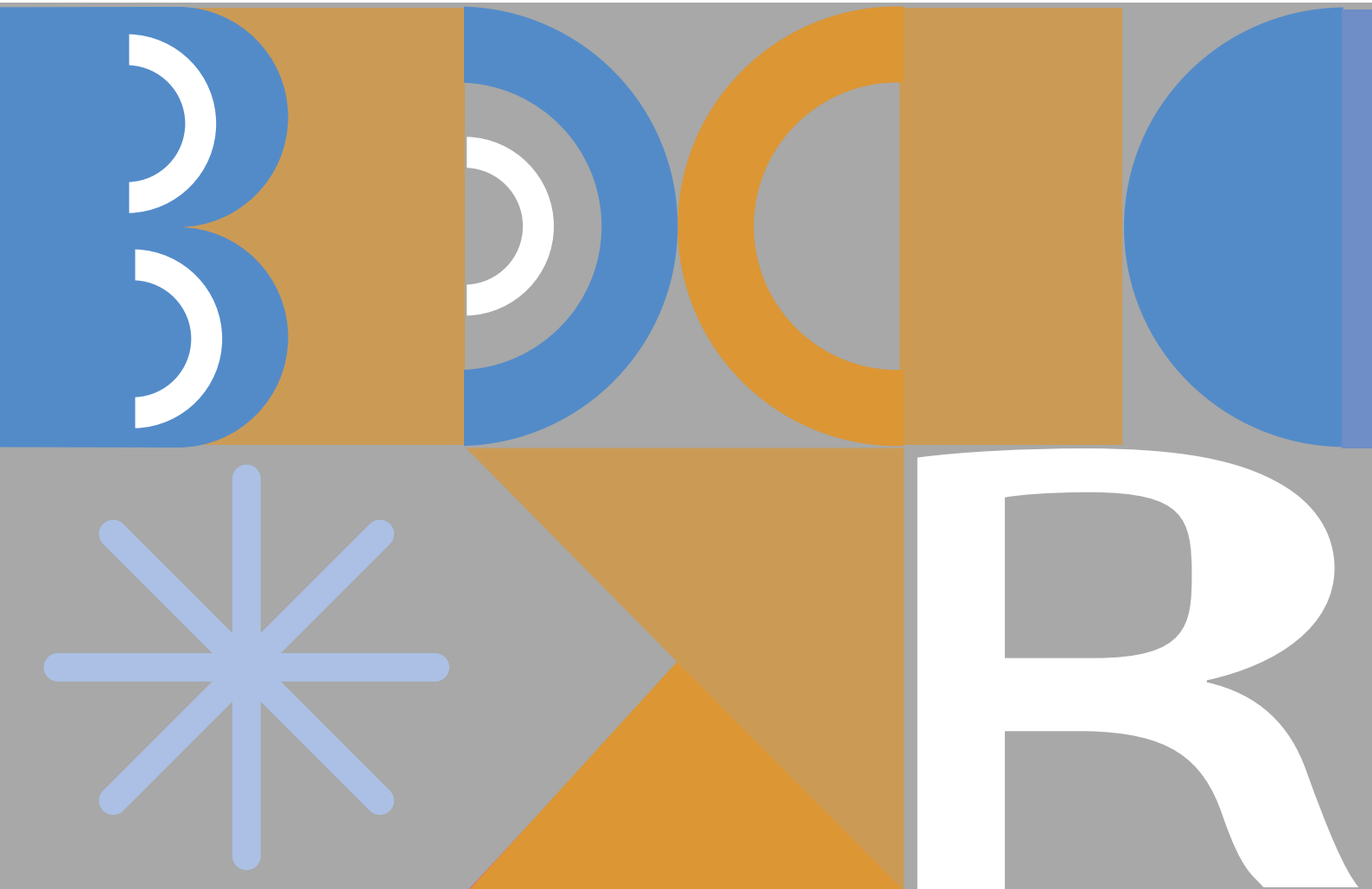
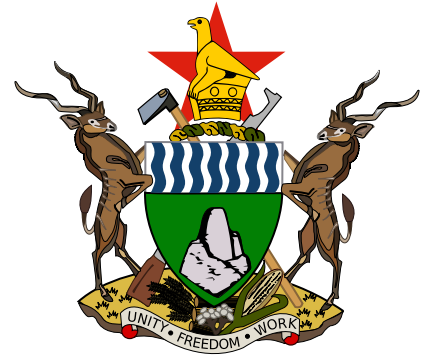


**2021 CAADP**  
**BIENNIAL REVIEW**  
**BRIEF**  
**ZIMBABWE**



**Africa Agriculture  
Transformation Scorecard:  
Performance and Lessons**

# Africa Agriculture Transformation Scorecard: Performance and Lessons

## 2021 CAADP Biennial Review Brief: Zimbabwe

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# 1. Introduction

The 2014 Malabo Declaration outlines the vision of Africa's leaders for accelerating agricultural growth and transformation on the continent between 2015 and 2025 (AUC 2014). This transformation is to be achieved through the pursuit of seven broad commitments:

1. Upholding the principles and values of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP),
2. Enhancing investment finance in agriculture,
3. Ending hunger in Africa by 2025,
4. Reducing poverty by half by 2025 through inclusive agricultural growth and transformation,
5. Boosting intra-African trade in agricultural commodities and services,
6. Enhancing the resilience of livelihoods and production systems to climate variability and related risks, and
7. Ensuring mutual accountability for actions and results by conducting a Biennial Review (BR) continent-wide to monitor progress in achieving the seven Malabo Declaration commitments.

