



Minutes SDG2 Roadmap TWG Meeting

Participants

Group Members

- **David Laborde**, *FAO*
- **Challiss McDonough**, *Gates Foundation (Co-Chair)*
- **Vivien Schuessler**, *GIZ (for Germany)*
- **Federica de Gaetano**, *Italy*
- **Naomi Sterk**, *The Netherlands*
- **Torgeir Fyhri**, *Norway*
- **Chris Hillbruner**, *United States (Co-Chair)*
- **Chris Penrose Buckley**, *United Kingdom*

Guests

- **Francesco Rampa**, *ECDPM*
- **James Henderson**, *GPSDD*
- **Gloria Carrión**, *Southern Voice*
- **James Thurlow**, *IFPRI*
- **Jaron Porciello**, *CABI*
- **Hafsa Sheikh**, *CABI*

GDPRD Secretariat

- **Maurizio Navarra**
- **Michelle Tang**
- **Alessandro Cordova**
- **Carlotta Cramer**
- **Monique Amar**

Agenda

ISSUE	ITEM	PIC
1.	Welcome and Introduction	Challiss McDonough (Gates Foundation), Chris Hillbruner (United States)
2.	Evidence-Based Food Systems Policy and Decision Making	James Henderson (GPSDD), Francesco Rampa (Italy), Gloria Carrión (Southern Voice)
3.	Global Learning Agenda	Jaron Porciello (CABI)
4.	Investment Prioritization	James Thurlow (IFPRI)
5.	Wrap-up and Closing	Challiss McDonough (Gates Foundation), Chris Hillbruner (United States)

Key Highlights/Issues

1. Welcome and Introduction

- Challiss McDonough (Gates Foundation) co-chaired the call for the first time, as interim chair for Ammad Bahalim.

2. Evidence-Based Food Systems Policy and Decision Making

PURPOSE OF SECTION:

For colleagues from GPSDD, ECDPM, and Southern Voice (the Consortium) to present their follow-up proposal.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- In the [last TWG meeting](#), the Consortium proposed a new partnership based in Rome. After extensive feedback from group members, a revised proposal was shared.
- The 12-month dialogue-based scoping project is based on the principles of independence and leadership of developing countries. The proposal is meant to address the challenges of: constrained effectiveness of the Rome-Based Agencies (RBAs), driven by fragmented food systems governance architecture, misalignment between global priorities and national realities; poorly connected implementation mechanisms; lack of alignment between country food system needs and international agendas; and resource and information disparities between country representatives in Rome.
- The Consortium has already been engaging with LMIC representatives and stakeholders in Rome through the “Rome Data Champions” group, which meets regularly on an informal basis.
 - Representatives from Kenya and Canada emphasised the value of the Rome Data Champions Consortium to surface new or concerning issues, discuss freely across regional groups, learn from case studies, and keep up to date with their counterparts.
- The revised proposal for a 12-month research and dialogue-based scoping project would aim to understand how an independent mechanism/partnership/coalition could be established to support RBA processes, facilitate effective channels of coordination and collaboration, and maintain and strengthen trust. Importantly, the scoping project is not designed to formulate a new institution, but to maintain flexibility and responsiveness to the results of the scoping study. Key deliverables are identified as a vision, institutional framework, and theory of change; sustainable connections between national actors at RBAs; increased participation by Member Representatives; and clear actions identified towards a roadmap for transformative partnerships. **[James Henderson, Francesco Rampa, Gloria Carrión]**

Q&A and Discussion:

- Could the relationship between the lack of an independent think tank for RBAs and the separate challenge of strengthening low-income country engagement with RBAs be clarified? Are there specific reasons why a think tank has not yet naturally arisen in the RBA ecosystem? **[FCDO]**
 - The Consortium sees alignment between the two challenges. High-income countries tend to have three representatives in Rome, whereas low-income countries do not always have this resource, leading to stretched engagement in the parallel processes in Rome. This proposal is a way to streamline engagement to enable greater participation with constrained resources. **[James Henderson]**

- The lack of independent thinking and support contributes to the fragmentation between Rome and national levels. The proposal is focuses on Rome and draws on country voices, but does not involve implementation or travel to country contexts. **[Francesco Rampa]**
- We observe silos and fragmented communication between permanent representatives, meaning that information may not effectively reach national policymaking discussions. The proposal aims to improve this information flow both from Rome to country, and vice versa. **[Gloria Carrión]**
- To clarify, the proposal is for a piece of research, which aims to answer such questions. **[Gates Foundation]**

ACTION POINTS

- *TWG Members will have two weeks to comment on the proposal, on a no-objections basis.*

3. Global Learning Agenda

PURPOSE OF SECTION:

*To discuss coordination on key learning priorities for evidence-based decision making, and to seek TWG guidance on advancing an agenda for evidence, learning, and evaluation across donors. **[Annex I]***

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- In the [last TWG meeting](#), a common learning agenda was proposed based on work by the Juno Evidence Alliance. Now, a new stakeholder engagement process is being proposed for a technical working group comprised of funders and technical partners. Given the TWG's previous critical inputs to data and evidence projects (e.g., Ceres2030), feedback from members is encouraged.
- In terms of evidence-based decision-making, donor organizations have common questions and concerns, and there is appetite for learning, especially for AI models. Since it is possible to develop and improve methods, tools and definitions for evidence-based decision making using a decentralized approach, future directions involve exploring priority learnings areas, finding opportunities to clarify priorities, and identifying questions to answer with this approach.
- The workplan proposed for this activity would initiate stakeholder engagement in December 2024/January 2025, present findings in February 2025, hold a workshop in Spring 2025 to agree on priorities and set confidence levels, publish a white paper in June 2025, and develop a workplan supporting priority areas through to 2030 by September 2025. **[Jaron Porciello]**
- The proposal is not for a specific approach, but rather a process to set the approach. Before setting common learning priorities, an important interim step would be to create a framework articulating the already ongoing work on evidence generation and learning. **[USAID]**

ACTION POINTS

- *The concept note and accompanying presentation for this proposal will be circulated to all TWG members for offline consultation and feedback.*

4. Investment Prioritization

PURPOSE OF SECTION:

To present ongoing work on Investment Prioritization Analysis for the Feed the Future Initiative, sharing preliminary results from analysis of 4-5 countries, from the targeted 19 countries. [Annex II]

