Implementing the CAADP Round Table Process

The Malawi Experience

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The Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security of Malawi hosted a two-day agricultural symposium in October 2006 under the theme “Towards Food Security and Economic Growth Through Increased Performance of the Agricultural Sector”, within the framework of the Malawi Agricultural Sector Investment Program (MASIP) and SWAP (sector-wide approach process) for the agricultural sector, with sponsorship from the World Bank.

The FANRPAN Node Coordinator for Malawi, Victor Mhoni and other node members like Dr Charles Mataya also attended and actively participated in the symposium.

FANRPAN’s particular interest in this process was in respect of policy analysis, advocacy and providing regional comparisons and synergies harmonization.

In the NEPAD round table initiative it was agreed that member countries, with the help of Regional economic Communities (RECs), should begin by taking stock of available documents and policy papers, synthesize them, arrange round table meetings to sensitize key stakeholders and donors on the priority areas in agriculture, identify early actions and investment priorities, with specific roles assigned to different actors, and have action plans drafted.

The Malawi symposium was one such round table and it provided an opportunity for the regional team to share experiences and learn from the process and be equipped to offer guidance to other member states willing to organize similar round table meetings, in line with the agenda agreed by Heads of State for Africa.

The main purpose of the symposium was to involve all key stakeholders in the process of jointly re-defining the priorities in the agricultural sector and to design an implementation strategy that most of the actors would identify with and buy into, basing on the National Agricultural Policy Framework formulated by the host Ministry. Prior to the symposium, workshops were conducted for key actors in the sector including the donor community, to familiarize themselves with the policy framework and provide their input.
The overall outcome of the Malawi Symposium was agreement by all stakeholders to merge implementation of the SWAp process with CAADP.

It is in recognition of the important role of agriculture in the fight against poverty and malnutrition that African governments launched the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) in 2003 under the African Union Maputo Declaration. The agenda under the four pillars of CAADP, in particular Pillars I and IV, focuses primarily on helping African countries improve the management of agricultural and water, including irrigation, and reinforce research and technology generation systems to raise productivity and output levels. Pillar III of the CAADP agenda focuses on measures to alleviate the incidence of hunger and malnutrition by improving food security. Pillar II of the CAADP agenda focuses on the facilitation of public-private partnerships and business alliances as well as policies, institutions, and infrastructure measures to improve the operation of domestic markets and development of smallholder friendly supply chains. The regional programs that are being pursued by the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) under this pillar emphasize the facilitation of regional trade and integration among their member countries.

There are two sets of activities under the CAADP agenda that cut across individual pillars both addressing the issue of the level and efficiency of public expenditures for agricultural growth and food security. A budget and expenditure tracking system is being developed to establish consensus on the definition of agricultural expenditures and specify common methodologies for their quantification. Second, knowledge systems are being developed under the leadership of Regional Economic Communities (RECs) to support efforts to improve country sector policies and strategies through peer review, benchmarking, and mutual learning.

The CAADP implementation process

There have been three main sets of process-related challenges in terms of moving forward the implementation of the CAADP agenda. The first challenge has been to obtain commitment from key development partners to endorse and support what is an African agenda, and more critically, to ensure that they do not pursue separate or parallel agendas at the country level while efforts are still being made to engage national actors on the ground. A second challenge was to establish ownership of the agenda by the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and effectively empower them to fulfill the roles and responsibilities that have been assigned to them under the NEPAD agenda, namely the coordination of the implementation process in their member countries. The third and final challenge was to effectively facilitate the country level process of mobilizing the necessary expertise and resources in order to raise the efficiency of national policies and strategies, increase investments in the sector, and improve development outcomes to achieve the CAADP targets.

The following are the main principles and targets that define the CAADP framework:

- agriculture-led growth as a main strategy to achieve the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) of poverty reduction;
- the pursuit of a 6% average annual sector growth rate at the national level;
- the allocation of at least 10% of national budgets to the agricultural sector;
- the exploitation of regional complementarities and cooperation to boost growth and trade;
- the principles of policy efficiency, dialogue, review, and accountability, shared by all NEPAD programs;
- the principles of partnerships and alliances to include farmers, agribusiness, and civil society communities;

The CAADP process at the country level is supposed to build on ongoing country efforts and be led by national governments and other stakeholders, with the necessary support from the Regional Economic Communities and the
NEPAD Secretariat. In line with the NEPAD principles of ownership and accountability, the country CAADP process is initiated on a demand-driven basis, through consultations between RECs and their member countries.

CAADP Round Tables (RT) are designed to assist countries to review ongoing and planned national efforts, and elaborate, if necessary, policy, strategy, and investment measures in order to align these efforts with the CAADP principles and ensure successful achievement of the CAADP targets. In addition, CAADP Round Tables are to facilitate public-private partnerships, business alliances, coordination of development assistance, and the establishment of institutional mechanisms for effective policy dialogue and program progress and performance review.