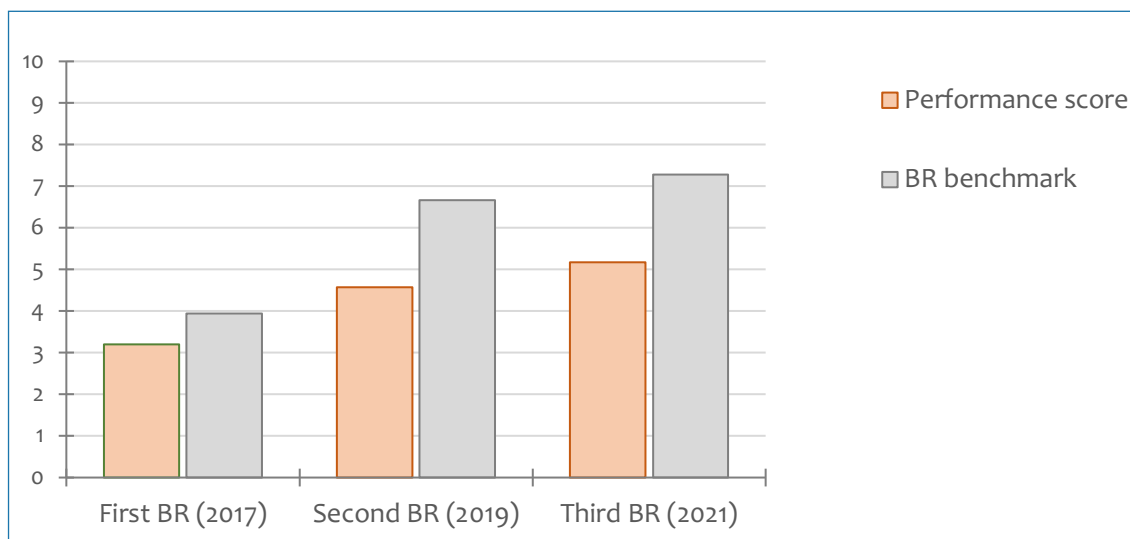
As part of fulfilling the seventh commitment on mutual accountability, the third CAADP BR report was endorsed by the assembly of African Heads of State and Government at the 35<sup>th</sup> African Union (AU) Summit in February 2022 (AUC 2021). This brief draws on that report to summarize the performance of the nation of Zimbabwe in pursuit of the seven Malabo Declaration commitments, comparing its performance over the third BR period from 2019 to 2021 to that of the second BR from 2017 to 2019 and the first BR from 2014 to 2017. The brief also assesses the challenges faced and the lessons learned by the country and reviews policy, programmatic, and investment changes in Zimbabwe induced by the inaugural BR of 2017 (AUC 2018), the second BR of 2019 (AUC 2020), and the most recent BR. The final section of the brief highlights policy actions and programmatic measures Zimbabwe must take for it to meet its Malabo Declaration commitments by 2025.

## 2. Progress by Zimbabwe in Achieving the Malabo Commitments

For the third BR, the benchmark score, the minimum score for a country to be considered on-track to achieve the Malabo Declaration commitments by 2025, was 7.28 (AUC 2021). Zimbabwe achieved an overall score of 5.17, which is below the benchmark, indicating that the country was not on-track for achieving the Malabo Declaration commitments. Nevertheless, Zimbabwe's overall score for the third BR was a 13 percent improvement over the country's overall performance score for the second BR of 2019 of 4.58 (Figure 1). This improvement from the second to the third BR represents a continuing improvement by Zimbabwe in its BR score, having registered a score of 3.20 for the first BR of 2017. Despite better performance from review to review, unfortunately, Zimbabwe's overall score in all three BRs was below their respective benchmarks, so the country has consistently been not on-track for achieving the Malabo commitments.



**Figure 1. Zimbabwe—Overall performance scores for all three Biennial Review rounds compared to benchmarks**



**Source:** Authors' calculations based on Zimbabwe Biennial Review scores.

The improvement registered by Zimbabwe between the second and third BR can be attributed to the country's generally improved performance across four of the seven Malabo Declaration commitments—recommitment to CAADP, ending hunger, enhancing resilience to climate change, and mutual accountability (Table 1, Figure 2). However, only for the recommitment to CAADP and the enhancing resilience to climate change commitments was Zimbabwe found to be on-track to achieve them by 2025, its performance exceeding the third BR benchmarks for both. Notably, Zimbabwe's third BR score on Malabo commitment one, recommitment to CAADP, achieved the maximum possible score of 10.0. On the climate change commitment, its good performance in the third BR reflects the results of a deliberate policy shift in Zimbabwe in recent years focused on climate-proofing and de-risking agriculture. This is seen in progress in its scores on this commitment—in the first BR of 2017, Zimbabwe scored poorly at 3.36, but it then more than doubled its performance score by the third BR to 8.76.