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- IFPRI is using its flagship [RIAPA modelling system](#) on investment data for agri-food systems. The model assesses the full extent of trade-offs between investments by gathering information on investments (i.e., costs, expected impacts, value chain context, target areas, cost-benefit time horizon), feeding them into an economy-wide model, and subsequently passing them down to the household survey level.
- The tool is already used by CGIAR, development partners, and government agricultural strategies, such as Tanzania's upcoming [Agricultural Master Plan](#). The model considers investment impacts across several longer-term indicators aligned with USAID Feed the Future ambitions, which are: agrifood system GDP, poverty reduction, undernourishment reduction, and diet quality improvements. Outcomes are aggregated and normalized for a combined outcome indicator.
- Conclusions from modelling show that a balanced portfolio is needed: there is no single investment that is most effective across all four outcome areas, nor a single solution for agri-food systems. Additionally, investment rankings change over time as outcomes vary depending on the timeframe.
- Investment rankings were tested to understand effects of potential climate risks by modelling the impact of climate shocks on the investment outcomes. The model also recognizes that investments are often bundled within projects and programmes, which may generate synergies across outcomes. Governments are particularly interested in testing alternative combinations of bundles, which represents the core added value of this model.
- From experiences in Tanzania and Malawi, the analysis has proven useful in decision-making in comparing investment pathways. Key benefits include capturing economy wide impacts, measuring relative cost-effectiveness, tracking a range of outcomes, and accounting for trade-offs. **[James Thurlow]**

Q&A and Discussion:

- This analysis has been tuned to specific USAID needs in the examples demonstrated, but the model allows for flexibility depending on user needs. There are also other recognised investment prioritization approaches. Therefore, TWG members are invited to share their experiences in comparable methods, for a discussion on the array of tools available to donors. **[USAID]**
- The FAO MAFAP approach is a modelling programme for governments and their choices, which is complementary to the RIAPA tool for making informed decisions on trade-offs. Both tools are supported by the Gates Foundation. **[Gates Foundation]**

ACTION POINTS

- *Members interested in continuing discussions are invited to contact Co-Chair Chris Hillbruner, expressing interest in a briefing on the approach as operationalized in country.*

5. Wrap-up and Closing

- Members are strongly encouraged to share their feedback on the revised Evidence-Based Food Systems Policy and Decision Making proposal, on a two-week no-objections comments

period.

- The Secretariat will share the Global Learning Agenda and Investment Prioritization materials with members via email.

Developing common learning priorities across agriculture, nutrition, gender, and climate across donors to support a 2030 agenda and beyond

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Updated: 11 Nov 2024

Summary

This document provides background and context for donors interested in developing a shared set of learning priorities to address knowledge gaps and support more effective, aligned decision-making. The primary aim is to guide collaborative learning, research, and evaluation across various initiatives, programs, and strategies tied to specific policy goals. An expected outcome is a framework of common learning priorities in key areas—agriculture, nutrition, gender, and climate—supported by targeted questions that help advance shared objectives and track progress across donors.

Background

Over the past decade, coordinated efforts by donors has led to [identifying and filling data gaps around the Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#), supporting [Monitoring and Evaluation \(M&E\) harmonization efforts](#), updating the [Agricultural Science and Technology Indicators](#). This work has helped to strengthen continuous data collection, especially at the national level, that benefits multiple organizations and streamlines reporting for many SDG indicators.

An early milestone in coordinated evidence-informed policy decisions across donors in agriculture and food systems was [Ceres2030: Sustainable Solutions to End Hunger](#). The project generated evidence, costing, and policy recommendations to support donor decision-making for SDG2. Among its most urgent recommendations was to establish platforms and identify organizations that could coordinate across donors and standardize evidence-based practices, ensuring that Ceres2030's efforts would lead to lasting, ongoing impact rather than a one-time initiative. This recommendation has led to the creation and support the [Juno Evidence Alliance](#), and is designed to offer agriculture and food systems an evidence-based platform similar to health and medicine's [Cochrane](#).

Coordinating with donors around evidence-based issues in agriculture and food systems supports a shared focus on achieving specific, measurable results that align with strategic policy targets. Recently, interest has shifted from just collecting coordinated data to ensuring that decision-making is grounded in reliable evidence. This shift has practical implications for how program knowledge, scientific knowledge, technical guidance, and traditional knowledge are used to inform policy and improve accountability in implementation.

Updated: 11 Nov 2024

What are common learning priorities?

The shared learning agenda helps donors address the complex, interconnected nature of food systems by reviewing traditional sector boundaries. It focuses on learning priorities that span agriculture, nutrition, climate, and gender, allowing donors to consider broader factors impacting food systems while setting clear, actionable goals and accountability measures. This approach enables donors to work together on targeted insights and take concrete steps toward sustainable and equitable food systems.

Creating a series of common learning priorities, or questions, promotes shared understanding, raises awareness about evidence-informed decisions, and creates a structured approach to knowledge generation. It can help avoid duplication of efforts, ensures that learning is relevant across multiple organizations, and can foster greater alignment on goals and strategies. This requires creating a shared framework supported by organizations to systematically identify, address, and track key questions for collective learning and improvement. It provides a focused approach to generating insights and building knowledge that is relevant and actionable for all involved stakeholders.

For example, a common learning priority for healthy diets could be identifying the most effective strategies to increase access to affordable, nutrient-rich foods in LMIC countries. Current research by FAO highlights the magnitude of the problem, but addressing it requires focus to identify priority areas to address significant problems (e.g., effective subsidies for fruits and vegetables, local food production initiatives, or market-based solutions that lower the cost of healthy foods, etc.). By first examining what the learning priorities are, a next step will be to identify the questions that can help fill in the gaps across different contexts and sectors so that donors and stakeholders can establish priorities that best improve access to healthy diets and use these insights to guide future investments and policy decisions.

These questions will be designed to yield specific, actionable results that can enhance the effectiveness and impact of ODA investments. Importantly, shared learning priorities are intended to be at a high-level and are not intended to replicate individual organizational strategies.

Why now?

Agriculture and food systems are facing increasingly complex challenges that demand coordinated, evidence-based approaches to create actionable solutions. While the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) agenda remains highly relevant, the world has only grown more

Updated: 11 Nov 2024

complicated, with the original SDG challenges now compounded by climate change, conflict, and the rising cost of a healthy diet, all intersecting with rapidly evolving technology, demographic shifts, and political changes. A set of common learning questions allows funders to collaborate more effectively, identifying and addressing knowledge gaps, improving data collection and analysis, and ensuring that their investments yield valuable insights for policy decisions. With shared questions, donors can stay focused on critical issues that support global food security goals and respond more flexibly to emerging challenges.

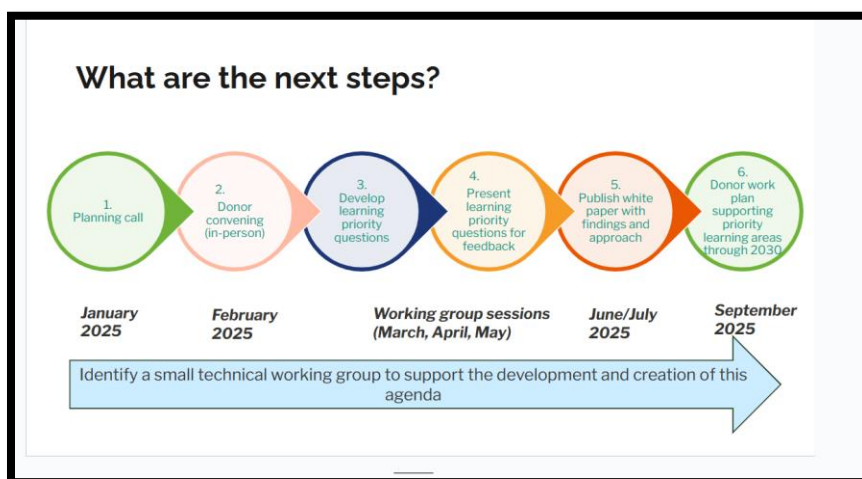
What is involved in this work?

