



ECDPM Side-event: Wednesday 8 October, 2014

ReSAKSS Annual Conference, 8-10 October 2014 - African Union
Headquarters, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Title

“Responding to Malabo: how to triple intra-African agricultural trade and promote inclusive regional value chain development?”

Abstract

The side-event aims to bring together policy-makers, representatives from farmers organisations, private sector, civil society and development partners for an open dialogue, and cross-regional learning, on progress made around the regional dimensions of CAADP. Discussion topics are framed in the context of the recently adopted Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation. This multi-stakeholder dialogue will suggest ways to boost intra-African agricultural trade through more effective continental and regional trade agreements and the promotion of inclusive regional value chain development, thus implementing the commitments and meeting the targets set by African Heads of State in the Declaration.

Context

The Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation adopted at the African Union Summit in Malabo in June 2014 highlighted the need to further exploit regional complementarities and cooperation opportunities to boost economic growth and resilience. In the declaration, African leaders specifically committed to triple intra-African trade in agricultural commodities and services by 2025. Meeting these commitments will require ensuring suitable trade regulations are in place to facilitate intra-regional trade in agricultural inputs and products. This is reflected in the Malabo Declaration, which announced efforts to accelerate the establishment of the Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA). However, more targeted multi-stakeholder dialogue and well-planned collaborations may be needed around pragmatic initiatives to remove trade barriers for a small set of priority food commodities, where real political commitment and commercial interests can effectively change policies and practices.

Access to markets and regional value chain development are increasingly featured on the agendas of RECs and African Heads of State resolved in the Malabo Declaration to establish public-private partnerships to develop at least five strategic agricultural value chains with strong linkages to smallholder agriculture. One of the main challenges will be to ensure that the weakest operators in the value chains, notably smallholders and local small and medium enterprises, will benefit from regional value chain initiatives. Discussion will focus on how regional-level interventions can support the development of inclusive cross-border value chains within and around the agricultural sector in a way that is coherent with the structural adjustments that regional market integration implies. Platforms facilitating regular public-private dialogues and bringing together multiple actors and initiatives could foster regional cooperation and better support smallholders to benefit from corridors and standard value chain development initiatives.

Audience and approach

The envisaged participants of the side-event include stakeholders from inside and outside Africa (e.g. representatives of: smallholder farmers associations, agri-business, civil society, policy-makers and researchers, development partners).

This side-event seeks to foster open and engaging multi-stakeholder policy dialogue and cross-regional learning to build on progress around CAADP-related policy processes at the continental (AUC and NEPAD) and regional levels (different RECs). For a more interactive side-event, panelists are invited to engage in a discussion with the audience on the proposed topics, rather than give long presentations.

The objectives of the side-event include:

1. Facilitate cross-regional learning, and discuss how regional agricultural trade can enhance resilience of smallholder farmers and local small to medium enterprises;
2. Suggest ways to achieve the commitments of the Malabo Declaration, through: more effective trade regulations (e.g. establishment of the Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA), ensuring member states' compliance to implement existing regional trade protocols, gaining political commitment and commercial interests to effectively change policies and practices) and regional value chain development (e.g. business facilitation, establishing inclusive regional value chains to benefit especially smallholders, platforms supporting regular public-private dialogue).

Panelists

1. Facilitator: Francesco Rampa, Head of Food Security Programme – European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM)
2. Komla Prosper Bissi, CAADP Pillar II Adviser – African Union Commission (AUC)
3. Steve Muchiri, Chief Executive Officer – Eastern Africa Farmers Federation (EAFF)
4. Dr. Edmealem Shitaye, Coordinator – IGAD Drought Disaster Resilience and Sustainability Initiative (IDDRSI)
5. Mr. Mathews Chikankheni, Chairman – COMESA Business Council

Hosting organisation and contact persons

The European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM) is the main hosting organisation for the side-event.

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