Unfortunately, Zimbabwe's overall performance in the third BR was adversely affected by reversals in progress between the second and third BRs on three Malabo commitments—enhancing agriculture finance; halving poverty through agriculture, and intra-Africa trade in agriculture.



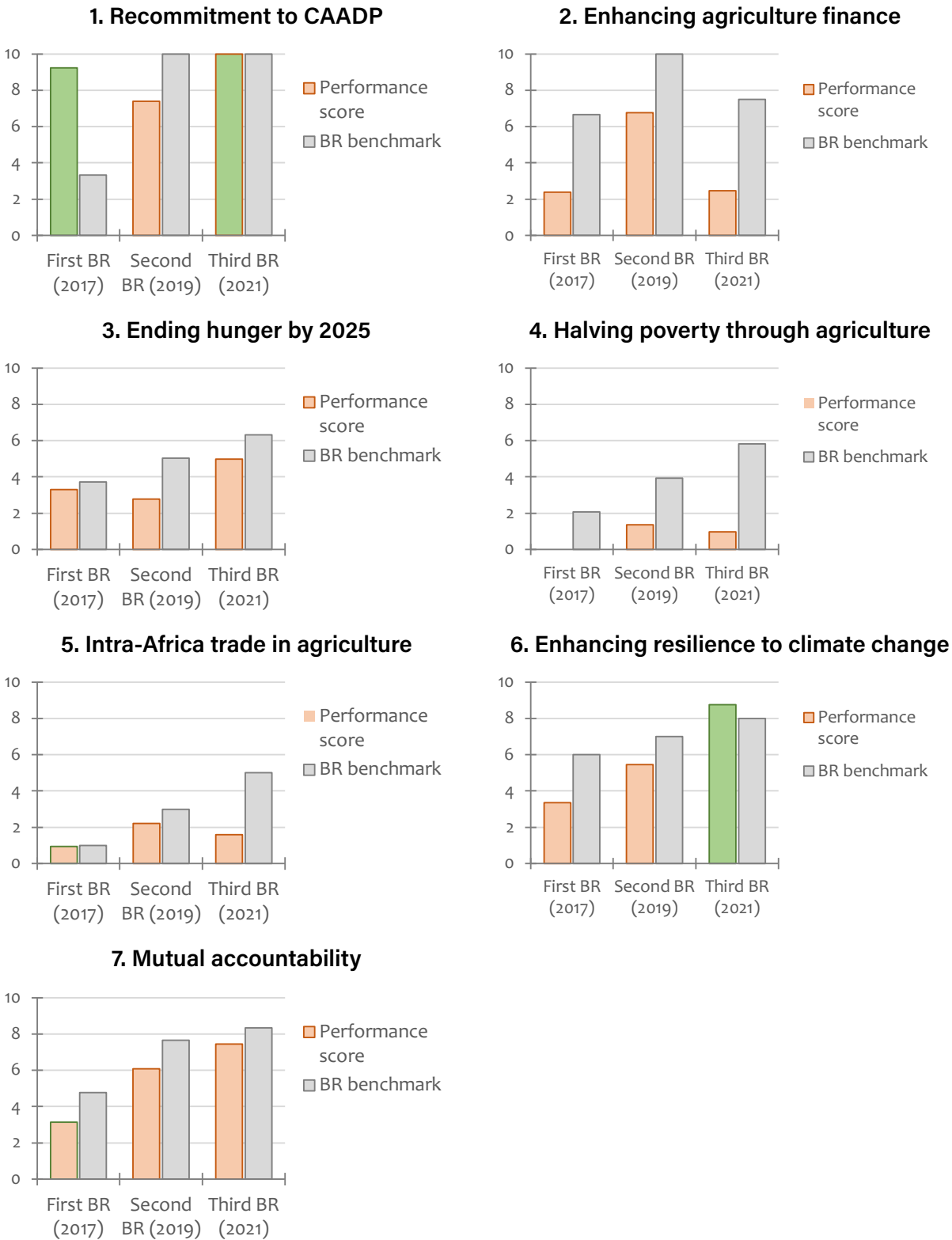
**Table 1.** Zimbabwe—summary of Biennial Review scores by Malabo commitment