This work involved bringing together a group of donors who are interested in advancing common learning priorities to support evidence-based decision making. Several donors have already indicated their interest and willingness to be involved. The Juno Evidence Alliance will facilitate planning, coordination, and organizing for this process.

The initial steps are included below. We are asking for time for a planning call in January, an in-person meeting in February, and 90-minutes working sessions in March, April and May to prepare a white paper with some findings and a proposed approach, with additional refinement and engagement from other donors by September 2025.

What are the next steps?

We will organize an in-person convening for **February 2025** (North America, London or Rome). A poll will go out to interested donors to identify a date.



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The convening will be the first step designed to exploring i) benefits of multi-donor engagement strategy and ii) discuss common learning priorities and iii) next steps. Some of the discussion questions include:

- Are priorities clear and shared by donors across food systems?
- What are the shared accountability mechanisms to ensure global investments are aligned with the knowledge and solutions we have available today?
- What incentives and processes do we need to consider for Rome-based agencies (RBAs) to align with common learning questions proposed by donors?
- Are commissioning opportunities/mechanisms for evidence-informed decision making shared across donors?
- Are definitions of evidence (both how it is used, and it is developed) shared across agrifood systems?

For more information, please contact Jaron Porciello, Director, Juno Evidence Alliance, at j.porciello@cabi.org

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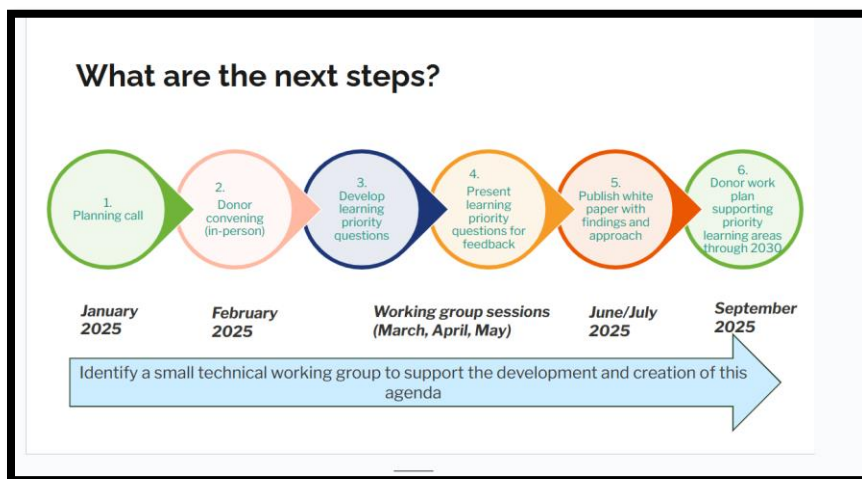
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INITIATIVE ON
Foresight

Prioritizing Agrifood System Investments

James Thurlow

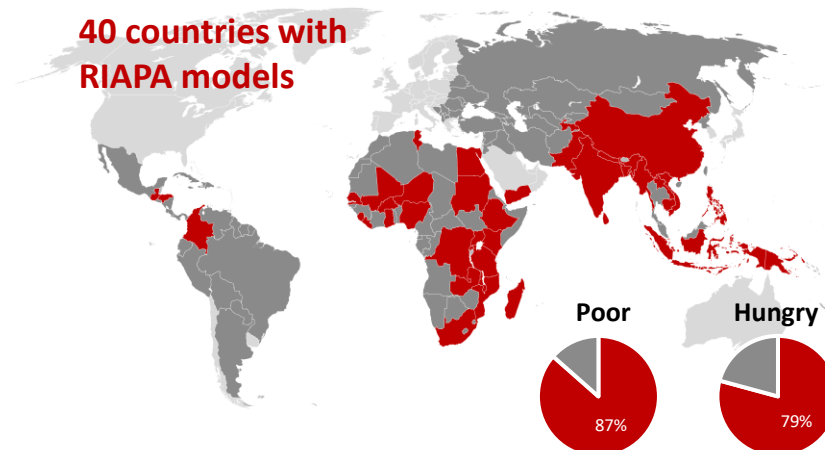
Director, Foresight and Policy Modeling
International Food Policy Research Institute

SDG2 Roadmap TWG | October 17, 2024

Modeling System

Impacts of investments are estimated using IFPRI's RIAPA modeling system...

- **Investment module** estimates the impacts of investments on sector-level growth
- **Economywide model** estimates impact of sectoral growth on household incomes
- **Household survey module** tracks changes on individual-level welfare indicators



Data inputs

Investment information
(e.g., spending levels, unit costs, treatment effects)

Baseline growth path
(e.g., population, labor force, productivity trends)

