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Africa Agriculture Transformation Scorecard: Performance and Lessons for the Southern Africa Development Community-SADC

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Abstract:

This paper describes preliminary lessons and experiences from the African Union/NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency's Biennial Reviews process in which agricultural investment plans for every African Union Member State are reviewed every two years in order to track the country's progress in the implementation of the Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Program (CAADP) and Malabo commitments that were made by African Union Heads of State in June 2014 in Equatorial Guinea, on how to improve agriculture. We have analysed documents from the African Union, previous meeting notes and other literature to in order to understand the Biennial review processes and draw conclusions on how best countries can improve their processes and possibly their biennial reviews scores going forward.

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Abstract

This paper describes preliminary lessons and experiences from the African Union/NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency's Biennial Reviews process in which agricultural investment plans for every African Union Member State are reviewed every two years in order to track the country's progress in the implementation of the Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Program (CAADP) and Malabo commitments that were made by African Union Heads of State in June 2014 in Equatorial Guinea, on how to improve agriculture. We have analysed documents from the African Union, previous meeting notes and other literature to in order to understand the Biennial review processes and draw conclusions on how best countries can improve their processes and possibly their biennial reviews scores going forward.

Brief on CAADP/Malabo Commitments

The African Union Assembly of Heads of State and Government adopted the Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation (Doc. Assembly/AU/2(XXIII)) in June 2014 in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, after a decade of implementing the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) in which Member States committed to investing 10% of their national budgets in Agriculture. By August 2017, fifty countries were engaged in CAADP, while 42 had developed CAADP compacts and 33 had national agriculture investment plans (NAIPS) (De Pinto & Ulimwengu, 2017)The major goal of the Malabo Declaration is to make sustainable and inclusive African agriculture transformation as a means for creating wealth, building resilience and sustainability, achieving food and nutritional security, creating economic opportunities, alleviating poverty and attaining shared prosperity (AUC (African Union Commission), 2014)). In order to ensure that member states achieve these aspirations, Heads of State and Government committed to focus on 7 key areas (Malabo Seven Commitments commonly known as the Malabo Declaration) namely:

1. A recommitment to CAADP principles and values as outlined in NEPAD/AUC (2003).
2. Commitment to Enhancing Investment Finance in Agriculture.
3. Commitment to Ending Hunger in Africa by 2025.
4. Commitment to reducing Poverty by the year 2025, through Inclusive Agricultural Growth and Transformation (Agriculture to contribute Half of the reduction).
5. Commitment to Boosting Intra-African Trade in Agricultural commodities and service.

6. Commitment to Enhancing Resilience of Livelihoods and Production Systems to Climate Variability and other related risks.
7. Commitment to Mutual Accountability to Actions and Results (AUC 2014).

Going forward, the National Agriculture Food Security Investment Plans (NAFSIPs) must be consistent with the Malabo commitments in order to achieve agricultural transformation in a sustainable and inclusive way. This is also vital in swaying the National Agricultural Policies and Strategies of member states to conform to the Malabo Declaration (Agenda 2063) so that a holistic approach is implemented towards invigorating the agriculture sector across Africa.

Under the Commitment on Mutual Accountability, the Heads of State agreed to conduct reviews of their country's agricultural sectors every two years (Biennial Reviews-BR) in order to take stock of the progress being made in pursuit of the Malabo agreements/commitments.

In the course of 2016 and 2017 the African Union Commission (AUC) and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) Planning and Coordinating Agency (NPCA) together with the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and Member States, in collaboration with partners (technical and development) as part of implementing the commitment of strengthening mutual accountability to action and results, designed and implemented the inaugural agriculture sector Biennial Review (BR) for the continent. The inaugural BR results were presented to the Heads of State and Government at the 30th AU Assembly meeting in Addis Ababa in January 2018 (see (AUC (African Union Commission), 2018)).

This note presents summaries, experiences and lessons from the inaugural BR process focusing only on the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC). It highlights country and regional averages of BR scores and brings out common policy lessons for the region.