Malabo commitment	First BR (2017)			Second BR (2019)			Third BR (2021)			% change, 3 <sup>rd</sup> BR-2 <sup>nd</sup> BR
	Score	Benchmark	Progress	Score	Benchmark	Progress	Score	Benchmark	Progress	
1. Recommitment to CAADP	9.24	3.33	On-track	7.39	10.00	Not on-track	10.00	10.00	On-track	35
2. Enhancing agriculture finance	2.39	6.67	Not on-track	6.77	10.00	Not on-track	2.45	7.50	Not on-track	-62
3. Ending hunger by 2025	3.31	3.71	Not on-track	2.78	5.04	Not on-track	4.97	6.32	Not on-track	79
4. Halving poverty through agriculture	0.00	2.06	Not on-track	1.36	3.94	Not on-track	0.97	5.81	Not on-track	-29
5. Intra-Africa trade in agriculture	0.94	1.00	Not on-track	2.21	3.00	Not on-track	1.59	5.00	Not on-track	-28
6. Enhancing resilience to climate change	3.36	6.00	Not on-track	5.46	7.00	Not on-track	8.76	8.00	On-track	60
7. Mutual accountability	3.14	4.78	Not on-track	6.09	7.67	Not on-track	7.45	8.33	Not on-track	22
All commitments	3.20	3.94	Not on-track	4.58	6.66	Not on-track	5.17	7.28	Not on-track	13

**Source:** Authors' calculations based on Zimbabwe Biennial Review scores.



**Figure 2:** Trends in Zimbabwe's performance scores on each Malabo Declaration commitment over the three Biennial Reviews to date



**Source:** Authors' calculations based on Zimbabwe Biennial Review scores.

Table 2 compares the third BR commitment performance scores for Zimbabwe to the averages for its peer countries in the Southern Africa region. Zimbabwe realized higher performance scores than the average for the region for the recommitment to CAADP, ending hunger, enhancing resilience to climate change, and mutual accountability commitments. Unfortunately, on none of the seven Malabo commitments were the countries in the Southern African region on average on-track to achieve the commitments by 2025.



**Table 2.** Zimbabwe—third Biennial Review scores relative to average for Southern Africa countries, by Malabo commitment

Malabo commitment	Zimbabwe Third BR	Zimbabwe status	Third BR Benchmark	Southern Africa avg.
1. Recommitment to CAADP	10.00	On-track	10.00	6.55
2. Enhancing agriculture finance	2.45	Not on-track	7.50	3.94
3. Ending hunger by 2025	4.97	Not on-track	6.32	2.79
4. Halving poverty through agriculture	0.97	Not on-track	5.81	1.43
5. Intra-Africa trade in agriculture	1.59	Not on-track	5.00	2.35
6. Enhancing resilience to climate change	8.76	On-track	8.00	5.58
7. Mutual accountability	7.45	Not on-track	8.33	6.14
All commitments	5.17	Not on-track	7.28	4.11

**Source:** Authors' calculations based on Biennial Review scores for the countries concerned.

**Note:** The Southern Africa region for this analysis is made up of Angola, Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

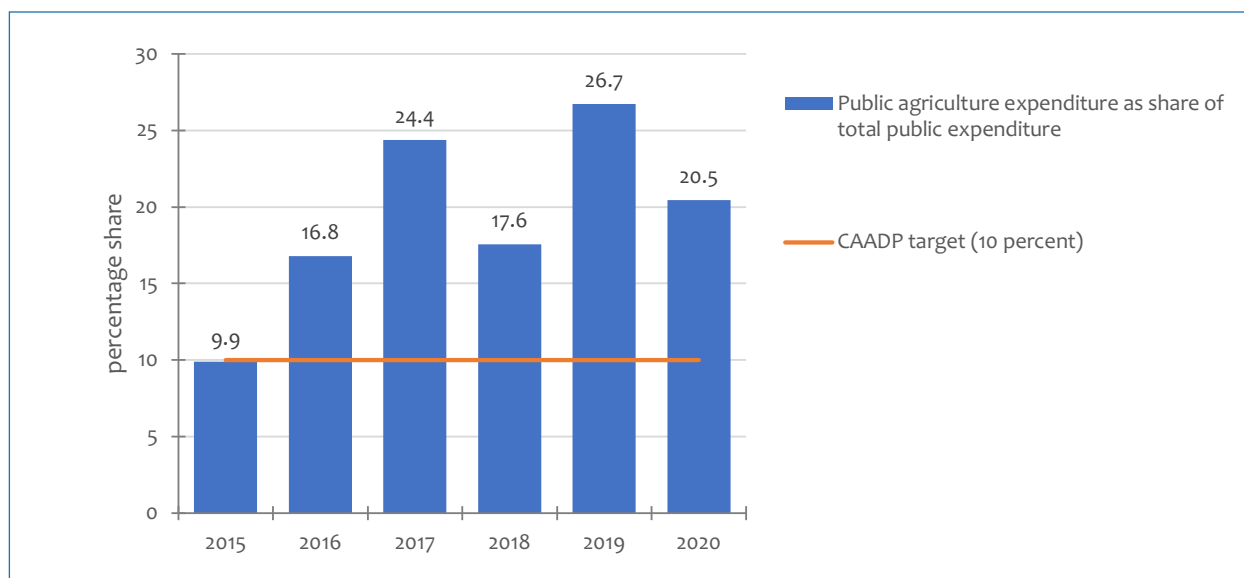
### 3. Selected Sub-Sectoral Performance Trends in Zimbabwe

Despite Zimbabwe being found in the third BR to not be on-track to achieve by 2025 most of the seven Malabo commitments, notable progress has been made in the country on several Malabo commitment indicators in recent years—notably on the share of public expenditures devoted to agriculture, the share of agricultural GDP devoted to agricultural research and development, and the intensity of inorganic fertilizer use.