Outcome indicators

Investment Module

Production gains caused by investments

Economywide Model

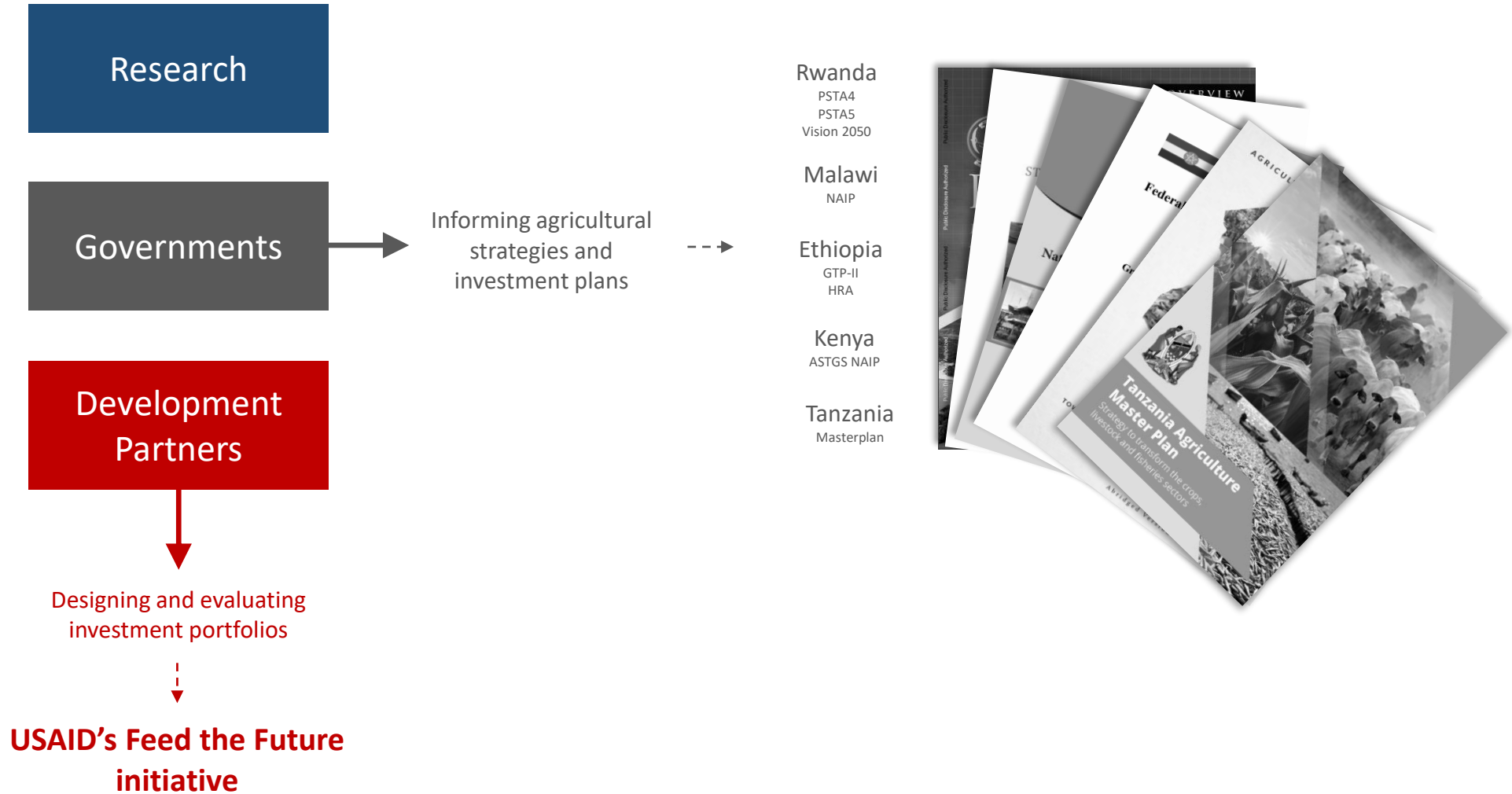
- Income (GDP) gains
- Job creation

Income changes for different households

Household Survey Module

- Poverty
- Undernourishment
- Diet quality

Uses and Uptake



Comparing USAID Investments (Feed the Future)

Question:

- What is the impact of spending \$1 million, directed at different investment areas, on a targeted set of outcomes?
(i.e., agrifood system GDP, poverty, undernourishment, diet quality)

Scenarios:

- Spending starts in 2025 for 5 years (model runs to 2045)
- 18 investment areas spanning the agrifood system
(i.e., R&D, farmer services, market development, etc.)

Composite indicator:

- Normalize and average (i.e., four outcomes are equally important)
- Discount (i.e., future impacts are valued less than impacts today)

R&D	1	R&D (improved seeds)
	2	R&D (agronomic practices)
	3	R&D (animal breeds)
	4	R&D (animal husbandry)
Extension / advisory services	5	E/AS (improved seeds)
	6	E/AS (agronomic practices)
	7	E/AS (livestock)
	8	E/AS (climate information)
	9	E/AS (climate smart agriculture)
Markets and food systems	10	Seed systems (agro-dealers)
	11	SME processors (finance + training)
	12	SME traders (finance + training)
	13	Food loss (post-harvest storage)
	14	Credit access (financial inclusion)
Risk reduction and resilience	15	Seasonal forecast (early warning)
	16	Productive safety nets (targeting poor)
Infrastructure	17	Irrigation infrastructure
	18	Rural roads

Investment Impacts

(Tanzania | 4% discount rate | 2025-2045)

Agrifood GDP

(\$ change in total GDP per \$ of investment spending)

Poverty

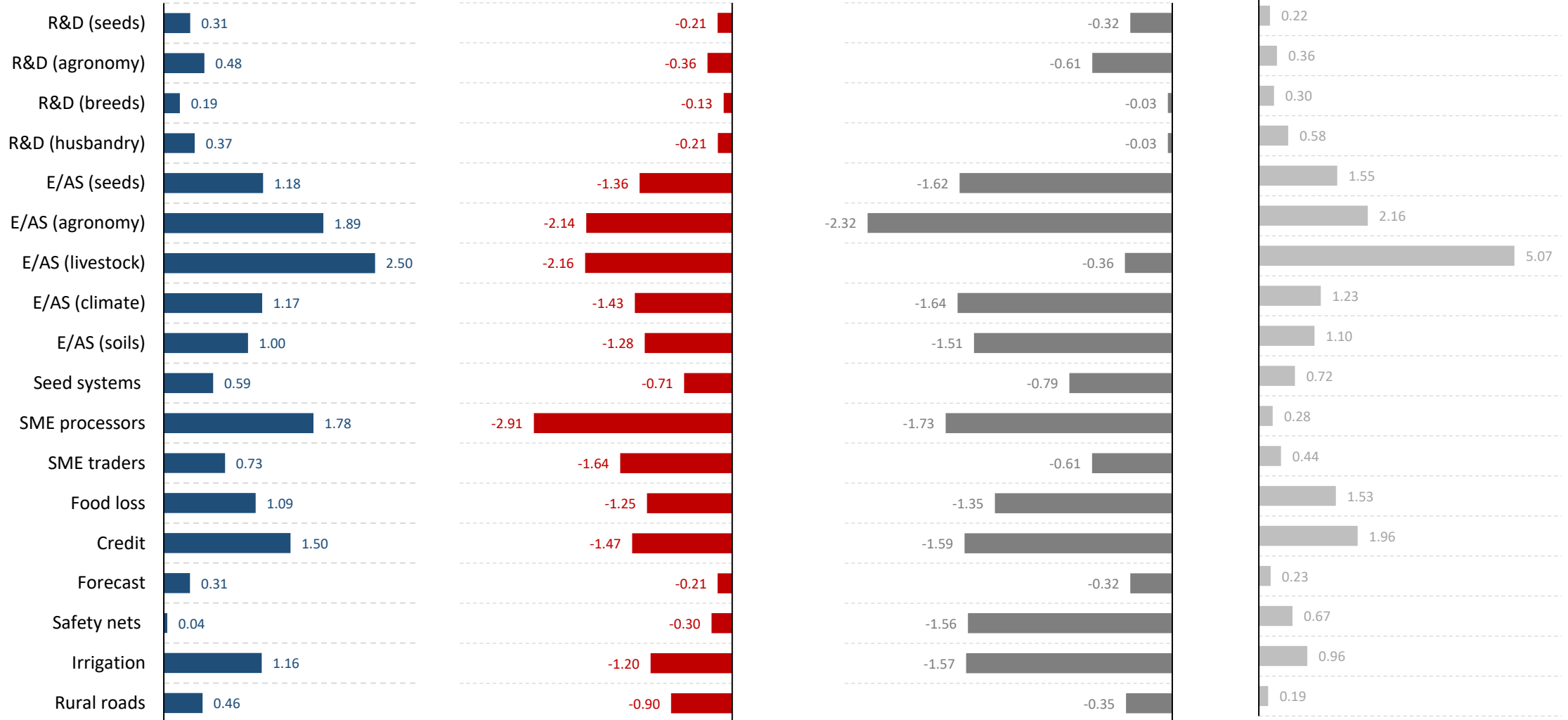
(change in number of poor people per \$1000 of investment spending)