Biennial Agricultural Review (BR) and the Agriculture Joint Sector Review (JSR) are the key mutual accountability processes within the CAADP context. The SADC Regional Agriculture Policy is the CAADP Compact approved by the Council of Ministers for SADC and responds to Malabo Declaration commitments. The SADC region has also developed a Regional Agricultural Investment Plan (RAIP) which is designed to be a central instrument to rally financial and technical support towards implementation of the SADC RAP. The SADC RAIP is designed to facilitate coordination of regional and crosscutting programmes that are best handled regionally and those that compliment interventions in the NAFSIPs.

Rationale for CAADP Mutual Accountability Mechanisms

Mutual accountability is a process by which two or more parties hold one another accountable for the commitments they have voluntarily made to one another. Mutual Accountability(MA) is a core principle of CAADP. A mutual accountability framework (MAF) for CAADP was developed by the NCPA in 2011 to guide MA processes at continental, regional, and country levels. The BR mechanism aims to provide a platform for mutual accountability, and peer review

to motivate increased performance by AU Member States to deliver on targets set by the Malabo Declaration. The African Union Member States committed to achieve this through a well-designed, transparent and performance based Monitoring and Evaluation and Biennial Sector Reporting to the AU Assembly. Biennial Review involves tracking, monitoring and reporting on the implementation progress in achieving the provisions of the Malabo Declaration commitments.

Methodology

The main lessons and discussions presented are based on a review of relevant literature ranging from journal articles, research reports and the 2017/2018 CAADP BR documents. The reviewed material included international, regional and national level documents (including synthesis of the various planning and implementation meetings and workshops of the 2017 BR process) relevant to the objectives of the study. We also rely on documentation of the experiences from regions by the authors and other partners acknowledged at the end of this brief, who were also involved in some of the planning and implementation activities of the BR process

2018 Southern Africa Development Community Regional Agricultural Transformation Scorecard

Overview

Beginning 2016, the AUC, NPCA, and RECs implemented consultative actions and technical partner engagements that culminated in a set of reporting tools for the first BR. An agreement reached with the leadership of the AUC was to evaluate the progress made by individual member states using balanced scorecard methods, to develop an African Agriculture Transformation Scorecard (AATS). The seven (7) Malabo Commitments were translated into seven (7) thematic areas of performance as highlighted under section 1:

In the 2017 BR Report, twenty-three (23) performance categories and forty-three (43) indicators were defined, for the seven (7) thematic areas of performance aligned to the commitments to evaluate country performance in achieving agricultural growth and transformation goals in Africa. Forty seven (47) out of 55 Member States submitted their validated national reports to their respective RECs including SADC member states: Angola, Botswana, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Seychelles, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The final scorecard was prepared by the AUC and NPCA with support from the RECs and technical partners. The scorecard **Figure 1** was presented to the 30th African Union Assembly in January 2018.

Figure 1: Country overall progress for implementing the Malabo Declaration for Agriculture

Source: *AUC, 2018*

Performance by SADC Member States

It is important to note first that the African Union Commission and the NPCA assigned countries to groupings for purposes of achieving the trainings and implementation of the BR process between 2016 and 2017. In some cases except West Africa and North Africa where all countries fell in one REC, the AUC/NPCA groupings cut into political economic communities. Southern Africa region on which the AUC/NEPAD scorecard were based, for example, contained fewer (all SADC countries except Angola, Tanzania, and DRC) countries than the SADC block. Based on the AUC/NPCA grouping, the Southern Africa region is on track and its performance on the various themes is higher, although the themes requiring further attention are unchanged. Note that the averages regional performances are dependent on the number of countries on which they are based. For example using the African Union's grouping of countries

in which the Southern Africa has all SADC countries except Tanzania, Angola and DRC, the results show an improved picture in which the SADC region is on track, and this is because the latter countries have not performed as well as the other SADC countries..

