The Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP): Africa's collective vision for agriculture!

The Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) was adopted in 2003 by Africa leaders as their collective vision for agriculture in Africa. This newsletter examines the rationale for establishing CAADP, some of the initial challenges faced in implementing CAADP at country-level, and the current status of implementation at national and regional levels. It is argued that while implementation has been slower than envisaged, the CAADP process has brought agriculture development to the forefront of the international development discourse. It has gained momentum and also made an important contribution to focusing Africa’s energies on this sector over the last seven years.

A crisis response for agriculture in Africa is required

The African Union (AU)/New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) in July 2003 established the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) as the highest policy level framework for the co-coordinated development of agriculture in Africa. The main objective of CAADP is to assist African countries to achieve a higher economic growth rate through agriculture-led development, which will contribute to reducing poverty and eliminating hunger. To do this, African Governments have agreed to increase public investment in agriculture by a minimum of 10 per cent per year of their national budgets, to raise agricultural productivity by at least 6 per cent per year, and to improve overall policy efficiency through peer review and accountability.

In 2003, when CAADP was launched, agriculture in Africa was in a crisis and demanded a “crisis response”, which in essence was the aim of CAADP. Agriculture provides livelihoods for about 70 per cent of Africa’s population. It accounts for 60 per cent of the continent’s active labour force and contributes almost 17 per cent of Africa’s total gross domestic product. It is the main source of income for nearly 90 per cent of Africa’s rural population (CAADP, 2003; ECA, 2005). However, Africa is unable to feed itself and imports nearly US$20
billion in food annually. Farmers’ yields have stagnated for decades and the growth in total output has barely kept pace with Africa’s increasing population. CAADP stated that nearly 200 million people or 28 per cent of Africa’s population was chronically hungry during 1997-1999. According to the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO), the number of chronically undernourished people in Sub-Saharan Africa stood at 239 million in 2010 (or 30% of the population).

CAADP consequently was launched as an attempt to do things differently. It was a response to the question of whether or not the FAO, World Food Programme (WFP) and bilateral donors were not already doing all that could be done to feed the hungry and poor of Africa.

**CAADP: Africa’s answer to Africa’s problems**

CAADP is entirely Africa-led and Africa-owned. This is what makes it unique amongst the multitude of initiatives in Africa that endeavour to address food insecurity.

Under CAADP, African leaders agreed to four key focus areas, or pillars, for investment and action, in addressing increased and sustainable productivity in agriculture. The four pillars are: (i) sustainable land and water management; (ii) rural infrastructure and trade-related capacities for market access; (iii) food and nutrition security; and (iv) agricultural research, extension and training for technology dissemination and adoption. The premise of CAADP is that the time had come for agriculture to become the engine of economic growth in Africa.

CAADP acknowledges that although available financial resources have to be managed better, overall investments in agriculture have to be drastically increased if Africa is to pull out of its food crisis. It was estimated that the four CAADP pillars would require $251 billion in investments between 2002 and 2015, of which the annual average of $17.9 billion would be less than the amount that Africa expends each year on food imports. Significantly CAADP proposes that Africa mobilise about half of the total amount from its own resources. It was envisaged that this share would gradually increase as the continent strengthens its domestic capacities, in order to ensure that it remains a truly African-owned initiative.

**Challenges facing implementation**

The fact that CAADP was the product of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) was both a blessing and a curse. The purpose of NEPAD was to fast-track development on the continent and was arguably the first significant attempt by Heads of State and/or Government in Africa to take over the reigns of development and in so-doing accept collective responsibility for the fate of Africa’s citizens. No one could disagree that a high-level response to agriculture, infrastructure and education, among other, was long overdue. However CAADP was, by its nature, a top down process which initially was perceived to be imposed on countries and Regional Economic Communities (REC).