Undernourishment

(change in number of undernourished people per \$1000 of investment spending)

Diet Quality

(reduction in consumption gap to a healthy diet per \$1000 of investment spending)



Investment Ranking (Tanzania | 4% discount rate | 2025-2045)

Ranking based on composite score

- Measures relative cost-effectiveness
(1 = most effective for all outcomes, 0 = least effective)

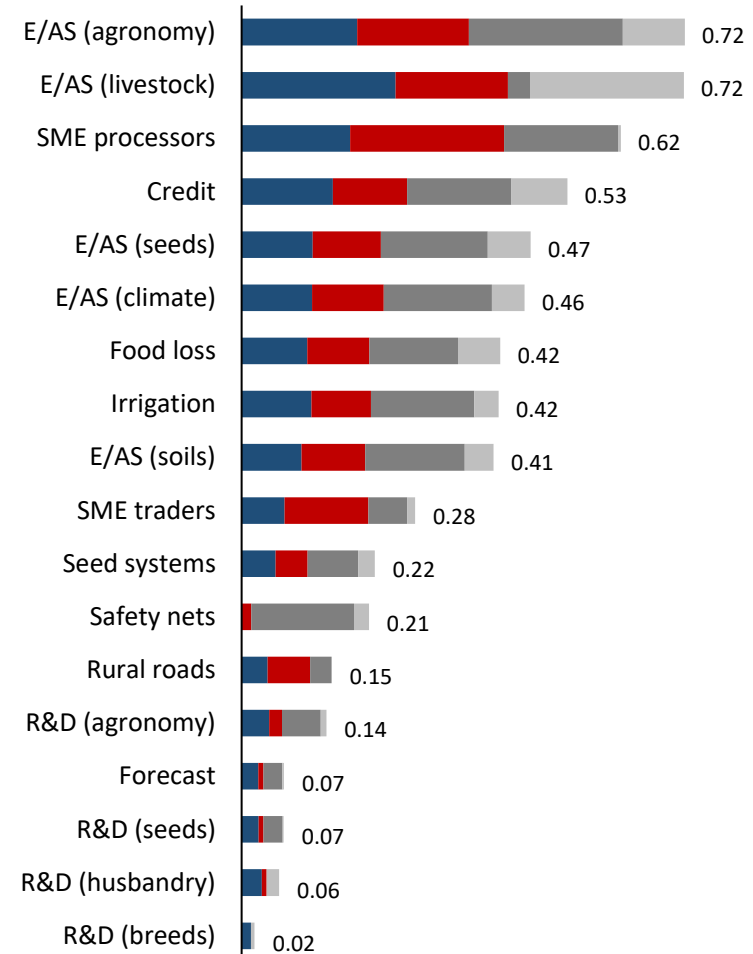
General lessons

- Which outcomes to target is important
(others could include job creation, cost of a healthy diet, gender income gaps, poverty gaps, GHG emissions, water use, etc.)
- Focus on where there are larger gaps between investments
- Usually need a “balanced” portfolio to achieve all outcomes

Composite Scores by Investment Area

(normalized outcome indicators summed together assuming equal weights)

■ Growth ■ Poverty ■ Undernourishment ■ Diets

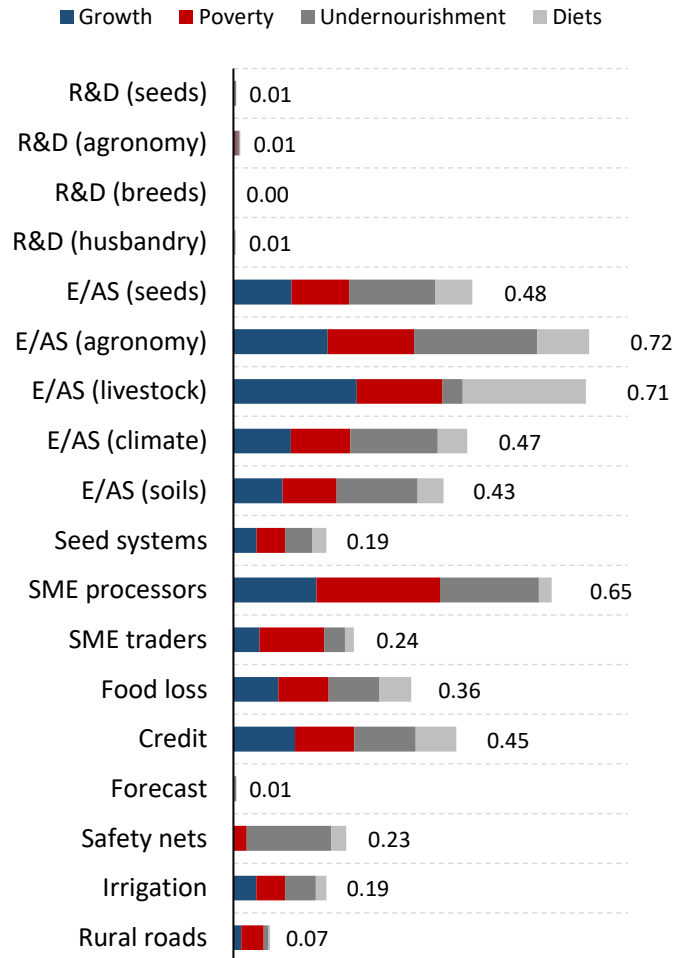


Investing in **extension and advisory services** focused on improved agronomic and livestock practices are the most cost-effective options