With regards to public expenditures devoted to agriculture, this is part of the second commitment of the Malabo Declaration on increasing financing to agriculture. Countries are expected to devote at least 10 percent of their national budget to the agriculture sector every year. This target originates from the Maputo Declaration on Agriculture and Food Security in Africa of 2003 and was carried into the 2014 Malabo Declaration. As shown in Figure 3, Zimbabwe reported expenditures on agriculture as a share of the national budget between 2015 and 2020 that are among the highest levels of all African countries.



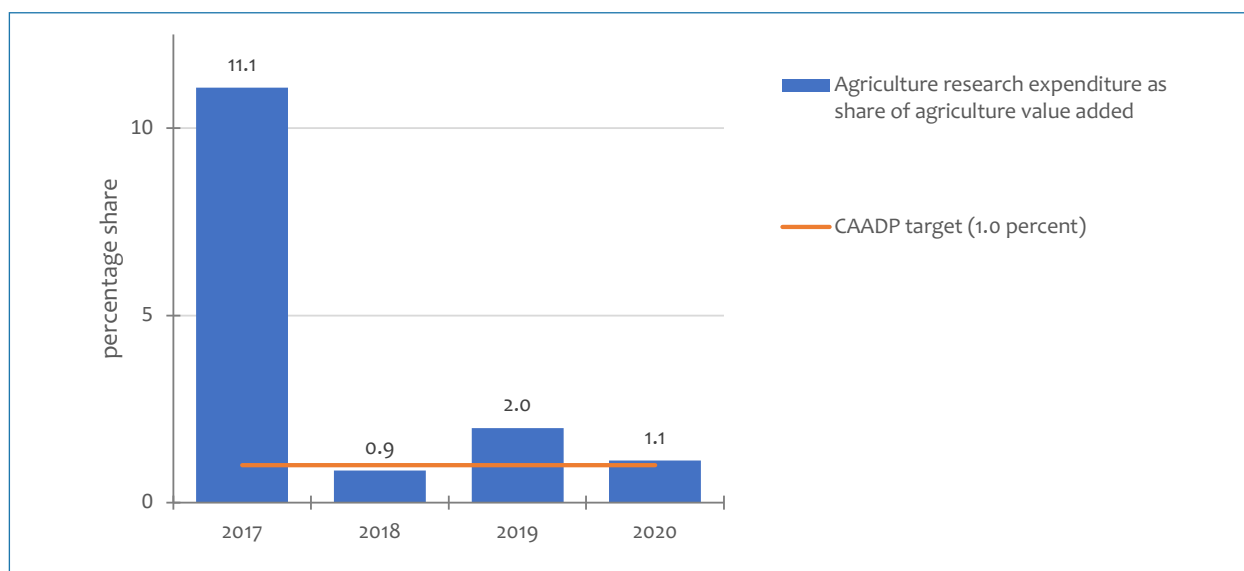
**Figure 3: Zimbabwe—Government expenditure on agriculture as a proportion of national budget, 2015 to 2020**



**Source:** AU 2021 and Government of Zimbabwe 2021.

The significant public expenditure on agriculture in Zimbabwe in recent years is largely attributable to the Presidential agricultural input support program. The principal objectives of the program are to raise agricultural production and to ensure household food security. The program supports 1.6 million vulnerable households in their maize, sunflower, small grain, and soyabean production with improved seed and inorganic fertilizer. For example, households received for their maize production a standard input package of 3 kg of improved seed and 100 kg of inorganic fertilizer. Beneficiary farmers are to employ the inputs as a component of their use of conservation agriculture techniques that also are climate-friendly.