After the launch of CAADP, the task fell to the NEPAD Secretariat to convince countries to adopt CAADP into their national policy frameworks. In many of these countries, the agriculture policy frameworks were already determined, largely, by donor organisations and international financial institutions. Whilst African leaders and the heads of donor organisations had committed to support CAADP, the reality of implementing CAADP at a country level proved more challenging. How would CAADP affect the budgetary and planning processes in ministries responsible for food and agriculture and in donor country offices? While there was general acceptance that it could not be business as usual, it was unclear exactly how to implement CAADP.

Another challenge was the culture of neglect that had come to define the attitude of countries, RECs, donors and international financial institutions towards agriculture. Decades of disinvestment in agriculture in favour of industrialisation as the hope for economic growth in
Africa, was to blame. This contributed to a situation where most countries lacked agriculture research institutions and policy networks; agriculture infrastructure was often poor or non-existent; and markets were dysfunctional. A significant challenge however to rolling out CAADP was that Ministers of Finance were not accustomed to budgeting for agriculture. In addition, in most countries, the portfolio of the Minister of Agriculture was not always a very powerful portfolio. Also, a culture of consultation on agriculture policies in government with key policy makers and key agricultural stakeholders, such as farmers and Civil Society Organisations (CSOS) was largely non-existent.

It was clear that simply leaving the implementation of CAADP up to countries was not an option. A way had to be found to get countries to make CAADP their own, which would in essence entail changing the prevailing culture surrounding agriculture and food security. A consultative process was called for. One that would bring ministries in government together, put donors and policy makers around the same table as equals and give a voice to all the agricultural stakeholders.

**Bringing CAADP to the people: National and regional implementation process of CAADP**

The NEPAD Secretariat, after much consultation, introduced the CAADP Roundtable process as the mechanism for implementing CAADP. At national level CAADP implementation is primarily a process of aligning national agricultural policies, strategies, and investments with CAADP principles and targets. The process builds on each country’s ongoing efforts and is led by national governments and key stakeholders, with coordination by the RECs, NEPAD, and the AU. One of the main steps in the process is the signing of a compact between all the stakeholders which identifies key investment areas or long-term investment commitments under each of the four CAADP Pillars that will accelerate agriculture-led economic growth and ensure food security. (NEPAD) Stakeholders at national level range from large and small-scale farmers, government ministry officials, donors, researchers, agribusiness and NGOs.

The process was endorsed at the Maputo Africa Partnership Forum (APF) meeting in May 2006. It was furthermore agreed that regional compacts would also be concluded at REC level as a means to accelerating regional integration. The RECs are expected to establish their own priorities based on the continent-wide Pillars. Furthermore lead Pillar institutions were identified across the Continent to design Pillar Frameworks to guide the implementation of the various Pillars by countries.

As a result of this process it can now be said that CAADP is a framework embodying a set of key principles and targets and not a supranational programme which has been imposed on countries. Continental in scope, CAADP is realised through national efforts to promote growth in the agriculture sector and economic development. Countries will implement the CAADP Agenda in their own way by drawing from a common set of tools, such as the Pillar frameworks and the country roundtable process. Finally institutional actors at lower levels are required to report back to the higher level actors, a hierarchy which eventually leads to the African Union Commission. AU/NEPAD coordinates CAADP by inter alia promoting the CAADP principles, managing communication and information, facilitating and coordinating monitoring and evaluation, linking resources with programmes, and harnessing key thinking and experience.
Progress is being made in implementing CAADP and attaining the Maputo targets - slowly but certainly

In 2007, nearly four years after the Maputo Declaration, Rwanda was the first country to sign its national CAADP Compact, after which it took another two years for the implementation process to gain momentum. The year 2009 was a landmark year in which twelve countries signed their respective compacts. By March 2010, fifteen countries had signed their national CAADP Compacts and several countries had advanced in the pre-Compact processes. There are still, however, a few countries remaining that have not yet launched the CAADP and commenced with roundtable processes.

