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ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF SMALL LAND HOLDER

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ABSTRACT:

This working paper will present a review on national and international policy initiatives that aim to empower small holders in markets. By policy initiatives we mean those plans and actions developed by national governments and international governing bodies that affect the functioning of agricultural markets and defines the context within which the sales of agricultural products takes place, as well as those plans and actions that support small holders' economic organizations. As policy reforms are often long-term developments, the review will study changes in public policy and private responses over the last 15 years.

KEYWORDS: Economic Empowerment , national and international policy initiatives, agricultural products.

INTRODUCTION :

The review will cover experiences in both OECD and developing countries. We will look for general patterns and processes in these policy initiatives and highlight the ways in



which small holders and their economic organizations have been influenced by and reacted on these initiatives. The review will explicitly focus on the interaction between public policies and private responses. Initiatives of small holders' or generations themselves to influence the institutional environment will be included. Special attention will be given to initiatives where IFAP is involved in or is consulted on.

Economic development and the concentration of poverty in rural areas.

The term 'small holder' refers to their limited resource endowments relative to other farmers and therefore the definition of small holders differs between country and between agro-ecological zones. For instance, in favorable areas with high population densities small holders may be characterized as cultivating less than one ha of land, whereas in semi-arid areas small holders may be characterized cultivating 10 ha or more or managing 10 head of livestock. Sortie production is far more intensive than others: irrigated agriculture versus rain fed agriculture; dairy production versus extensive grazing; etc. The distinction between small holders and larger farms based on their landholdings. is not always possible. A distinction that is more useful is the one based on labor use. Small holder farms are usually family farms, with the labor (including management) needed on the farm being supplied by the household. Large farms commonly employ hired labor. Most small holders are vulnerable to economic and climatic shocks and spread their risk by diversifying their sources of livelihood including significant

off-farm income. In this respect, small holders also form a diverse group in terms of their allocation of resources to food, cash crops, livestock and off-farm activities, their use of external inputs and hired labour, the proportion of food crops which are sold, and their household expenditure pattern. In addition, different types of small holders are differently integrated with outside markets, whether national or international, and this influences the way they are impacted by policy changes. Complete subsistence or self-sufficiency does not really exist anymore and there is at least always some form of local market, in which small holders trade their surplus. But these markets are not very remunerative and offer limited opportunities for negotiation. Finding and entering markets that will provide them with better prospects can be extremely difficult, and small holders are often faced with a number of difficulties.

Several studies have listed the constraints that small holders encounter when they want to link to new markets or become more competitive in existing markets. The World Bank (2007) distinguished the following five issues: lack of access to these markets; weak technical capacity; difficulty in meeting quality standards; difficulty in meeting contract conditions; and exposure to additional risks. IFAD (2003) discusses three dimensions of the issue of market access: physical access to markets; market structure; and lack of skills, organization and information. Finally, Bienabe et al. (2004) in their review of projects that aim to link small holder farmers to markets distinguished the following constraints for trade: barriers to entry; risks; transaction costs; asymmetry of information or lack of information on markets; lack of bargaining power and asymmetry of negotiation; lack of economy of scale; lack of human capital; and lack of social capital. By combining several of the constraints barriers to entry market; market risks; high transaction cost (which include asymmetry of information); and low bargaining power. Public policies do impact these constraints such agencies provide farmers with market information, improve rural roads or set up laboratories for quality control services, or they can be negative, for instance through over-taxation of market transactions, or when farmers are prohibited to sell their products directly to specific markets. The marketing of agricultural products is affected by many different laws and regulations.

Some of these laws and regulations work directly on agricultural marketing opportunities, such as the legal requirement to have a license for selling products or the legal obligation to sell to a state marketing board, or the requirements for government procurement, other laws and regulations have an indirect effect such as public quality standards or policies on investing in physical infrastructure. The latter policies often have a broader objective than just to regulate agricultural marketing. The importance of laws and regulations that support agricultural marketing is related to their impact on production and trade, and thereby on incomes and prices. As trade provides opportunities for specialization, a regulatory framework supporting trade also supports efficiency improvements, production increases, and quality improvements. Thereby, rural incomes may increase and affordable supplies of basic foodstuffs become available to urban consumers.

A set of well-functioning formal rules is essential for the effective functioning of marketing systems. In many developing countries, the capacity of the state to conceive, implement and enforce these formal rules is weak. In such a case, the efficiency of the market is reduced, the costs of doing business are increased and the development of a competitive private sector becomes more difficult. Not only the absence of rules may hamper effective and efficient marketing; the existence of inappropriate laws and regulations may have the same detrimental effects on markets. Formal laws and regulations are not the only institutions governing agricultural marketing, as informal institutions also play a role in directing, enabling and constraining human behavior.

CONCLUSION

1. Initiatives of small holder's or generation themselves to influence the institutional environment will be included. Special attention will be given to initiatives where IEAP is involved in or is consulted on.
2. Finding and entering market that will provide them with better prospects can be extremely difficult and

small holder is often faced with a number of difficulties.

3.The marketing of agriculture product is affected my many different laws and regulations.

4.Formal laws and regulation are not the only institution governing agricultural marketing, as the informal institution also plays a role in directing, enabling and constraining human behavior.

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