

Lessons Learned

Steven Haggblade
Michigan State University
COMESA AAMP Journalists Training Workshop
Dar es Salaam
July 2, 2010

Outline

- Starting points
- Three lessons learned
- The way forward

Starting points

1. Agricultural productivity growth → poverty reduction
 - 30% GDP
 - Employs 70% poor

Starting points

1. Agricultural productivity growth → poverty reduction
 - 30% GDP
 - Employs 70% poor
2. Public goods (therefore government action) = key constraint
 - agricultural research
 - infrastructure
 - favorable policy environment

Lessons Learned

1. Journalists, like government, neglect agriculture
 - Government spends 6% on agriculture
 - Journalists devote 4% resources to agriculture

Lessons Learned

2. Journalists *potentially* powerful for informing and changing government thinking

- Channel empirical evidence (opportunities; scientific findings; impact of alternative policies)
- Give farmers voice
- Hold governments accountable

Lessons Learned

3. *Journalists* pitch stories, *editors* decide:
therefore, academics need to work with *both*

Lessons Learned

1. Journalists, like government, neglect agriculture
2. Journalists potentially powerful for informing and changing government thinking
3. **Journalists** pitch stories, **editors** decide: therefore, academics need to work with **both**

The way forward

- Researchers (like me!) need to disseminate results better to journalists: ***How?***
- Journalists need to acquire technical knowledge and field experience in key agricultural topics: ***How?***
- ***What else?***