Progress at the regional levels has also been varied. The most notable progress has been achieved in Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA). ECOWAS adopted its regional Compact in November 2009. COMESA has commenced with the process of developing its regional Compact. COMESA in 2009 commissioned FANRPAN to design the COMESA Regional CAADP Compact. FANRPAN commenced with desk reviews and stakeholders engagements in 2009 and drafted the COMESA Regional CAADP Compact in 2010. The next step in completing this process involves the singing of the Compact and the designing of investment programmes.

African countries have also made some progress towards reaching the Maputo targets. Since the 2003 Maputo Declaration, many governments have increased their budgetary allocations to the agriculture sector. By 2008, eight countries had allocated 10 per cent or more of their national budgets to agriculture. Nine countries had allocated between 5 and 10 per cent and 28 countries have devoted less than 5 per cent of their total budgets to this sector. While African countries as a whole have not met the CAADP 10 per cent budgetary allocation target, by 2008 agricultural spending had increased by 75 per cent from 2000 to 2005. The target, however, remains unmet because of the low initial base prior to 2000. (ReSAKSS)

By 2008, 10 countries had achieved an agricultural growth rate of 6 per cent or greater. 14 countries recorded growth rates between 3 and 6 per cent and 6 countries recorded positive growth rates under 3 per cent. The GDP growth rate for agriculture in Sub-Saharan Africa had increased from an annual average of 3 per cent in the 1990s and 2000s to 5.3 per cent in 2008. (ReSAKSS) It, however, is too soon to say if Africa, as a continent, will be able to sustain this growth or meet the 6 per cent growth target, as the recent food, commodities and international financial crises

have affected growth rates in 2009 and are likely to continue doing so in 2010.

Donor spending in the agricultural sector has not increased as envisaged in CAADP. The ratio of donor spending for agriculture as a share of total donor spending in Africa “has declined consistently from an average of 15 per cent between 1980 and 1995 to 12 per cent between 2000 and 2002”. “In 2006, the ratio had declined to about 4 per cent”. Total ODA for agriculture in Sub-Saharan Africa has remained at about “US$1 billion a year since the 1990s.” (ReSAKSS)

A NEPAD commissioned review in 2010 found that the Pillar frameworks, which were completed in 2009, have assisted the implementation process. They, for example, have provided “useful approaches and strategies in each of the areas”. Three pillars, namely Pillar 1 by TerrAfrica, Pillar 3, by the University of KwaZulu Natal and Pillar 4 by Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA), “have already made an impact on the work being carried out in their respective areas with investments supported by multi-donor trust funds” (AU/NEPAD, April 2010).

The way forward: Moving beyond the process but acknowledging how far we have come.

The 2010 review commissioned by the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency indicated that the CAADP should move beyond “being simply a ‘process’ to becoming a provider of services,” in “support of accelerating growth in the agriculture sector” (AU/NEPAD, April 2010). In response to the findings, Dr Ibrahim Assane Mayaki, the CEO of the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency, indicated that the greatest achievement of the CAADP has been to “demonstrate its relevance to accelerating the growth of the agriculture sector in Africa and to bring African agriculture to the top of the development agenda. It has successfully garnered the support of all the major development partners both politically, through statements on the importance of supporting African agriculture at G-8 summits, and financially, through the creation of a US$60 million Multi-Donor Trust Fund dedicated to enhancing CAADP implementation. It has also shown itself to be flexible and responsive to emerging issues such as climate change, bio-energy and high food prices”.

Dr Mayaki also noted that CAADP’s biggest disappointments have been “its failure to secure greater understanding and ownership of CAADP at country level, and to not achieve more in terms of increased investment in the sector by governments and development partners”. (AU/NEPAD, April 2010)

The purpose of this article has been to provide some sense of road that has been travelled since the inception of CAADP in 2003. It would be naive to refer to the
CAADP implementation process as “simply a process”. It is easy to forget that the continental and international landscapes for agriculture development were barren less than 10 years ago. The CAADP process has brought agriculture development to the forefront of the international development discourse and focused Africa’s energies on this sector over the last 7 years. It should be recalled that in 2008 the World Bank published its first report on agriculture in 25 years calling for greater investment in agriculture in developing countries. This would not have been the case without the NEPAD CAADP.

