

SAGA

**Strategies and
Analysis for
Growth and
Access**

A project of

CORNELL

and

CLARK ATLANTA

Universities

**for research and
technical assistance
in Africa**

Funded by the
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USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



The number of poor people in Africa continues to rise despite macroeconomic policy reforms in the past 20 years in many sub-Saharan African countries. The HIV/AIDS crisis compounds this problem.

Strategies & Analysis for Growth & Access (SAGA), a project of Cornell and Clark Atlanta Universities, funded by a cooperative agreement with USAID, brings together key personnel having extensive experience in Africa as researchers, teachers, policymakers, and consultants, to offer a different approach.

We believe that macroeconomic reforms are only part of the basis for growth and poverty reduction—what is missing is a “bottom-up perspective.”

We are focusing on the capabilities of individuals, households, and communities—their productivities, their vulnerabilities, their institutions, and their environment.

Without **access for all Africans to education and health services**, goals for growth and poverty reduction cannot be fully realized.

Without **access to markets** and institutions that help the poor protect themselves against the vagaries of nature and the marketplace, they will remain trapped in poverty.

Without **access to local and national governments** that permit their voices to be heard, the interests of the poor may be absent from policy making.

SAGA is divided into 3 major components:

- ◆ Research
- ◆ Technical Assistance
- ◆ Competitive grants program

Our project differs from typical research projects in that both **the research and the technical assistance components are demand driven**, responding directly to needs and interests of our African colleagues. We seek input from African policymakers, stakeholders, and researchers in developing the activities of this project.

SAGA's goals are to conduct high quality, policy relevant research, and to increase African capacity to produce such research on key issues affecting economic growth and improved living standards in Africa.

Our four main objectives are to:

- 1. Conduct policy oriented research on economic growth equity and poverty alleviation*
- 2. Strengthen selected African economic research institutes*
- 3. Expand the pool of highly trained African economists*
- 4. Facilitate linkages between US and African researchers*

· **COLLABORATIVE SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH**

SAGA's research themes are:

- ◆ Schooling, Education & Human Capital
- ◆ Health and Nutrition
- ◆ Risk, Vulnerability & Poverty Dynamics
- ◆ Empowerment and Institutions

Our aim is to better understand the economic, social, institutional, and natural constraints that keep Africa's poor from prospering in the context of growth-oriented reforms.

We selected our geographical focus—**Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, South Africa, Uganda, and the West African region**— from countries and regions with USAID missions, and with commitments to working with the local members of The Secretariat for Institutional Support for Economic Research in Africa (SISERA).

Because our research is demand driven, setting our research agenda began with lengthy consultations with our African

partners to ensure local involvement and requires a continuing dialogue. Our research publications are available on-line at www.saga.cornell.edu/saga/workpap.html Here are some highlights of our research:

GHANA: With the Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research (ISSER), we have commissioned papers on Understanding Poverty in Ghana. The first drafts will be presented at a workshop in January 2004, in Accra, with final papers delivered at a major conference on the Economy of Ghana in July 2004, the first conference of a new "Network on the Economy of Ghana." We have developed a proposal to establish a major panel data set, necessary for serious analysis of poverty dynamics. We began to address the disconnect between qualitative and quantitative approaches to poverty analysis when ISSER hosted a workshop to advance collaborations between analysts in May 2003. Future Qual-Quant conferences are planned, with ISSER forming interdisciplinary teams to address the issues identified.

KENYA: Our research program has two key themes: "Reducing risk and vulnerability in rural Kenya" and "Empowering the rural poor." Each theme will lead to a policy workshop to present key findings to Kenyan research, policymaker, and donor communities. Interrelated sub-projects are being pursued with the Institute of Policy Analysis and Research (IPAR), Kenya Institute for Public Research and Analysis (KIPPRA), Tegemeo Institute of Agricultural Policy and Development, the University of Nairobi Department of Agricultural Economics, Clark Atlanta University, and Syracuse University. With KIPPRA, and co-sponsored by the World Bank, we are planning a workshop on "Mixing Qualitative and Quantitative Methods of Poverty Analysis in Kenya" in March 2004.

MADAGASCAR: Our research agenda was developed after discussions with the Centre d'Etudes Economique (CEE) and the USAID Mission. We are examining HIV/AIDS knowledge and behaviors in the context of a country with low prevalence but with a vulnerability to rapid increase in incidence. With additional funding from the World Bank, we are working with the Institut National de la Statistique (INSTAT) and the Ministry of Health to conduct surveys of health facilities and their users. We seek to determine effects of the recent political crisis, assess

impacts of the new government's temporary suspension of cost recovery on utilization of public and private health services, and provide a comprehensive view of the Malagasy public health sector seven years into health sector decentralization. We are working with INSTAT and the Ministry of Education to develop a research program to examine factors affecting primary and lower secondary schooling outcomes. Workshops are planned on health research in spring 2004, and on education in the fall. In collaboration with FOFIFA and INSTAT, the SAGA team is also exploring rural poverty dynamics and vulnerability, exploring the linkages between agricultural production and marketing and natural resource management patterns and poverty dynamics at household and commune level with the objective of informing the PRSP process.

