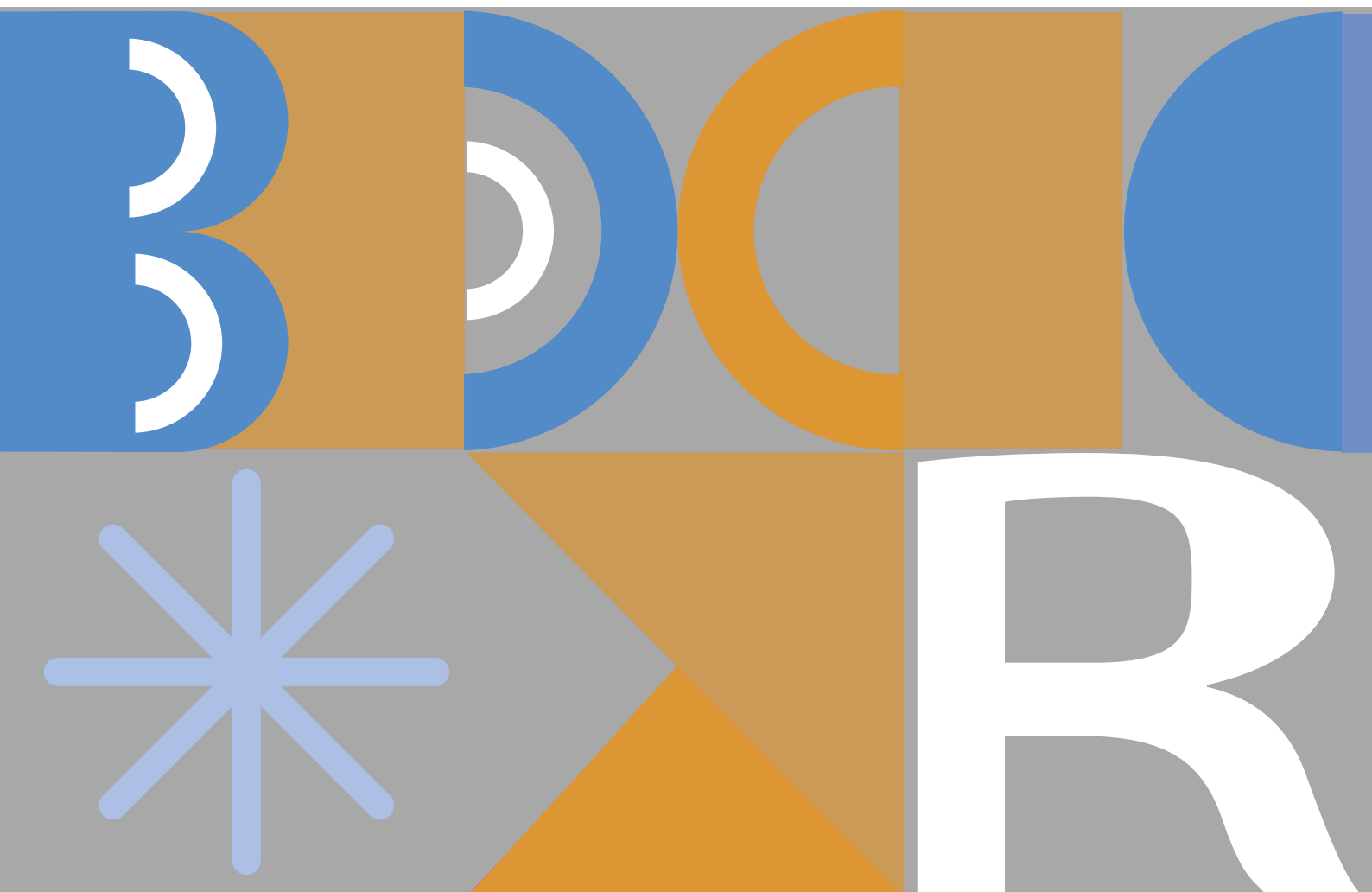
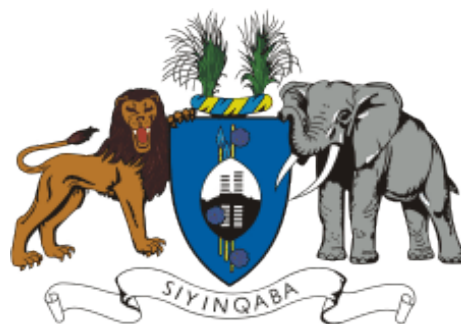


**FOURTH CAADP**  
**BIENNIAL REVIEW**  
**BRIEF**  
**ESWATINI**



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

# Africa Agriculture Transformation Scorecard: Performance and Lessons

## Fourth CAADP Biennial Review Brief: Eswatini

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This policy brief was developed by the Regional Strategic Analysis and Knowledge Support System for Eastern and Southern Africa (ReSAKSS-ESA), which is facilitated by AKADEMIYA2063 and the International Water Management Institute (IWMI), and Eswatini's Ministry of Agriculture.

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### About ReSAKSS

Established in 2006 under the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), the Regional Strategic Analysis and Knowledge Support System (ReSAKSS) supports efforts to promote evidence- and outcome-based policy planning and implementation. In particular, ReSAKSS provides data and related analytical and knowledge products to facilitate CAADP benchmarking, review, and mutual learning processes.

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# 1. Introduction

Addressing Africa's agricultural challenges can unlock inclusive economic growth, benefit smallholder farmers, boost food production, and end hunger. The Maputo Declaration of 2003, endorsed by the African Union (AU) Heads of State and Government, legitimized the Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP) as the principal framework to foster agricultural investments and development in Africa. The CAADP seeks to increase public investments in agriculture by allocating a minimum of 10 percent of national budgets to the sector and targets consistent agricultural productivity growth of 6 percent annually.