In summary the main tasks of the CAADP Round Tables are to:

- take stock and review how national policy and investment processes are tackling key country level constraints to achieving the 6% target growth rate for the sector;
- identify the eventual policy and investment gaps;
- devise action plans to bridge these gaps within a reasonable time frame;
- agree on budget and external resource requirements and funding and institutional arrangements to implement these plans; and
- adopt mechanisms for effective coordination and review of implementation progress and performance.

An important outcome of the RT is an assessment of: (i) the extent to which a country’s policies, strategies, and investments are aligned and conducive to meeting the CAADP sector growth and expenditure targets; and (ii) the extent to which development assistance in that country is aligned to help it meet these targets. The assessment also includes, when relevant, an indication of the gaps that need to be bridged in order to put the country on track to achieve these targets.

In case a country is not on track to achieve the expenditure or growth targets, the RT would define the required set of actions and commitments by national governments, the private sector, the farming community, and development partners that are active in that country in order to bridge the gaps identified, including the necessary partnerships and alliances.

The final set of RT outcomes is to define the institutional arrangements for the coordination and review of implementation progress and performance with respect to the actions and commitment specified by the country’s agricultural stakeholders. Under this step it would be important to further refine the framework by presenting outcomes to a wider audience i.e. all stakeholders for the sector need to buy into the initiative and assist in the prioritization of key result areas, as was done at the Malawi symposium.

Thank you to COMESA Secretariat who facilitated FANRPAN’S participation at the Malawi RT.

2ND International Symposium
Of The African Science Academy Development Initiative
“Prioritizing Food Security Policies For Health And Development In Africa”
Yaounde, Cameroon, 15-16 November 2006 | Report by Dr. Wynand van der Walt, FANRPAN-South Africa

The theme for the symposium “prioritizing food security policies for health and development in Africa” was considered timely and relevant in view of the endemic food insecurity, malnutrition and health problems on the continent. The focus on the scientific community was aimed at getting more active inputs and liaison from scientists in developing government policies by way of evidence-based scientific information.

The Symposium, attended by 165 delegates from 12 African and 5 industrial country academies, was officially opened by the Honourable Minister of Education, Professor Jacques Ndongo. The Minister stated that science offers the most powerful means of knowledge creation and challenged academies to be more active in promoting science, to transfer knowledge to the next generation, and accept their role in addressing new problems by means of evidence-based science.

Dr. Wynand van der Walt, representing FANRPAN, presented a review on modern biotechnology, its various applications, and the potential benefits for African agriculture. He urged scientists to become involved in policy development and public awareness communication, while making use of existing biotechnology networks. The key outcome of the ASADI symposium was a call to academics to become more involved in the promotion of science and technologies, and assisting governments in developing policies and regulations, in order to alleviate endemic problems in food insecurity, malnutrition and disease.
Report On European Development Days  
**Brussels - 13 To 17 November 2006**  
**Mrs. Miriam Nkunika, FANRPAN-Zambia**

“As Chairperson of the Agricultural Consultative Forum, I was privileged to represent FANRPAN at the European Development Days, which took place in Brussels, Belgium from 13th – 17th November 2006”.

Mrs. Nkunika was one of Twenty Delegates sponsored by the “Technical Centre for agricultural and rural co-operation (CTA). All the representatives came from civil society.

The Zambian delegate was the only one from an Institution that promotes Private/Public Sector Partnership on matters of policy. This attracted a lot of interest. Welcome remarks were given on behalf of the Belgian Prime Minister Mr. Guy Verhofstad. He explained that this was the First Edition of European days and would focus on Africa. This was an initiative of the EU President and was expected to become an annual event, to provide an opportunity for dialogue between EU Member countries and its African partners. The need to strengthen Regional and Continental Institutions was recognised.

Africa Position on GMOs in Agriculture and Food Security  
**Addis Ababa, Ethiopia Africa Union Commission, October 17-19, 2006**  
**Marnus Gouse, FANRPAN-South Africa**

Mr Marnus Gouse, of the University of Pretoria represented FANRPAN at the Africa Union meeting on “Africa Position on GMOs in Agriculture and Food Security”. The objective of the meeting was to discuss the main issues and various approaches to better harmonise the way African countries address issues of GMOs and food safety.

The final outcomes of the meeting were to supply guidance for the development of an Agricultural Biosafety Strategy for Africa supported by a number of pillars, including: Regional cooperation, Capacity building focussed on Africa’s needs, Institutional network (regional and national), Public participation and awareness, Preparation for negotiations. Effective legal and policy framework (Revised African Model Law), South – South cooperation, Effective monitoring and evaluation system, Information exchange (biosafety clearing house – national nodes – regional nodes – AU), and Resource mobilisation.

The African Model Law has been under review for some time now and problems with the law have been identified. Progress reports on the review are under preparation. The development of biosafety policies necessitates regional cooperation and harmonisation. The on going work by the AU is a commendable effort.