

Social and Environmental Trade-Offs in African Agriculture

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Briefing

[Agricultural expansion in Zambia: what are the drivers and implications?](#)

Nugun P. Jellason, Jacob Mwitwa, Elizabeth J.Z. Robinson, Barbara Adolph, Adam Devenish, Phil Franks, Geoff Griffiths, Pamela Katic, Syed Amir Manzoor, Adrienne Martin, Joseph Tobias

In this policy brief, we highlight what we currently know about the drivers of agricultural expansion in Zambia and their implications for food security, livelihoods and biodiversity conservation. Data was gathered using a suite of rapid-assessment participatory rural appraisal (PRA) tools during fieldwork conducted in 2019 by the Sentinel project team in five communities.



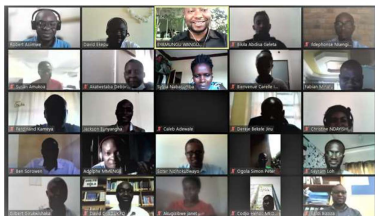
Blog & Journal Article

[Can Agriculture 4.0 technology adoption reduce agricultural expansion in Sub-Saharan Africa?](#)

Nugun P. Jellason, Elizabeth Robinson

A shift in agricultural production processes through technology application that incorporates precision farming, the internet of things (IoT), cloud computing, big data, drones, biotechnology innovations, smart farming, and robotics – broadly referred to as agriculture 4.0 – is being witnessed across the globe.

There is considerable scope for the application of agriculture 4.0 technologies to enable farmers to produce more on existing land in a sustainable way, consequently reducing the expansion of agricultural land to feed Africa's population. However, just as was the case with the Asian Green Revolution, it is not certain whether Sub-Saharan Africa will tap into this new wave of technology that has the potential to lead to the production of more food per unit area. In our perspective paper, we ask this pertinent question: ["Is sub-Saharan Africa ready for the new wave of agriculture 4.0 revolution?"](#). Tackling this question could prove to be game-changing.

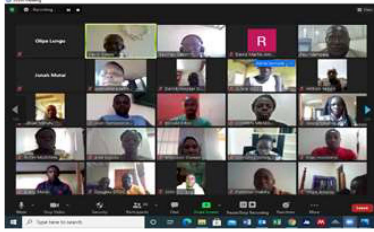


Blog

[Through the Sentinel Project, RUFORUM trains masters and doctoral students in practical econometric modelling using STATA](#)

David Ekepu

Responding to the capacity needs of students, RUFORUM organised a basic econometrics and data analysis training using STATA on 28th June-2nd July 2021. In order to widen the beneficiary audience for the training, all masters and doctoral students supported under the various RUFORUM programmes were invited to participate. The training attracted 282 applicants of which 149 participants successfully completed the training. The participants who completed the training were drawn from 18 countries across Africa.



Blog

[RUFORUM trains masters and doctoral students on grant proposal development through the Sentinel Project](#)

David Ekepu

In recent times, there have been declines in levels of funding for the agricultural sector, as well as increasing institutionalisation of competitive grants. Therefore, the survival of researchers and their institutions relies on the ability to attract funding through winning proposals. However, this requires great experience and resilience. RUFORUM, with support from the Sentinel project, hosted an online skills enhancement training in grant proposal development for masters and doctoral students between 14th and 18th June 2021. The objective of the training was to strengthen competencies of postgraduate students and early career researchers in grant proposal writing.



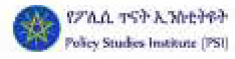
Blog

[Talking transdisciplinarity](#)

Alexandre Chausson, Lydia Cole

How do we really achieve impact in our work? The societal challenges of the 21st century – notably climate change, biodiversity loss and global inequality – are interlinked and cross-cutting, hence they cannot be resolved through siloed or sectoral approaches. They call on researchers to work across disciplines, and to actively engage and work collaboratively with research users. Therefore, the answer to the critical question on how to achieve impact continues to evade us. The Sentinel project and the British Ecological Society's Conservation Ecology Group co-ran an online workshop at the 2020 Festival of Ecology. The workshop's aim was to unpack transdisciplinary working and explore the facets of collaborative knowledge production that lie at its core.

Sentinel is an interdisciplinary research project seeking to address the challenge of achieving 'zero hunger' in sub-Saharan Africa, while at the same time reducing inequalities and conserving ecosystems.



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