

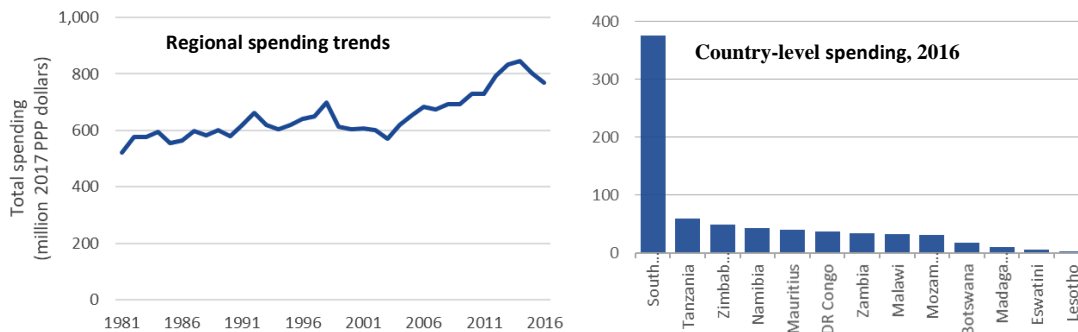
STATUS OF AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH INVESTMENT IN THE SADC REGION – A FACTSHEET*

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*EXTRACTED FROM FULL CONSULTANCY REPORT

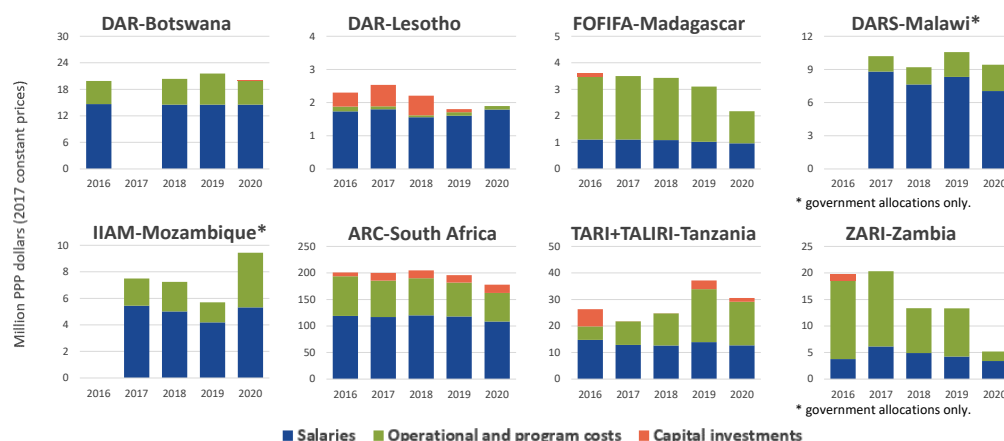
Investment in agricultural research, 1981-2016



Sources: Calculated by author based on ASTI datasets (www.asti.cgiar.org). See full consultancy report for definitions and other information.

- ✓ Following a period of stagnation during the 1980s and 1990s, agricultural research spending in the SADC region (excluding the private for-profit sector) grew steadily. Of concern, however, is the 9 percent drop in total spending from 2014 to 2016.
- ✓ Absolute levels of agricultural research spending varied considerably across the SADC countries: South Africa accounted for about half of the region's total investments in 2016; whereas Madagascar, Eswatini, and Lesotho spent less than 10 million each that same year.