**Figure 4: Zimbabwe—Agricultural research expenditure as a percentage share of agriculture value added, 2017 to 2020**



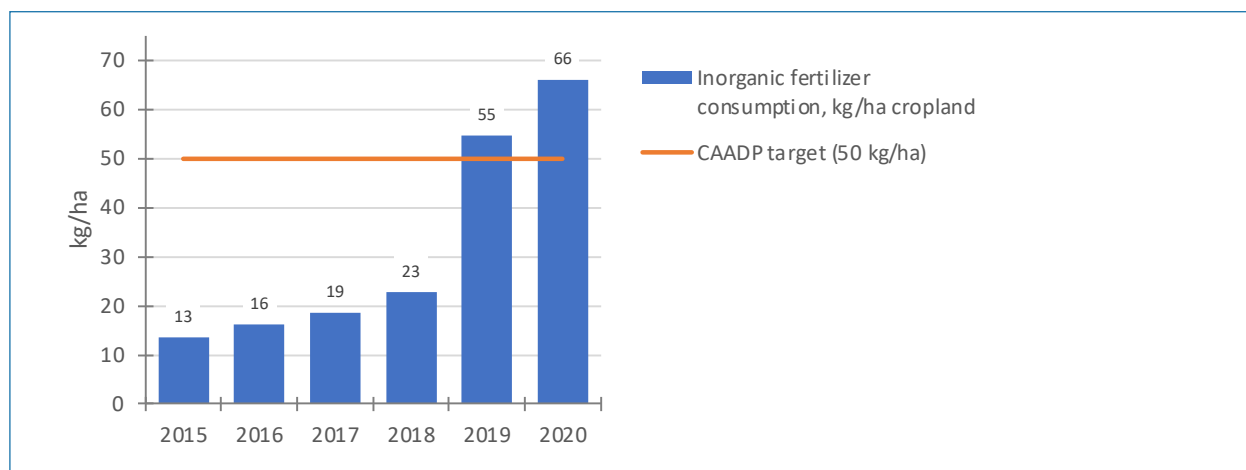
**Source:** AU 2021 and Government of Zimbabwe 2021.

On agricultural research expenditure, member states of the African Union have adopted a target of investing at least 1.0 percent of their agriculture GDP in agricultural research and development. Such investments are critical to agricultural sector growth because of the catalytic function of research and development. Figure 4 shows that Zimbabwe has consistently reached this target. Zimbabwe is one of the best-performing Southern African countries in this regard—only Botswana and Namibia have higher investments in agricultural research as a share of agricultural GDP. However, it is observed that increased investments in



capital and program operations in agricultural research are needed in Zimbabwe. Salaries currently capture most agricultural research spending.

**Figure 5: Zimbabwe—Inorganic fertilizer use per hectare of cropland, 2015 to 2020**



**Source:** AU 2021 and Government of Zimbabwe 2021.

With regard to inorganic fertilizer use, Zimbabwe reports increasing levels of use per hectare of cropland, as shown in Figure 5. The continental target for fertilizer consumption is 50 kg/ha, which Zimbabwe surpassed in 2019. The increasing use of fertilizer by farmers is supported by both increased local production and increased imports of fertilizer into the country. There are now 22 registered fertilizer production and blending companies, up from 15 in 2017. However, disruption to this positive trend is possible with the uncertainty in global fertilizer markets due to the ongoing conflict in Ukraine.

## 4. Challenges and Lessons Learned from the Third Biennial Review in Zimbabwe

While Zimbabwe saw considerable improvement in its progress toward achieving the Malabo Declaration commitments by 2025 between the second and third BRs, the third BR showed that the country continues to face several challenges. Underlying many of them are basic challenges affecting data availability and the quality of the data that is available. Unlike the indicators for monitoring progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, for which member states are given the liberty of customizing the indicators used, the indicators for the BR cannot be customized. For those BR performance indicators for which no data is available and a data gap exists, a performance score of zero is reported. Zimbabwe must invest more in strengthening national data systems and capacities for enhancing good quality and adequate data on most of the BR indicators on which the country did not perform well in the third BR. Doing so is important for the BR. But, it is equally, if not more, important for enabling Zimbabwe to use reliable evidence in planning its agricultural development efforts and, thereby, achieve the Malabo Declaration commitments.

Among the specific development challenges that Zimbabwe must address more forcefully to achieve the Malabo commitments by 2025 are:

- Zimbabwe must increase agricultural value added per hectare of arable land. The country was not on-track on this indicator.
- The country did not perform well on the issuance of land tenure documents. Farming households must have secure rights to the land they farm to improve food production and food security. Improving land security is relevant to achieving the Malabo commitment of reducing hunger by 2025.
- The country needs to prioritize strategies to reduce post-harvest losses for strategic value chains. In the third BR, Zimbabwe scored only 3.37 against a benchmark of 10.0 for the post-harvest losses indicator. This poor performance undermines agricultural sector production levels and makes it unlikely that Zimbabwe will end hunger by 2025.

- Zimbabwe is lagging behind other countries in Africa in women's empowerment and in supporting women in agriculture. The country has to promote strategies and policies that enhance access to financial services for women in agriculture. Similar criticisms apply to youth in agriculture—Zimbabwe scored zero on this indicator either because nothing is being done to support youth in agriculture in the country or because no data on such efforts is being collected. This lack of either action or information adversely affects Zimbabwe's performance on the commitment of eradicating poverty through agriculture.

All these challenges contributed to Zimbabwe being found in the third BR to not be on-track to achieve five of the seven Malabo Declaration commitments by 2025.

