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“Development on the margin”

## Exploring the Influence of Socio-economic Aspects on Realising Agricultural Production Potential in sub-Saharan Africa (by using Maps)

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### Abstract

In order to ensure food security and reduce poverty, one of the key challenges is to raise agricultural productivity and production in developing countries. Domestic agricultural production productivity growth plays an important role since it will help developing countries to become less dependent on imports and hence less affected by price volatility on world markets, like during the recent crisis. In addition to biophysical factors, such as soil quality and rainfall for example, prevailing socio-economic aspects are crucial determinants for the realisation of the potential agri-food production and ensuring productivity growth. The paper proposed combines research about plant production and an economic analysis, thereby constituting an interdisciplinary research effort.

The paper proposed looks at socio-economic aspects and agricultural productivity in sub-Saharan Africa as a case study. For sub-Saharan African countries, we collect data on indicators reflecting socio-economic aspects and examine them in a comparative analysis across countries by using maps. The aim of our analysis is to shed light on the relationship between socio-economic aspects and agricultural production. More specifically, we will explore the influence of socio-economic indicators on difference in the actual yields harvested and potential yields, given the prevailing biophysical conditions.

In the first part of the paper, we introduce a set of socio-economic factors and derive indicators that can be used for their measurement: farm-level aspects, socio-economic aspects, market access and governance/market institutions. While some of the socio-economic indicators are of general nature, others have a clear link to agriculture and range from primary production and inputs to the distribution of food products. The socio-economic indicators are applied in the subsequent analysis to explain “yield gaps”. The paper finishes with a discussion and concluding remarks that will also consider the challenges of the analysis.

**Keywords:** Agricultural production potential, maps, socio-economic indicators, sub-Saharan Africa, yield gap