In this brief, we presented the data based on the entire SADC which achieved an overall average score of 3.66 and therefore is **not on track** to meet the CAADP/ Malabo targets. Indeed, to be on track in 2017, a region needed to reach or surpass a benchmark score of 3.94. The SADC regional score is based on national reports of all the 15 SADC Member States. All the 15 SADC countries (100%) reported on their Malabo commitments and among them (8) are on-track in meeting Malabo commitments namely: South Africa, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, Swaziland, Mozambique, Botswana and Seychelles. In the SADC region, Mauritius (5.0), Malawi (4.92) and Botswana (4.38) were the top performers. With BR scores of 1.44 and 2.10, DRC and Angola, respectively were the least performers and were also not on track when assessed against the 3.94 benchmark for 2017. **Figure 2** presents a pictorial view of the performance of SADC Member States in implementing the Malabo declaration for agriculture as per the results of the inaugural biannual review report released by the AU in January 2018.

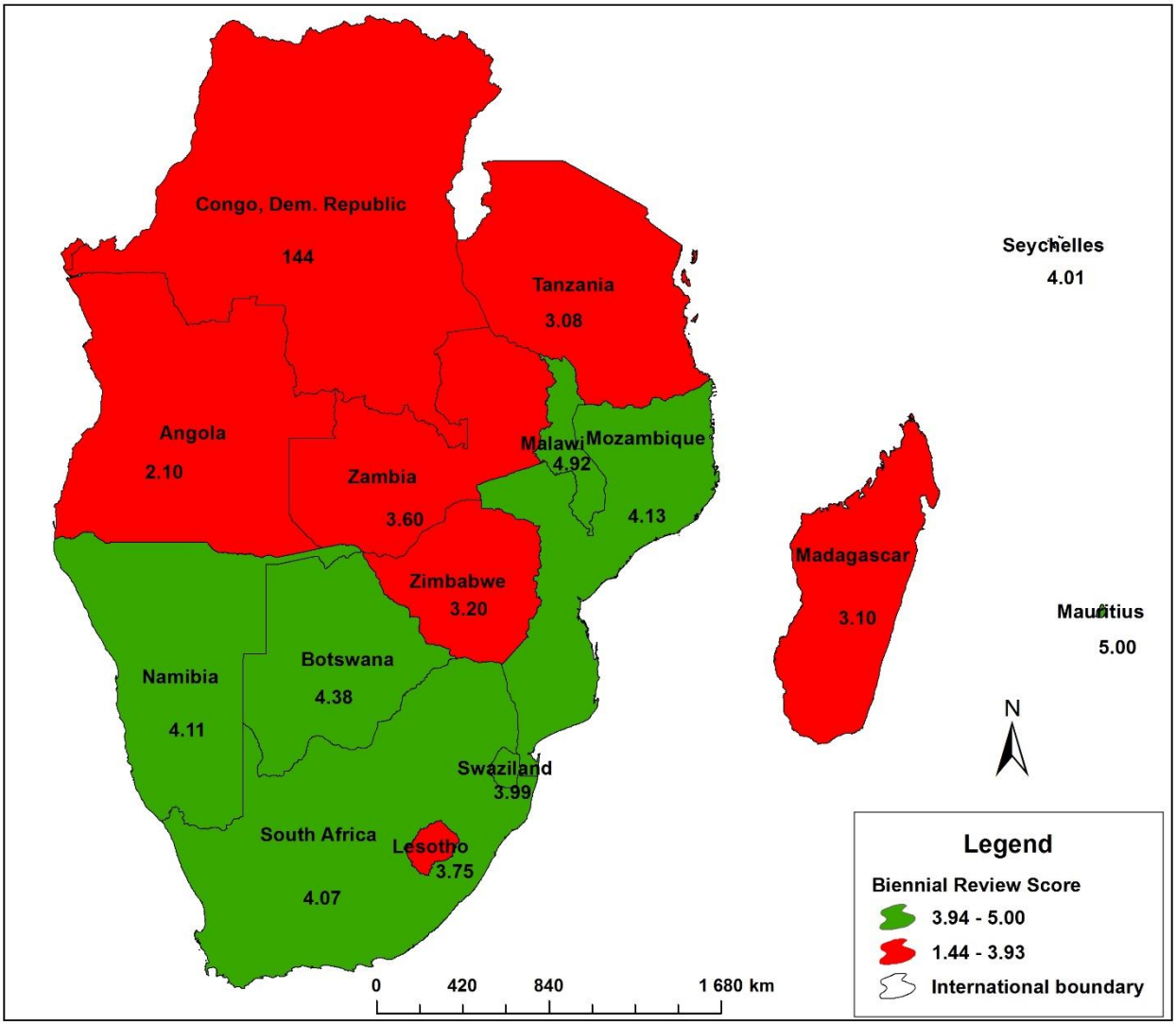

Figure 2: ***Progress for implementing the Malabo Declaration for Agriculture by the SADC member states***

Source: Authors illustration based on data from AUC, 2018

Table 1 shows that the SADC region did well and is on track in four thematic areas, namely: i) Re-commitment to CAADP process; ii) halving poverty through agriculture by 2025; iii) boosting intra-Africa trade in agriculture commodities; and iv) Commitment to mutual accountability for action and results. Although there are obvious country variations, the SADC region as a whole needs to pay attention to three thematic areas where it was not on track namely: i) Ending hunger by 2025; ii) Enhancing resilience to climate variability; and iii) Enhancing

investment in agricultural finance. Recommendations on how these challenges may be addressed are provided in section 4 below.