## 5. Policy and Programmatic Changes in Zimbabwe Following the First Three Biennial Reviews

The National Development Strategy 1 (NDS1) is the first 5-year Medium Term Plan aimed at realizing the country's Vision 2030, the main economic blueprint in which Zimbabwe has enshrined its development objectives. The agriculture and food security aspirations of NDS1 are to be achieved through the implementation of the Agriculture and Food Systems Transformation Strategy. This builds in part on the findings from the first three BRs in Zimbabwe. The overall aim of this strategy is to transform agriculture's contribution to Zimbabwe's GDP from 12 percent to 20 percent. If achieved, the strategy will:

- Secure Zimbabwe's economic recovery, growth, and development in the face of climate change and variability;
- Assure national and household food and nutrition security and end hunger;
- Contribute to income generation and the creation of decent employment for all Zimbabwean workers, with a special focus on women and youth
- Halve the level of poverty by 2030; and
- Contribute to sustainable industrial development by meeting by 2030 at least 60 percent of industry's requirements from competitively home-grown agricultural raw materials.

Zimbabwe is on a new development trajectory anchored on strong democratic institutions and a market economy that is private-sector led and public-sector facilitated with agriculture at the center of future growth and development. The Agriculture and Food Systems Strategy recognizes that Zimbabwe's population largely comprises of rural households, whose source of livelihood is smallholder agriculture. At the same time, most of the country's poor reside in rural areas. Zimbabwe's population also is young. Hence agriculture and rural development, focusing on smallholder farming and mainstreaming both women and youth into agriculture and agro-value chains, is the most direct route to reducing poverty, hunger, and malnutrition. To achieve the objectives of the strategy, the government of Zimbabwe seeks to effectively leverage the country's abundant land and water resources, suitable agro-climatic conditions, and the high level of skills and education of its population.

The strategic objectives of the Agriculture and Food Systems Strategy are to:

- Improve crop and livestock productivity and raise the gross agriculture production value to USD 8.2 billion annually.
- Achieve self-sufficiency for local human and industry consumption in all strategic agriculture commodities, while also generating surpluses for export.
- Treble agriculture trade through improved market access and increased competitiveness of Zimbabwe's agriculture commodities on domestic and export markets through the production of quality produce and significant value addition to those commodities;
- Raise the annual per capita income for farming households to upper middle-income country levels of between USD 4,000 and USD 12,000; and

- Ensure that the existing agricultural resource base is maintained and improved, including through soil health restoration and the use of sustainable agriculture intensification technologies and practices.

The key factors for successful agricultural growth under the strategy are in the four major pillars of Zimbabwe's agriculture and food systems transformation framework. The content of these pillars is as follows:

1. Enabling agriculture policy and regulatory environment to facilitate the flow of investment into the agriculture sector:
  - National Agriculture Policy Framework,
  - National Land Policy,
  - Mechanization and Irrigation Development Policy and Strategy,
  - National Livestock Development Policy and Strategy,
  - National Horticulture Development and Export Policy and Strategy,
  - Agriculture Marketing and Trade Policy and Strategy,
  - Agriculture Education, Extension and Research Policy and Strategy,
  - Climate Smart Agriculture Policy and Strategy,
  - Agriculture Digitalization Policy and Strategy,
  - Integrated Agriculture Information Management System,
  - Responsive service delivery institutions,
  - Supply of key agriculture enablers, and
  - Climate proofing of input support programs.
2. Appropriate agriculture investment for productivity, food security, and resilience guided by a National Agriculture Investment Plan (NAIP):
  - Input manufacture and supply,
  - Water and irrigation infrastructure rehabilitation and development,
  - Agriculture mechanization and development,
  - Greenhouses and cold chain systems,
  - Livestock production facilities, and
  - Domestic and export marketing infrastructure.
3. Efficient agricultural knowledge and technology innovation systems:
  - Promote a change in the thinking of farmers so that they increasingly practice farming as a business,
  - Allocate at least one percent of agricultural GDP to agricultural research and development,
  - Promote public-private partnerships in research and development, with flexible funding mechanisms,
  - Practice climate-smart and precision agriculture,
  - Establish efficient agricultural education, research, technical, and extension support systems, and
  - Promote digitalization, innovation, and modernization of agriculture value chains.



4. Agriculture sector coordination for responsive planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation:
  - Put in place coordination mechanisms for national and local level agriculture sector stakeholders;
  - Formulate an agriculture investment plan for financial mobilization;
  - Establish project and program monitoring and evaluation systems;
  - Build an integrated agriculture management information system for the production of timely and accurate agriculture data and statistical information;
  - Facilitate the establishment of industry associations for value chain championing and coordination;
  - Strengthen farmer organizations by improving their capacity and by promoting aggregation models for access to finance and to input and output markets; and
  - Continue to innovate in the use of Information and Communication Technologies to achieve efficiencies in doing business in agriculture in Zimbabwe.