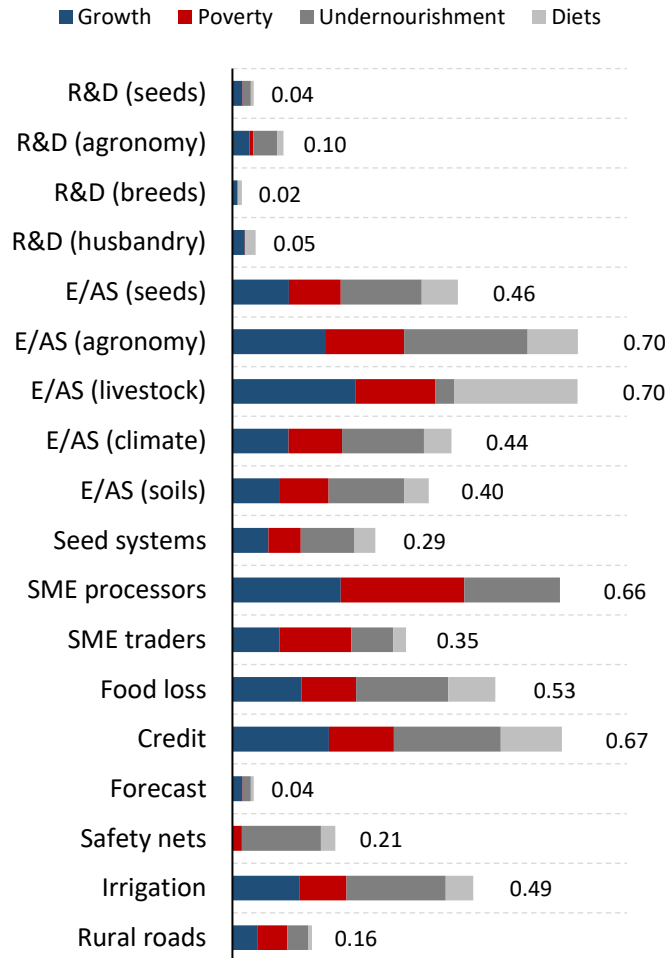
Rankings Change Over Time (Tanzania | no discount rate)

Some investments need more time to have an impact (e.g., R&D)

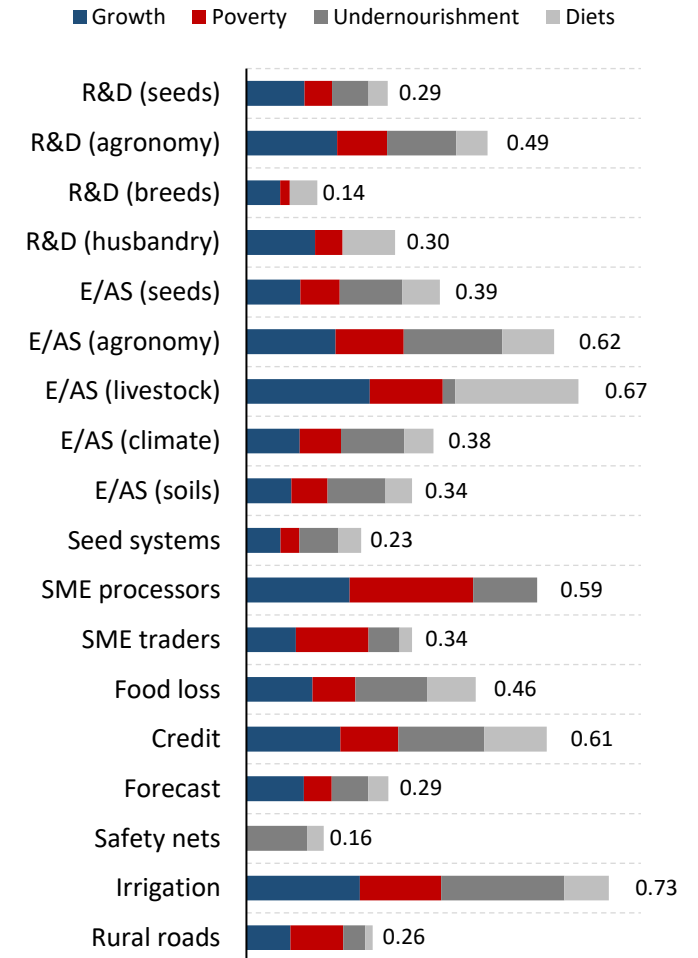
Ranking by 2030



Ranking by 2035



Ranking by 2045

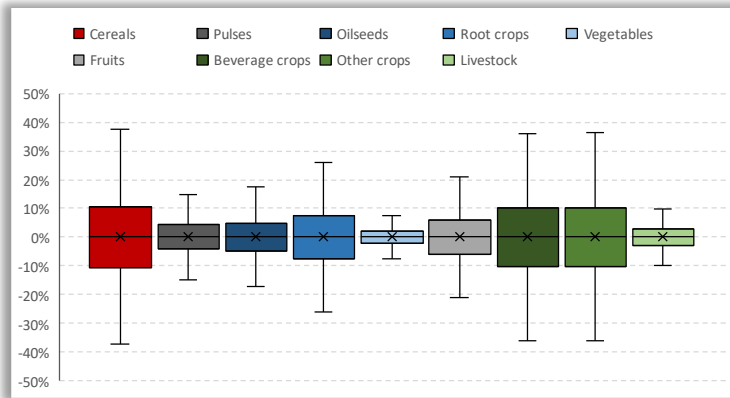


Stress-Testing Investments

(Tanzania | 4% discount rate | 2025-2045)

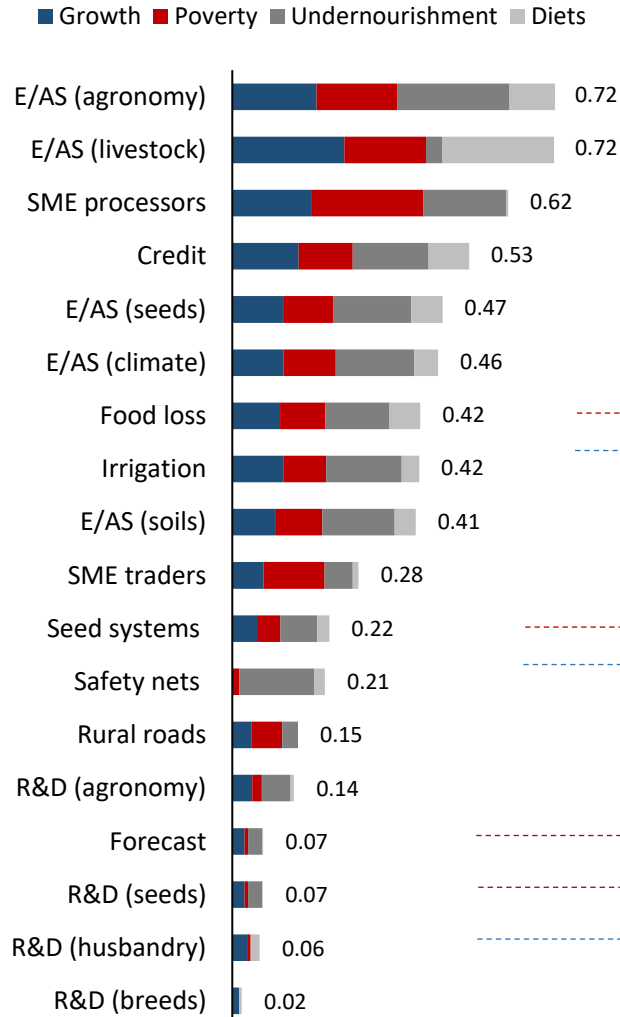
Production shocks can reduce the efficacy of investments