Table 1 : *BR Scores for the SADC Member States*

	Re-commitment to CAADP	Enhance Agriculture Finance	Ending Hunger by 2025	Halving Poverty Through Agriculture	Boosting Intra-Africa Trade in Agriculture	Enhancing Resilience to Climate Change	Mutual Accountability for Actions & Results	Country Averages
S. Africa	3,52	2,46	3,02	3,30	3,79	3,35	9,09	**4,07**
Botswana	5,40	3,40	2,37	3,68	4,68	4,61	6,52	**4,38**
Mozambique	5,59	2,70	2,65	5,27	3,84	3,36	5,49	**4,13**
Malawi	7,20	4,92	2,09	4,98	1,36	4,65	9,24	**4,92**
Zimbabwe	9,24	2,39	3,31	0,00	0,94	3,36	3,14	**3,20**
Zambia	7,19	6,08	2,32	0,18	0,88	3,42	5,11	**3,60**
Swaziland	5,15	8,07	2,72	1,00	1,54	3,33	6,16	**3,99**
Lesotho	4,44	3,30	2,38	0,05	5,19	3,33	7,52	**3,75**
Namibia	4,79	4,16	2,65	3,13	3,85	4,01	6,16	**4,11**
Madagascar	4,41	2,31	0,49	3,53	3,44	4,10	3,39	**3,10**
Mauritius	8,09	5,55	1,44	3,13	4,93	6,47	5,39	**5,00**
Seychelles	3,64	8,33	1,65	2,85	4,17	3,33	4,10	**4,01**
Angola	3,40	2,33	2,08	0,63	0,00	3,33	2,93	**2,10**
DRC	4,34	0,57	0,42	0,63	0,00	0,00	4,15	**1,44**
Tanzania	3,95	3,05	1,17	3,13	1,12	3,74	5,39	**3,08**
SADC Regional Average**	**5,36**	**3,97**	**2,05**	**2,37**	**2,65**	**3,63**	**5,59**	**3,66**
Minimum Score	3,33	6,67	3,71	2,06	1,00	6,00	4,78	3,94
Progress	**On track**	**Not on track**	**Not on track**	**On track**	**On track**	**Not on track**	**On track**	**Not on track**

Regional Average***	**5,72**	**4,47**	**2,26**	**2,59**	**3,22**	**3,94**	**5,94**	**4,02**
Minimum Score	3,33	6,67	3,71	2,06	1,00	6,00	4,78	3,94
Progress	On track	Not on track	Not on track	On track	On track	Not on track	On track	**On track**

Source: Authors based on AUC (2018) Scorecard data

**SADC Regional Average calculated based on country data for all 15 countries

*** AUC Southern Africa country grouping averages as in Scorecard report

A conspicuous challenge that many countries faced in the region concerned missing data for a number of indicators.