## 6. Zimbabwe—Priority Actions and Recommendations for Ensuring Achievement of Malabo Commitments by 2025

Zimbabwe was not on-track at the time of the third BR to meet five of the seven Malabo Declaration commitments by 2025. All three BRs to date have found the country not to have been on-track overall. Hence specific attention is needed on several issues to enable Zimbabwe to achieve all of the commitments by 2025. Zimbabwe should implement the following:

- **Enhancing agriculture finance:** Zimbabwe did not perform well on this commitment—its commitment-specific score between the second and third BR fell by 4.32 points. A significant factor in this poor score was missing data for both foreign and private sector direct investment in agriculture. Another challenge is access to finance. Just under one-third of both men and women involved in agriculture had access to finance. This falls far short of the 100 percent target for access to agricultural finance. While this poor performance on finance can be attributed to the broader macroeconomic challenges, more can be done to provide incentives for financial institutions to craft products tailored to the financing needs of smallholder farmers. In addition, ensuring security of tenure could reduce the perceived risk associated with lending to smallholder farmers. It is recommended that the country work on these indicators for better performance around the Malabo commitment to agricultural finance in the future.
- **Ending hunger by 2025:** Zimbabwe performed poorly across the various components of the Malabo hunger commitment in the third BR. The failure of the country to enhance access to agriculture technologies, reduce post-harvest losses, improve social protection, and improve food safety has contributed to poor performance on this commitment. In addition, less than half of farmers had secure rights to the land they farm. This contributed to the poor performance on this commitment. In addition, there were data gaps for some of the parameters needed to compute the proportion of children aged 6 to 23 months that receive a Minimum Acceptable Diet. Hence it is recommended that Zimbabwe should both improve its performance on these hunger-related issues and strengthen its collection of data on those issues.
- **Halving poverty through agriculture by 2025:** Zimbabwe has a poor record on poverty reduction across all three BRs to date. The country failed to achieve higher agricultural GDP, establish inclusive public-private partnerships for commodity value chains, strengthen the involvement of youth in agriculture, or expand the participation of women in agri-businesses. To be on-track for this poverty reduction commitment, access to agricultural technologies should also be increased to improve yields and production. In addition, the level of investments in agricultural research and development should be maintained at one percent of agricultural GDP or even increased. One area that could

help the country improve its performance in reducing poverty is to reduce the gap between farm gate and wholesale prices. Such efforts could include the operationalization of warehouse receipt systems and the re-establishment of the Zimbabwe Commodity Exchange to improve price discovery in agricultural commodity markets. As part of these efforts, the government will be reviewing its involvement in agricultural commodity markets to ensure government actions promote, rather than hinder, the competitiveness of the sector.

- **Intra-African trade in agriculture commodities and services:** The development and enhancement of intra-African trade policies and institutions in Zimbabwe have so far not met with the desired success. The country is not on-track on this commitment. One of the biggest challenges is physical infrastructure. The country scored poorly on the quality of its road infrastructure and on the efficiency of its train and port services. In addition, more needs to be done to improve the free movement of people across Zimbabwe's borders. The number of countries with visa-free privileges for their citizens for entry into Zimbabwe or whose citizens can obtain visas upon arrival remains low. In addition, the country should expand the bilateral agricultural trade-related agreements with more countries—Zimbabwe's performance on such bilateral agreements is rated at only 15 percent of the goal.
- **Mutual accountability for actions and results:** Despite Zimbabwe making steady progress on this commitment, the country was not on-track in the third BR for achieving it. This is due to the failure of the country to improve its biennial agricultural review process or to strengthen its capacity to conduct evidence-based planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation in the agricultural sector. Additional capacity to generate and use agriculture statistical data and information is needed.

## 7. Suggestions for Upcoming Biennial Reviews in Zimbabwe

Beyond improving its performance on the seven Malabo declaration commitments, Zimbabwe can also do better in monitoring its performance on the commitments through the BR process. However, greater flexibility in the BR process for Zimbabwe to participate in it successfully. Two suggestions are offered:

- **Explore the use of proxy data:** Because of the many challenges faced related to the availability of data, the issue of identifying proxies for some of the BR indicators stipulated was discussed by members of the Zimbabwe BR data clusters. For example, there are many methodologies used to calculate the severity of food insecurity in the population. If a country does not collect the data necessary for using the Food Insecurity Experience Scale, as required for the BR reporting framework, but, rather, does collect the data required to compute the Food Consumption Score or the Household Dietary Diversity Score. these alternative food security measures should be accepted in future BRs. The country would need guidance from those responsible for the technical requirements of the BR process continent-wide on the feasibility of adopting this proposal to accept proxy indicators to judge country progress towards achieving the Malabo commitments by 2025.
- **Improve the Biennial Review process:** Most members of the Zimbabwe BR data clusters voiced their opinion that the data imputation process for the BR was cumbersome. Many noted that the time given to the BR teams to input data was inadequate, so they often had to rush to complete data entry. This can compromise data quality. In view of this, the BR technical team should explore ways to make data entry for the BR process more user-friendly and also ensure sufficient time is given for the country teams to input the data.



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