Historical data shows how production risks vary across sectors

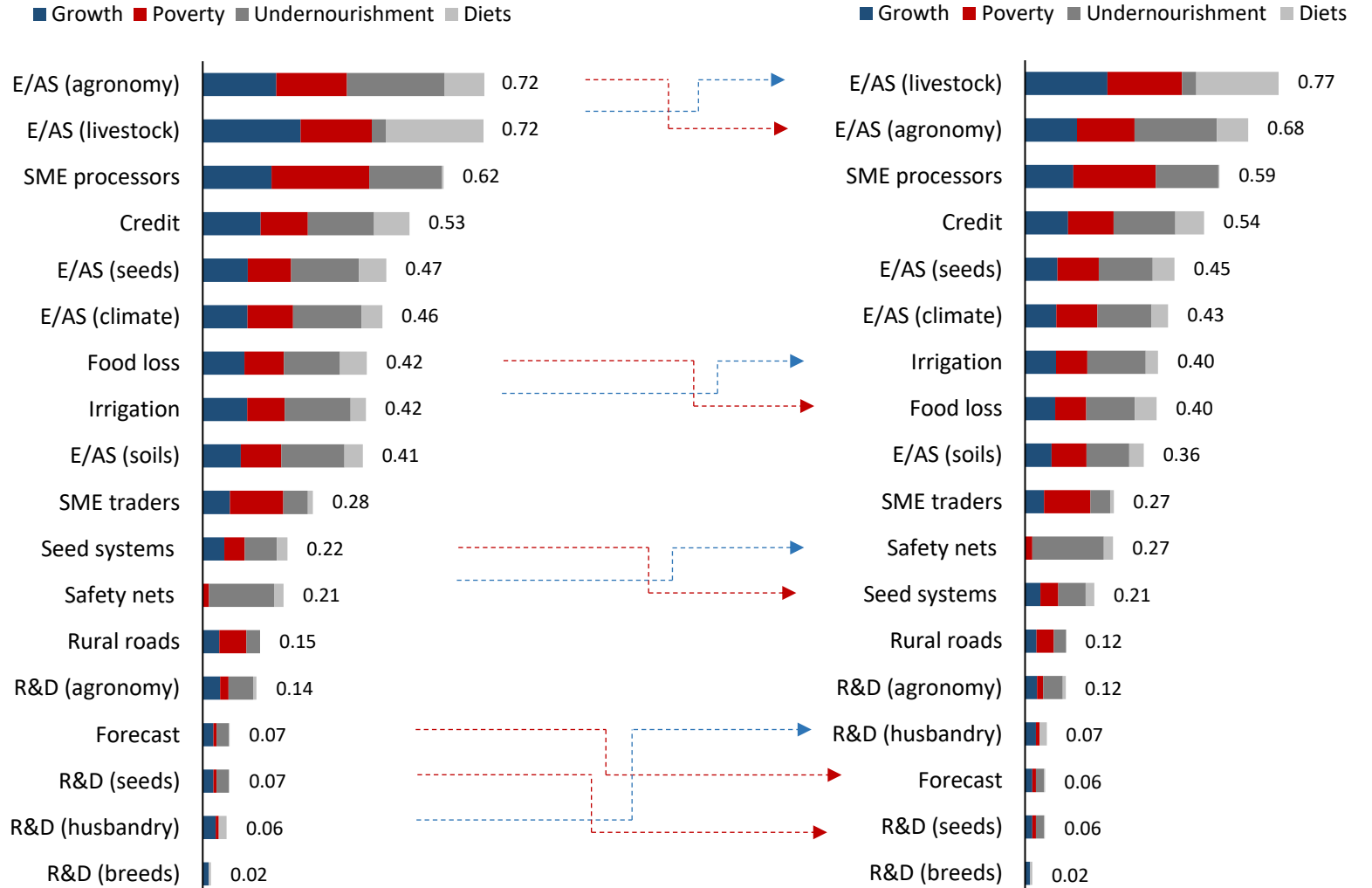


Simulate 1-in-25-year production shock and re-rank investments

Ranking before stress-test



Ranking after stress-test



Targeting Investments

(Tanzania | 4% discount rate | 2025-2045)

			All crops combined	Cereals	Root crops	Pulses and oilseeds	Horticulture	Other cash crops
R&D	1	R&D (improved seeds)	0.06	0.17	0.01	0.02	0.04	0.02
	2	R&D (agronomic practices)	0.11	0.27	0.04	0.04	0.07	0.01
	3	R&D (animal breeds)	0.02	0.02				
	4	R&D (animal husbandry)	0.05	0.05				
Extension / advisory services	5	E/AS (improved seeds)	5 0.34	0.32	0.39	0.36	0.34	0.19
	6	E/AS (agronomic practices)	1 0.52	3 0.60	1 0.69	0.30	2 0.63	0.34
	7	E/AS (livestock)	3 0.48	0.48				
	8	E/AS (climate information)	0.34	0.34				
	9	E/AS (climate smart agriculture)	0.30	0.32	0.39	0.12	0.34	0.19
Markets and food systems	10	Seed systems (agro-dealers)	0.16	0.16				
	11	SME processors (finance + training)	2 0.50	5 0.50				
	12	SME traders (finance + training)	0.24	0.24				
	13	Food loss (post-harvest storage)	0.30	0.25	4 0.57	0.27	0.47	0.28
	14	Credit access (financial inclusion)	4 0.37	0.37				
Risk reduction and resilience	15	Seasonal forecast (early warning)	0.06	0.06				
	16	Safety nets (targeting poor pop.)	0.14	0.14				
Infrastructure	17	Irrigation infrastructure	0.31	0.36	0.47	0.06	0.39	0.22
	18	Rural roads	0.13	0.13				

← Composite Scores

Average of the four outcome indicators after normalizing each one to 0-1 range

Higher Score is Better

0 = least effective investment area on all four outcomes

1 = most effective investment area on all four outcomes

Top-5 investments

When investments target all crops at the same time

When investments target specific crop subgroups

Political Economy (Tanzania)

Pol. Economy of Rural Investments (PERI)