Table 2: BR Data submission by the SADC member states

Country	Percent of data submitted (%)
Zambia	91
South Africa	90
Malawi	86
Madagascar	84
Botswana	83
Namibia	83
Mozambique	81
Mauritius	81
Swaziland	80
Lesotho	80
Tanzania	80
Zimbabwe	77
Seychelles	73
DRC	54
Angola	52

The desired target was for all countries to report on 100% of the 43 CAADP indicators, but none of the SADC member states met the target (**Error! Reference source not found.**). The countries that reported on most indicators were Zambia, South Africa and Malawi in that order, whereas Angola and DRC reported on the least number of indicators implying that they faced the most challenges in data access.

Key Policy Issues and Recommendations

The fact that the SADC region has not scored 10.00 in any of the seven themes implies that even in those themes where it has surpassed the minimum benchmark of 3.94, the region should still maintain and or do more to ensure that there is no retrogression in the next round. The recommendations below ensue from the four themes in which the SADC was not on track; we highlight only the main issues faced by the region. It should also be stated for example that data challenges were reported in almost all the SADC countries although degrees of challenges differed from one country to another.

Theme 2. Enhancing Agricultural Finance

- The SADC region should develop programs that will increase public investments in agriculture.
- The SADC should consider developing regional development finance banks to ease access to reliable and cheaper sources of finance by farmers and other agro-dealers.
- Support the development of an active private sector that sustainably provides agricultural finance and create an enabling environment to encourage foreign direct investments in the agricultural sector.

Theme 3. Ending hunger by 2025

- Boost intra-regional trade in agriculture inputs especially seed, fertilizer, irrigation technology, and pesticides.
- Develop or strengthen existing social protection programs to ensure the protection of the vulnerable. Well managed strategic grain reserves may play an important role in this process.
- Develop technologies and trainings that purport to reduce post-harvest losses due to pests and effects of harsh weather conditions. Regional programs to promote processing of agricultural products and trainings in the availability and use of storage facilities may be very important to achieve this goal.
- Regional trade can play an important role in ending weather induced hunger as trade can move commodities to areas of deficit from areas of surplus- enhancing regional trade in food should be enhanced.

- Develop policies and programmes to encourage transboundary cooperation in the use of cross-boundary resources of importance to agriculture such as river systems and aquifers. This would reduce hunger through intensified irrigation, fishing and other water system based livelihoods.
- Promote development of regional gene banks as well as collective action in technology generation for improved crop varieties and livestock breeds (e.g. high yielding, early maturing, drought tolerant varieties and breeds); and
- Develop robust corporeal and intellectual property rights to enhance technology development and investments in land improvements in general, which are key for agricultural production.

Theme 5. Boosting intra-Africa trade in agriculture.

- Develop regional sanitary and phytosanitary programs to improve food safety and hence the flow of agricultural products within the SADC region.
- Harmonize trade and other related policies, product/service standards and regulations;
- Improve regional physical infrastructure (railways, roads, one stop border posts, ports) in terms of capacity, effectiveness and efficiency;
- Simplify border procedures e.g. customs, migration, etc.;
- Improve market information systems including use of modern ICTs to increase availability and access of market information to all relevant stakeholders.
- completely eliminate any remaining tariff barriers on agricultural commodities to enhance the volumes of agricultural trade.