Spending trends at selected national agricultural research institutes, 2016-2020

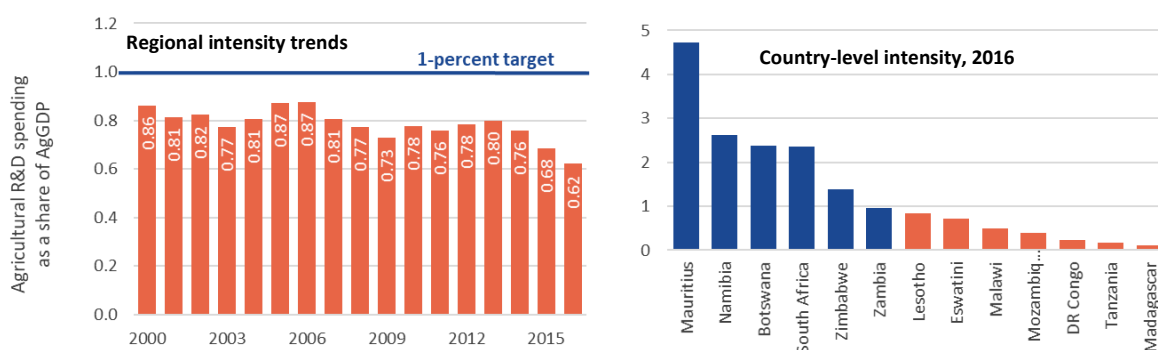


Sources: Calculated by author based on survey responses. See full consultancy report for definitions and information.

- ✓ Although there appears to be an increasing acknowledgement by governments on the importance of agriculture and agricultural research in the development of the economy and addressing food security and poverty alleviation, this has yet to be translated in increased financial support.
- ✓ In fact, new evidence collected through a survey of various research and higher education agencies shows that most governments have seriously cut their budgets to agricultural research during 2016-2020. The negative impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on overall government revenues have had a further negative impact on their allocations to research.

- ✓ Almost all SADC countries are highly dependent on government contributions, but these funds mostly cover the salaries of staff and the costs of the basic operations.
- ✓ Research programs and infrastructure improvements are mostly funded by donor contributions and development bank loans. These sources of funding have been erratic and limited; in fact, all agricultural research agencies reported serious infrastructural and equipment constraints.
- ✓ Other sources, such as revenues through the sales of goods and services or private sector funding, remain limited.

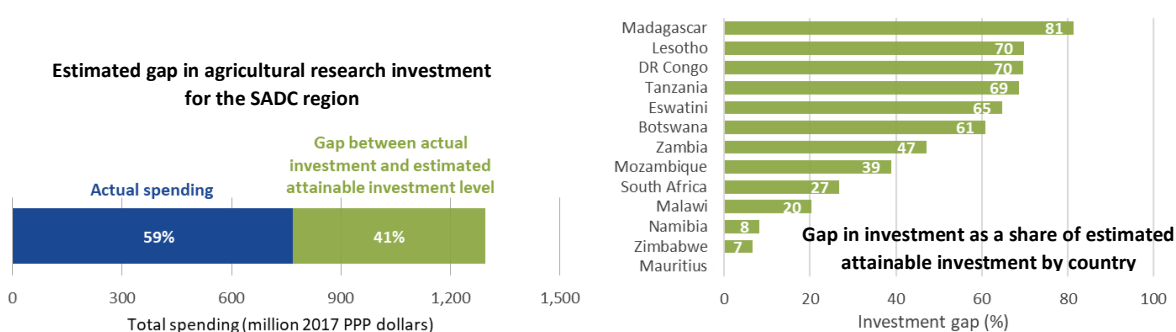
Agricultural research spending as a share of AgGDP, 2000-2016



Sources: Calculated by author based on ASTI datasets (www.asti.cgiar.org). See full consultancy report for definitions and other information.

- ✓ Overall, the SADC region invested only 0.62 percent of its AgGDP in agricultural research in 2016, which is less than the recommended 1 percent by the African Union. Agricultural research spending growth was lower than that of agricultural output, resulting in a decline in research spending intensity over time.
- ✓ The region comprises a number of small countries, which have in general substantially higher intensity ratios because they are unable to benefit from economies of scale; they need to establish minimum-level of capacities across relevant disciplines and major commodities to be effective.

Measuring the level of underinvestment in agricultural research, 2016



Sources: Calculated by author based on ASTI data (various years) and estimates provided by Alejandro Nin Pratt (personal communication). See full consultancy report for definitions and other information.

- ✓ The traditional intensity ratios fail to consider the broader structure of agricultural sector and economy. For this reason, ASTI developed a more nuanced measure that estimates the gap between a country's actual level of investment and the level deemed attainable based on comparisons with countries of similar economic structures.
- ✓ The SADC region is not investing its potential based on the countries' economic structure. Overall, the region could have invested 41 percent more on agricultural research in 2016. Based on the ASTI estimates, Mauritius, Zimbabwe, and Namibia were investing the right amount on agricultural research but most countries are far from investment levels that are attainable.