

Criteria Specification in Land Reform Evaluation in Sub-Saharan Africa

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ABSTRACT This paper argues that the mixed results of evaluations of land reform programs in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) is perhaps more a product of design imperfections in research execution rather than a true reflection of realities on the ground. Based on a survey of literature on SSA for the period 1960-2011, the findings of this literature are compared in terms of whether a clear specification of evaluation criteria is provided. The results indicate a persistent confusion between policy, objectives, implementation, and performance in the way land reform programs are reported. A specification of what is meant by effectiveness, efficiency, success and failure remains critical. The tendency for making generalisations on SSA derived from a few countries is noted. There is an urgent need for research work with a focus on the evaluation of land reform programs in Sub-Saharan Africa.