- Systematic approach for assessing constraints and opportunities

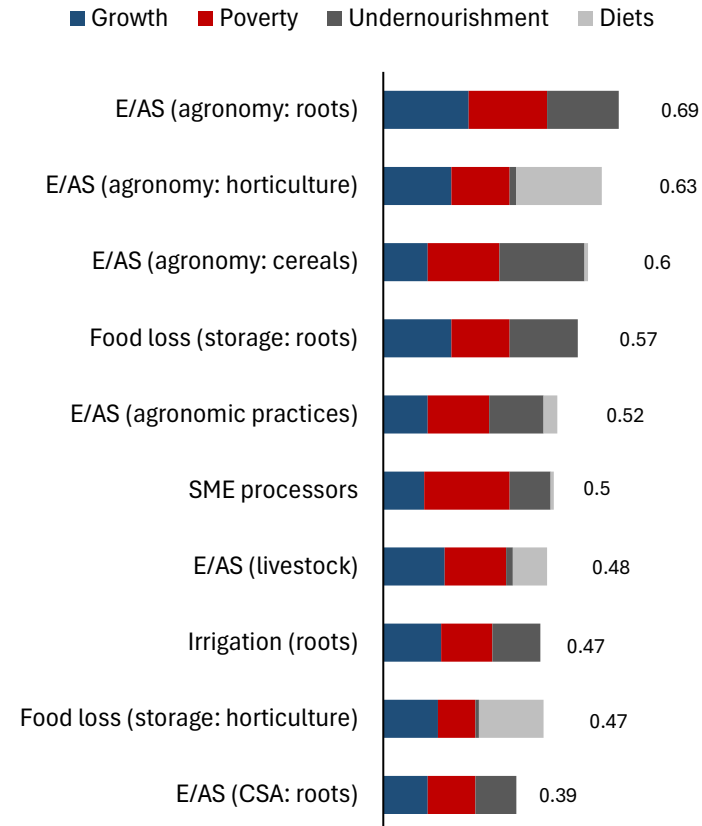
Options assessed across three domains:

- **Alignment** with political incentives
(e.g., targeting, visibility, political cycle, etc.)
- **Resilience** to vested interests
(e.g., interest groups, state-business relationships, etc.)
- Likelihood of accountable **implementation**
(e.g., horizontal vs. vertical coordination, etc.)

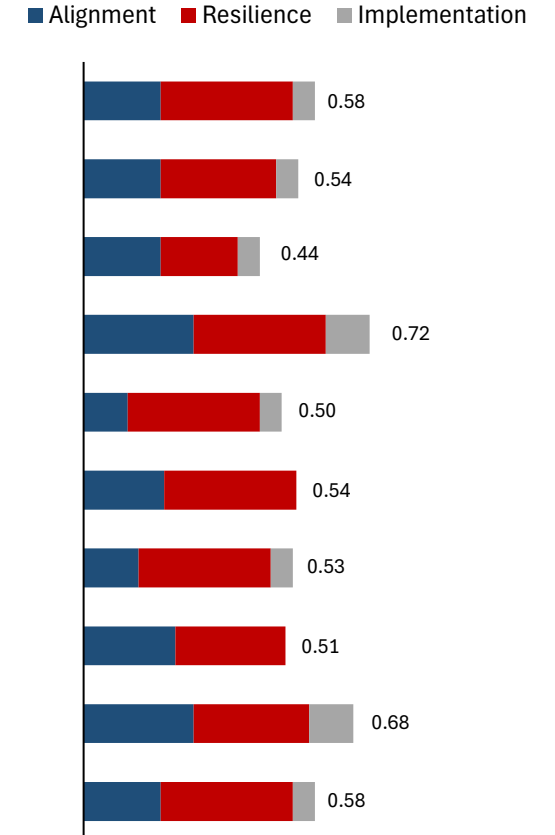
Composite Scores by Investment Area

(normalized outcome indicators summed together assuming equal weights)

RIAPA analysis



PERI analysis



Bundling Investments (Malawi | 4% discount rate | 2025-2045)

Investments can be combined into bundles:

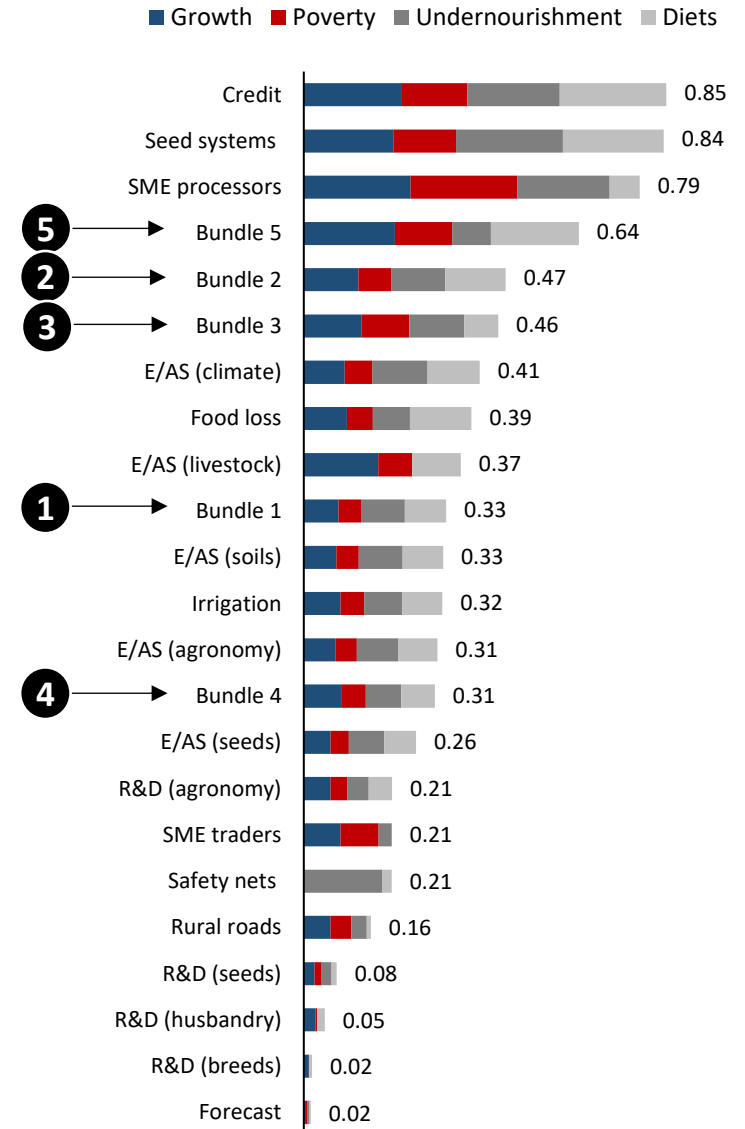
- Capture synergies (or trade-offs) between technologies, production, markets, etc.
- Check which bundles address multiple goals

USAID Malawi Mission identified five bundles:

Bundled Investment Areas	
Bundle 1	Irrigation + E/AS (climate info) + E/AS (seeds)
Bundle 2	Irrigation + credit for farmers + E/AS (seeds)
Bundle 3	Irrigation + SME processors + E/AS (seeds)
Bundle 4	Food loss + E/AS (agronomy) + SME traders
Bundle 5	E/AS (livestock) + seed systems + credit for farmers

Composite Scores by Investment Area

(normalized outcome indicators summed together assuming equal weights)



Summary

Model-based prioritization of investment areas

- Captures economywide impacts
- Measures relative cost-effectiveness
- Tracks a wide range of outcomes
- Accounts for trade-offs, risks, etc.

Ongoing country studies:

USAID FTF focus countries

+ **UAE/BMGF** selected countries