Most importantly the CAADP process should be acknowledged for the role that it is playing in re-establishing a culture of consultation in Africa. It is true that much remains to be done, but stakeholders have started talking to each other about what can be done to improve agriculture and food security. Perhaps, even more importantly, stakeholders are beginning to listen to each other. There is still hope that CAADP will assist Africa in meeting its vision for agriculture.

The CAADP process in COMESA

The COMESA Member States have implemented the CAADP in their countries to various degrees. By June 2010, six COMESA Member States had signed their national CAADP compacts. Rwanda was the first country in Africa to conclude its country CAADP compact in 2007. This was followed in 2009 by Ethiopia and Burundi and in 2010 by Uganda, Swaziland and Malawi. More countries are continuously embracing CAADP values and moving towards concluding their compacts with an additional four Member States (Zambia, Zimbabwe, Kenya and Sudan) in COMESA expected to sign by the end of 2010. In most of the COMESA countries, development of Agricultural Sector Strategic Plans predates the adoption of the CAADP framework. These strategies have been reviewed and are being harmonised to reflect the CAADP principles.

At a regional level, COMESA in 2009 commissioned FANRPAN to design the COMESA Regional CAADP Compact. FANRPAN commenced with desk reviews and stakeholders engagements in 2009. In the process of designing the draft Compact, the following outputs

Delegatges at the 3rd Joint Meeting of COMESA Ministers of Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resources, Zambia
were generated: (i) a database of regional institutions with relevance to programme imple-
mentation; (ii) a framework document providing the context within which the Compact was
developed and highlighting the existing and recommended programmes and institutional
arrangements that will need to be developed to achieve food security, end hunger, and
achieve economic growth in the region; and (iii) the COMESA Regional CAADP Compact.

The next step in completing this process involves the signing of the Compact and the design-
ing of investment programmes. It is envisaged that the Compact will serve as a commitment
by the stakeholders to develop and implement the investment programmes within the priority
focus areas, according to agreed upon roles and functions. After the signing of the Com-
pact, investment programmes will be developed and funding mechanisms will be agreed
upon. The Regional Investment Programmes for Agriculture (RIPA) will be a compendium to
the Compact.

Three priority areas of focus have been identified for the COMESA Regional CAADP Compact.
These priorities, which are consistent with the priorities of the COMESA Treaty and the
COMESA Agriculture Strategy, are:

- Food Systems Productivity,
- Trade, Infrastructure and Agricultural Development Corridors, and
- Human and Institutional Capacity Strengthening.

A Compact Programme is proposed under each of the above three priority areas. The Priority
Compact Programme takes into account the existing COMESA programmes, the gaps identi-
fied, and the elements required for a holistic approach. Given the focus and progress made
by both Alliance for Commodity Trade in Eastern and Southern Africa (ACTESA) and by the
North-South Corridor Model Aid for Trade Programme, it is recommended that the pro-
grammes for Compact Priorities 1 and 2 be anchored on these. It is also recommended that
the programme for Priority 3 - Human and Institutional Capacity Development should be con-
solidated on gains made by ongoing initiatives being implemented by sub-regional organisa-
tions (EAFF, SACAU, FANRPAN, ASARECA, FARA, RUFORUM and ReSAKSS).
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About FANRPAN

The Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network (FANRPAN) is an autonomous regional stakeholder driven policy research, analysis and implementation network that was formally established in the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) in 1997. FANRPAN was borne out of the need by SADC governments who felt that comprehensive policies and strategies were required to resuscitate agriculture. FANRPAN is mandated to work in all SADC countries and currently has activities in 13 Southern African countries namely Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.