from the Director.
6. Director of institution officially submits proposal to SISERA.

All applicants are requested to send an electronic version of the proposal. Prepare all documents using MICROSOFT word or Word Perfect

### **Amount of Grant**

The amount of a grant for a **one-year research project** should not exceed US \$40,000. Since projects can last more than a year, the cost effectiveness of the project should be given high consideration when preparing the budget. We expect to finance 5 – 8 proposals each year until nine months before the end of the project. The final reports and working papers for grants made in the fourth year of the competition must be received no less than three months (by June 2006) before the end of the program.

### **Selection panel.**

The selection panel will consist of SISERA and three independent reviewers. Upon receipt of proposals by SISERA, they will be sent out to three independent reviewers for their assessment. SISERA will provide the reviewers with guidelines and criteria for evaluation of project proposals. A meeting will be convened following the review to determine which proposals should be funded. All applicants will be informed of the decision of the selection panel. In some cases applicants might be requested to undertake some revision as recommended by reviewers and re-submit proposals for consideration.

### **Deadline.**

Your institution is being requested to disseminate this information to your researchers to prepare proposals for funding. Multidisciplinary teams are encouraged to apply. All requests must be submitted through the Directors of the centers **OR** in countries where there is no SISERA member institutes directly to SISERA. **Applications are being considered on a rolling basis so please apply immediately. Decisions about grants will be mailed to applicants in April, August and December each year. No grants will be awarded nine months before the project ends in September 2006.**

**Address your submissions to:**

**Catherine Daffe (SAGA Research Competition), [cdaffe@idrc.org.sn](mailto:cdaffe@idrc.org.sn).**

**STRATEGIES AND ANALYSES FOR GROWTH AND ACCESS (SAGA)**

**PROGRESS REPORT**

Cornell University and Clark Atlanta University  
October 2002

Attachment 5

SAGA/CRGP  
Proposal Evaluation Criteria

**SAGA/CRGP  
Proposal Evaluation Criteria**

Title of Proposed Research:

Principal Investigator(s):

**Conformity to selection criteria (Please comment briefly):**

1. The scientific merit with respect intrinsic importance of the topic in terms of potential impact on growth and access.
2. Relevance of the study to potential policy measures promoting growth and access.
3. Technical feasibility and quality of the proposed research, including the soundness of the methodology.
4. Likelihood that the research results will be used.
5. Applicability and Adaptability to other countries in the region.
6. Level of interest on the part of host-research institute, and the overall conformity of the proposal to SAGA's priority areas.
7. Involvement of local researchers; potential for enhancing local capacity for policy-oriented research and the degree of linkages with the local researchers.



8. Qualifications of the researcher

**Applying the criteria:**

These criteria will be used to evaluate proposals into two categories: necessary/essential, and sufficient/preferential.

- 1st Step: Criteria 1-5 are essential type, and will be used by two anonymous reviewers to order proposals, from "excellent" to "do not consider" (or a scale from 4 to 1).
- 2nd Step: Those proposals that received "favorable" ranking (those received a 4 or a 3, for example) from the first step will then be forwarded to the review/selection committee for final decision. This committee will then utilize criteria 6-8 to select the final grantees.

**Please use the following scale for your overall evaluation score:**

- 4 = excellent conformity to the indicated criteria
- 3 = recommended after modest revision
- 2 = substantial changes required
- 1 = not meriting further consideration

In effect, 4 means a go-ahead; 3 means provisional approval subject to modifications; 2 means do not fund, but a concept that may be worth pursuing for the next funding cycle; and 1 is a absolute rejection.

Overall evaluation score = \_\_\_\_\_

**Comments on strengths and weaknesses:**

Recommendations on conditionality for approval (for proposals scored as 3 only):