Theme 6. Enhancing resilience to climate variability

- Develop regional best practices for climate change and variability adaptation and mitigation
- Develop effective and robust vulnerability assessments and early warnings systems to inform decision making;
- Develop regional strategic food reserves that can be tapped into in case of need.
- Promote diversification of agriculture to minimize potential impacts of negative changes in climate

Lessons Learnt and Recommendations for Improving the BR process in the Region

Insights on what worked well

- Despite the various constraints in time and other resources facing the African Union/NPCA at the time, the Training of Trainers and the regional trainings that followed were well coordinated and hence facilitated a smooth roll-out of the BR implementation across the continent.
- Following the identification of resources for the activity, engagement of experts and networks across the continent was timely and this helped with the design and improvement of technical documents of the BR.
- Post-training support to member states in respective regions and where possible physical travels to specific countries improved completion and timely submission of country BR reports. for example, virtual backstopping provided to Country BR teams was pivotal for boosting country momentum and solving technical issues. For example, the BR whatsup groups were of relevance for engagement in all regions.
- Trained experts in each region working with the Regional Economics Communities (RECs) ensured RECs were able to timely capture, clean (through crosschecking with countries where necessary) and submit the regional datasets and reports to AUC – especially where RECs didn't have resources in terms of staff etc. The country performances would not have been as good in the absence of such support.
- The political leadership and anchorage from AUC/ NEPAD NPCA and the RECs on the BR process from planning, implementation and presentation of final findings was very important especially in getting countries to implement the BR and submit their reports despite various limitations.
- Exchange and sharing of learning experiences from regional trainings across the regions improved delivery of the upcoming trainings.
- Preparation of country roadmaps under facilitation of trainers and meetings facilitators was critical in facilitating rolling out BR process in each country.
- Where SAKSS nodes/SAKSS-like (SAKSS ready) structures exist, they facilitated the BR at country levels thereby increasing the likelihood of report submission, for example in Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo, Malawi, Mozambique, Uganda, Tanzania, Kenya, Ethiopia, DRC, Burundi, Seychelles, and Sudan.

Insights on what needs improvement

- Planning, coordination and roll-out of the implementation of the next BR process should be initiated well in time to avoid last minute arrangements.
- Validation of the BR reports at regional levels should be well planned in future BR implementation to allow for inclusivity and participation of diverse regional stakeholders.
- In future training events, training materials should be provided to participants well in advance before the events and countries should bring available country-level data on BR indicators to be used in any data based exercises at the events. Country trainees that

brought data during the training in 2017 appeared to engage more robustly during the trainings.

- The BR teams sent by each country for the training should be the relevant personnel who can collect or facilitate the collection of the data and report writing.
- On-going revisions on BR technical and reporting documents are important to improve on-going training and for next phases of the BR process, however, highlighted changes should be timeously and continuously improved and approved when required, based on revisions identified during the trainings.
- In the subsequent BRs, every country should update the previous BR data to ensure that a time series of good data on BR indicators emerges over time. This would greatly improve evidence based decision making around the CAADP/Malabo agenda
- The Statistics departments of RECs should be involved in the formulation and updating of Technical Guidelines related to statistical definition of CAADP indicators.
- More time should be planned for validation of country reports – this would also encourage involvement of all sector stakeholders in the countries.
- Countries require time to ensure that internal processes are fulfilled before BR report can be submitted to RECs and this should be carefully planned in the implementation of the next BR.
- The country reports should be sent to the REC with a note verbal from the Permanent/Principal Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture or the Permanent/Principal Secretary to the Cabinet , but must be co-signed by members of the Private, and Civil Society, as a confirmation that the report is a country owned document.
- Indicators on which most countries didn't report data require review and revisions in terms of how they are calculated and identify how countries can report on them in future.
- Participation at the country level must be invigorated through a strong facilitation and mentoring process and must culminate into a national level dialogue that discusses and validates the report before submission to ensure that all interested stakeholders verify data and there is almost no room for unsupported data.

