Challenges in implementing the National Sustainable Agriculture Development Plan (NSADP) for subsistence and semisubsistence farmers in Sierra Leone

Abstract:
The Government of Sierra Leone’s National Sustainable Agriculture Development Plan (NSADP) 2010-2030 recommends the gradual eradication of shifting cultivation practices and the active promotion of vertically integrated processing and marketing chains for selected staples (mainly rice and cassava) and export crops (cocoa and coffee). This article examines the implications of the changing national agricultural policy for the subsistence and semisubsistence farmers who represent about two-thirds of the population of Sierra Leone. Using socioeconomic data from a 2009 survey of 600 farm-households located in the country’s two main agricultural regions, we classified farms according to the diversity of the crops cultivated. The results illustrate the potential impact on rural livelihoods of the implementation of the NSADP and the challenges related to the transition period required to replace shifting cultivation with permanent agricultural systems.


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