

## ***A Biennial Review for transformation of agriculture in Africa***

Summary of the inaugural Biennial Review Report of the African Union Commission on the Implementation of the CAADP-Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared prosperity and Improved Livelihoods in Africa.

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### ***Summary of the 2017 progress report to the AU Assembly***

#### **Background**

A significant proportion of Africa's population still remains vulnerable to the challenges of economic marginalization, hunger and malnutrition, despite the promising achievements witnessed recently in agriculture and economic growth in the continent. Though agriculture still presents the best possible avenue to attain best return on investments in realizing sustainable development and addressing a growing problem of poverty as well as food and nutrition insecurity, it requires a coherent framework both at the political and technical levels to stimulate continent wide reforms in the sector. It was with this strategic thinking that the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) was endorsed in 2003 (Maputo Decision, 2003) as the Flagship Programme of the African Union for agriculture and food security to maximize the contribution of agriculture to achieving the ambition of a self-reliant and productive Africa and delivering economic growth and sustainable development for its people.

In 2014, marking the 10th anniversary of CAADP, the AU Heads of State and Government look back at achievements and lessons from CAADP's first 10 years implementation and also to look ahead to what CAADP needs to achieve over the next decade till 2025. This exercise culminated in endorsement of the AU Heads of State and Government 2014 Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods. The Malabo Declaration is a set of new goals showing a more targeted approach to achieve the agricultural vision for the continent. It is also a confirmation that agriculture should remain the priority on the development agenda of the continent, and is a critical policy initiative for African economic growth and poverty reduction. During the occasion, the leaders committed to Mutual Accountability to Results and Actions by conducting a biennial Agricultural Review Process that involves tracking, monitoring and reporting on implementation progress in achieving the provisions of the Malabo Declaration. It is with this background that the AU Heads of State and Government for the first time presented and discussed their respective country reports on progress of implementation of the Malabo Declaration in Addis Ababa during the recent AU summit end of January, 2018.

The Malabo Declaration has seven commitments translated into seven (7) thematic areas of performance. Progress is measured against twenty-two (22) performance categories and forty three (43) indicators. To evaluate country performance in achieving agricultural growth and transformation goals in Africa, the Member States' performances are presented in a form of a "Country Scorecard in implementing the Malabo Commitments" covering the period 2015 - 2016. The report covers key findings of the 47 member states out of 55 who submitted their validated national implementing commitments and results related to the Malabo Declaration. Also the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) provided comparable regional progress reports. The regional and country scorecards are expected to stimulate debate, sharing experiences and lesson learning on both the areas where progress is being made and where more effort is required by different stakeholders. New positive pressures within countries and regions to advance agriculture, reduce hunger and malnutrition can be unleashed. In turn, this can encourage new investments, partnerships and policy improvements.

#### **Key findings**

Only twenty (20) Member States obtained the minimum overall score of 3.94 out of 10 to be on track for the 2017 benchmark for implementing commitments of the Malabo Declaration by 2025. Rwanda has the highest score of 6.1 on Agricultural Transformation in Africa, and is the 2017 best performing country. In general, the average score for the whole Africa is 3.60 which indicates the Union is not on-track in meeting the CAADP/Malabo commitments when assessed against the benchmark for 2017.

→ On the first commitment, re-committing on CAADP, for instance through integration of Malabo Commitments in National Agricultural Investment Plans (NAIPs), the 47 Member States are at various stages of domesticating the CAADP/Malabo processes, with the overall stage at 63% only.

→ Regarding the second commitment of allocating at least 10 % of their annual public expenditures to agriculture, only ten (10) Member States have met the target during the review period of 2015 and 2016. Malawi (17.6%) and Ethiopia (16.8 %) are the two States with the highest allocation for agricultural

investment. Twelve (12) Member States, among them Burundi and Kenya, have reported to meet the required minimum agricultural research spending of at least 1% of the agricultural GDP yearly.

→ Under the third commitment, ending hunger by 2025, only nine (9) countries out of the thirty two (32) Member States that reported progress are on track regarding continental target for bringing down undernourishment rates to 5% maximum. Similarly, out of the thirty four (34) Member States that reported on growth rates of yields of national commodities, only thirteen (13) reached the minimum increase of 10% required to be on-track in 2017.

→ Under commitment four, halving poverty through agriculture by 2025, most Member States have met the objectives to creating new job opportunities for at least 30% of the youth in agricultural value chains by 2025 (milestone for 2017 was 3%). However, this might be misleading since the data reported are not for the new jobs created from 2015 to 2016, but rather the current total percentage of youth engaged in agriculture. So only the next biennial report will show progress as such. On the recommitment to achieving 6% annual growth of the agricultural GDP, eighteen (18) Member States reported an increase in Agricultural GDP of at least 6% in 2016.

→ On the fifth commitment, boosting intra-African trade in agricultural commodities and services, only three (3) Member States (Lesotho, Niger and Senegal) have reached the 2017 minimum milestone of 20% in growth rate increase. Thirty four (34) Member States are on track for reaching more than the minimum score of 10 for the Trade Facilitation Index (TFI) that should reach 100 by 2025. Botswana obtained the highest score for TFI while Lesotho has performed the highest overall score on the commitment on boosting intra-African trade of agricultural commodities and services.

→ Under commitment six, enhancing resilience to climate variability, in respect of the existence of government budget-lines on resilience building, 34 countries have reported. To be on track, countries need to have government budget lines on disaster preparedness policy and strategy and on early warning response systems and social safety nets and finally achieve a proportion of 100% of households covered by index insurance. The main challenge for the country was the household coverage by index insurance. Only one (1) Member State, namely Mauritius, is on track.

→ Last but not least, the African Heads of State also committed to enhancing mutual accountability for actions and results as the seventh commitment. Thirty (30) out of thirty two (32) Member States that have reported on this commitment, are on-track in establishing inclusive institutionalized mechanisms and platforms for mutual accountability and peer review.

For overview of key findings please refer to the page 7 et seqq. in the English version of the Biennial Review Report.

## **Conclusion**

The 30th Ordinary Session of the African Union (AU) Summit ended on 29 January 2018, with the adoption of key decisions by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government on various agendas. On Fast Tracking CAADP-Malabo Commitments for Accelerating Agriculture Transformation in Africa through Biennial Review Mechanism and Africa Agricultural Transformation Scorecard (AATS), the Assembly commended the positive response of Member States in conducting rigorous self-assessments, inclusive validation process and providing information for the preparation of the inaugural report to the Assembly of the African Union on the progress in achieving the common goals on agricultural transformation in Africa. This is even more commendable given the reluctance of the same Member States when it comes to other review processes, such as the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM).

Challenges faced by Member States were significant in collecting and compiling quality data to report progress on all goals and targets set in the commitments of the Malabo Declaration. The Assembly also called all Member States of the African Union to mobilize adequate technical and financial resources in supporting agricultural data systems, monitoring and evaluation systems and strengthen mutual accountability structures to trigger evidence based planning for agriculture transformation. We see the same challenge in the SDG reporting and overall data availability.

The report entails Country (and Regional) Scorecards, a politically powerful tool providing a concise and easy to read snapshot of the status of agricultural transformation in each country. Henceforward, this Biennial Review Report offers a powerful channel for communicating results following investments in national agricultural sectors and challenges for Governments, academia, private sector, civil society and development partners alike. For the latter ones, like Switzerland/SDC, it also holds potential for informing decisions of support for agriculture, food security and nutrition as well as for the policy dialogue with Governments and multilateral organizations in these fields.