The SADC Secretariat produces and publishes regional data including that which is sought for the purpose of the Biennial Reporting. There is need therefore to synchronize and harmonize the indicators for CAADP / Malabo and the collection of data to those of the SADC Statistical Unit;

- SADC data collection period runs from April each year with a report expected by October of the same year. This is the same timeline for the CAADP/Malabo requirements; and

- The Secretariat uses a specific protocol in the collection, verification and validation of country statistical data. The process employed in collecting the data for the Malabo Declaration commitments has the Country CAADP Team as the entry point at the country level whereas SADC's entry point is the Central Statistical Office. This

difference in protocol may cause duplication of data, discrepancies in data and disputable validity of data collected requiring that data sources and methods of collection be harmonised and that the same SADC protocol for data processing, verification and validation be used.

- It is important to train national and regional representatives on how to use the BR tool for data entry and analysis and if possible, it would be useful equip them with the ability to generate their country score in their respective countries. This may require AUC/NPCA and partners to deploy the software for data entry and analysis together with the required expertise, in countries and RECs

Recommendations

As part of efforts to address challenges from the implementation of the inaugural BR and strengthening areas that worked well and addressing the gaps or did not work well, the following is recommended: BR training experts together with AUC/NPCA and other technical partners should review the implementation of the inaugural BR to discuss in detail, issues raised above and others. In this process, effort should be made to bring in National Statistics Officers as well as Statistics officers at the RECs level. The purpose would be to provide important lessons that should be used to inform planning and design of the implementation of the second BR. The training materials (technical documents and reporting templates) should be revised and updated based on the review recommendations. There should be an effort to bring in experts from statistics, and other important areas relevant to Malabo to the pool of experts that AUC/NEPAD would be able to deploy to countries for technical assistance.

Since countries self-report on the BR, emphasis should be placed on strengthening the data collection processes to ensure that they are transparent and based on official and publicly available sources as much as possible which can easily be verified and cross-checked. In future, no data should be accepted in the absence of a credible and verifiable source. In the actual implementation of country BR roadmaps, physical visits by the technical experts and RECs where possible are critical to oversee country processes, and provide technical assistance and oversight role of how countries are conducting the process. For the same purpose, inclusive country validation processes must precede submission without exceptions.

Overall, strengthening the Malabo Declaration commitment on mutual accountability (MA) is important to the planning and operationalisation of the National Agriculture Food Security Investment Plans (NAFSIPs). The CAADP Technical networks that are in formation and technical institutions including African Universities should:

- Contribute to improvement of BR technical guidelines and reporting templates.
- Strengthen capacity of member states in M&E and agricultural data management (e.g. through e-Atlas).

- Assist RECs in developing regional BR reports through technical issue notes that analyse BR data and provide policy messages to member states.
- Ensure that the MA and BR lessons are used to improve MA in the operationalisation of the CAADP agenda.
- Deliver targeted capacity strengthening support for country biennial review processes based on the needs assessment feedback and context issues.
- Facilitate the integration of BRs into NAFSIP development/improvement at the earliest opportunity to permit meaningful NAFSIP implementation tracking.

- Invest more resources in data systems to improve evidence based planning in order to adequately report on all CAADP indicators
- Synchronize all Malabo Declaration Biennial Reporting indicators with those that the SADC uses in its Statistical and M & E systems to allow for easier future collection and reporting on Malabo Declaration without duplicating efforts and minimizing discrepancies in data collected and reported on;

- Collection of statistical data including on Malabo Declaration targets and indicators, should all be synchronized, harmonised and centralized through one official country authority such as the Country's Central Statistical Office to avoid duplication of data, to maximise of scarce resources, and to ensure uniformity;
- The standard (e.g. SADC) protocol of data collection, verification, validation should be established for the Malabo Declaration Biennial Reporting in the SADC countries; and

  Overall, the Statistics departments of RECs should be involved in the formulation and updating of Technical Guidelines related to statistical definition of CAADP/ Malabo Declaration indicators to ensure consistency with definitions of data ordinarily collected by the SADC in its routine statistical publications

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