UGANDA: Cornell and the Economic Policy Research Centre (EPRC) have established studies of poverty dynamics; multidimensional intertemporal and spatial poverty comparisons; modeling infant mortality over time; modeling behavior and HIV/AIDS; tax incidence; demand for health care consultations; public water supply and women's time use; and agricultural commercialization and children's nutritional status. A conference is planned for early 2004, in Kampala to present papers, with a briefing for policymakers to discuss recommendations and relevance of the research.

SOUTH AFRICA: We are working with the Development Policy Research Unit (DPRU) to build its capacities for research. SAGA has helped DPRU prepare a proposal to the African Economic Research Consortium (AERC) for research on labor markets. We also focus on the evolution of poverty in the post-Apartheid era, analyzing labor market trends, labor markets and vulnerability, and poverty correlates. Another proposal, "Human Capital Outcomes in South Africa: The Role of Primary and Secondary School Institutions," has been prepared and submitted to SISERA. We plan to commission papers on poverty and policy issues based on discussions with USAID-South Africa, and plan a major conference on poverty and policy, organized by DPRU, for October 2004.

WEST AFRICA: Our consultations focused on low educational attainment, lagging cognitive skill development, and large gender bias in



David Sahn, SAGA director, and Leopold Sarr, Cornell graduate student (right) working on field test of education and health survey in Senegal.

schooling. In Senegal and Côte d'Ivoire, we are investigating household, community, and school-level determinants of primary and secondary enrollment; school level transitions and progress through school; grade repetition and dropout rates; and learning (both academic and "life skills"). We are working in Senegal with Conférence des Ministres de l'Éducation Nationale (CONFEMEN), Centre de Recherche en Économie Appliquée (CREA), the Ministry of Education, Direction de la Prévision et de la Statistique, Institut National d'Études et d'Action pour le Développement de l'Éducation (INEADE). In Côte d'Ivoire, we are working with Ivorian researchers at Ecole Nationale Supérieure de Statistique et d'Économie Appliquée (ENSEA) and Centre Ivoirien de Recherche Économique et Sociale (CIRES), and with French researchers from Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique (INRA). With our partners, we designed and implemented a large and comprehensive household survey, trained enumerators and supervisors, and provided on-site supervision. Dissemination of findings will be presented at conferences in 2004, for researchers, policymakers, and stakeholders. A proposal is being prepared to research distance learning programs for teachers. Research on community schools, assessing their challenges and potential, and areas of innovation in addressing questions of inequality and equity, is also underway.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Technical assistance under SAGA has included: training workshops, support to SISERA's research competition, and support to individual SISERA institutes in proposal

preparation, planning, research projects, and executing these projects. Highlights include:

◆ **The Uganda Survey Data Analysis Workshop** in fall 2002, brought together researchers from EPRC and neighboring SISERA institutes, Makerere University, and the Bank of Uganda to develop skills for survey analysis.

◆ **In Senegal, Leopold Sarr spent six months at CREA** assisting in design and implementation of household, community, and school surveys. He provided overall supervision of the effort and worked closely with CREA's technical staff.

◆ **In Madagascar, David Sahn, Peter Glick and Bart Minten** worked with CEE and the Ministry of Health to design, conduct, and analyze health facilities and user surveys. Cornell worked with INSTAT and the Ministry of Education to prepare a proposal to study the impact of community, school, and household factors affecting demand for education.

◆ **A Workshop on Poverty and Inequality for faculty at South Africa's** historically disadvantaged universities was held June 23-July 4, 2003, involving 25 participants and staff from Cornell, DPRU, and the National Institute for Economic Policy (NIEP).

◆ **Analytical and Empirical Tools for Poverty Research Workshop** on August 16, 2003, in Durban, South Africa, was co-organized by SAGA and the World Bank. Leading poverty researchers introduced frontier techniques in poverty research, and a panel of scholars discussed research and policy priorities for addressing rural poverty with 110 participants from 22 countries.



Steve Younger provides hands-on training with STATA programming at DPRU/NIEH/Cornell course on poverty and inequality in Capetown, South Africa.

◆ **Qualitative and Quantitative Methods Workshops** to bridge the disconnect between these two methods of poverty analysis are being conducted with SISERA. In May 2003, ISSER hosted a workshop in Ghana attended by 30 economists, sociologists, anthropologists, geographers, and statisticians from academia, think tanks, government, NGOs, and donor groups. A workshop is planned in Kenya in March 2004.

COMPETITIVE GRANTS PROGRAM

Cornell and Clark Atlanta Universities invite research proposals from U.S.-based Ph.D. students and faculty in economics, agricultural economics, and other closely related fields to be carried out in selected African countries. The program facilitates the collaborations of U.S. and African researchers by:

- ◆ *Fostering productive relationships between U.S.-based researchers and SISERA-based researchers*
- ◆ *Supporting policy-oriented research of the highest quality on SAGA-related themes*
- ◆ *Promoting the research of women and minorities who are under-represented in the economics profession.*

Grants cover costs of travel, research-related expenses (e.g., data collection) and stipends to cover daily lodging and food (\$5,000 - \$20,000). For more information, contact the SAGA/Research Grants Office at CAU.

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