The 2014 Malabo Declaration outlines Africa's vision for accelerating agricultural growth and transformation on the African continent through seven broad commitments by 2025. These commitments are:

1. **Upholding the principles and values of CAADP:** African ownership and leadership; accountability and transparency; inclusiveness; evidence-based planning and decision-making; and harnessing regional complementarities.
2. **Enhancing investment finance in agriculture** by allocating 10 percent of public expenditures to agriculture and the operationalization of the African Investment Bank to mobilize and disburse investment finance for priority, agriculture-related investment projects.
3. **Ending hunger in Africa** by doubling productivity through increased access to inputs, irrigation, and farm mechanization; cutting post-harvest losses by half; and reducing the prevalence of stunting in young children to 10 percent.
4. **Halving poverty through inclusive agricultural growth and transformation:** This will be achieved through sustained annual agricultural GDP growth of 6 percent, establishing public-private partnerships to strengthen priority agricultural commodity value chains with strong linkages to smallholder farmers, creating jobs in agricultural value chains for at least 30 percent of Africa's youth, and facilitating the participation by women and youth in gainful and attractive agribusinesses.
5. **Boosting intra-African trade in agricultural commodities and services:** This aims to triple such trade by 2025 through fast-tracking the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and establishing a common external tariff scheme.
6. **Enhancing the resilience of livelihoods and production systems to climate variability and other related risks** by investing in social security for rural workers and other vulnerable social groups, as well as mainstreaming resilience and risk management in policies, strategies, and investment plans.
7. **Ensuring mutual accountability to actions and results** by conducting a continent-wide Biennial Review (BR) to monitor progress in achieving the seven commitments.

To meet the seventh commitment on mutual accountability, African countries present a report to the AU every two years, detailing their progress in agricultural transformation. In addition to gauging the progress toward achieving the seven Malabo Declaration commitments by 2025, each report also assesses the country's capacity for evidence-based policy and program design and implementation, monitoring and evaluation (M&E), peer review, and mutual accountability. To date, AU Member States have submitted four cycles of BR reports. The inaugural BR was compiled and presented in 2017, and the second in 2019 (AUC 2022). The third BR report of 2021 and the associated Africa Agriculture Transformation Scorecard were launched at the 35th AU Summit in February 2022 (AUC 2021). This brief highlights Eswatini's performance against the 46 indicators in the inaugural, second, and third BRs (2017, 2019, and 2021) and compares this to the fourth BR (2023) to track progress toward a fully transformed



agricultural sector. The fourth BR cycle had a total of 59 indicators (47 existing indicators and 12 new indicators) classified into 28 (24 old and 4 new) performance categories under 7 performance areas (7 commitments) to reflect the June 2014 Malabo Declaration. Eswatini has consistently submitted the four BR reports, with the latest (BR4) being launched at the AU Assembly in February 2024 (AUC 2024).

This report benefitted from the momentum created during the three previous reviews, which included ensuring data quality, the use of an electronic biennial review (e-BR) system, and building on lessons learned. Forty-nine African countries reported in this fourth Biennial Review (BR4), down from 51 countries that reported in BR3 and similar to BR2 which also had 49 reporting countries. The inaugural BR had 43 reporting countries. The third Biennial Review had one country on track to achieve the Malabo goals and targets, while twenty-five countries improved their overall score between 2019 and 2021. No country was on track in the BR4 cycle, although 26 countries had improved their scores since the BR3 cycle. The BR4 report was endorsed by the assembly of African Heads of State and Government in February 2024.

## 2. Main Findings

The following section presents the findings of BR4 and incorporates comments from the National Focal Points.

### 2.1 Progress in Achieving Commitments at Country Level

#### 2.1.1 General Performance

Eswatini scored 3.94 out of 10 against a 3.94 benchmark in the inaugural BR, and the country was considered to be on track toward achieving the Malabo Declaration commitments. In BR2, the country scored 3.41 against a benchmark of 6.66 and was not on track, while in BR3, Eswatini scored 4.08 against the benchmark of 7.28, and the country was again rated as not on track. In BR4, Eswatini scored 5.63 out of 10 against the benchmark of 9.29. Even though the country did not meet the BR4 benchmark, the country was rated as progressing well toward achieving the Malabo commitments.

#### 2.1.2 Country Performance by Thematic Area

The results from BR4 indicate that Eswatini underperformed in all thematic areas. This represents a deterioration in performance, as the country was on track on Themes 1, 4, 5, and 7 in BR1. While none of the 7 CAADP commitments were on track in BR2, Eswatini was on track for Commitment 6 in BR3. For BR4, Eswatini saw notable improvements in 3 of the 7 themes (Themes 1, 2, and 5), and the overall score improved in comparison to BR1, BR2, and BR3. The country's overall weak performance is attributed to two thematic areas rated as not on track: Ending hunger and Boosting intra-African trade in agricultural commodities and services (Table 1).



**Table 1: Eswatini – Summary of Biennial Review (BR) scores by Malabo Commitment**

Malabo Commitments	BR1 (2017)			BR2 (2019)			BR3 (2021)			BR4 (2023)			% Change from BR3 to BR4
	Score	Benchmark	Progress	Score	Benchmark	Progress	Score	Benchmark	Progress	Score	Benchmark	Progress	
1. Recommitment to CAADP	4.79	3.33	On track	4.26	10	Not on track	6.43	10	Not on track	6.74	10.00	Not on track	4.81
2. Enhancing agricultural finance	4.16	6.67	Not on track	4.48	10	Not on track	2.47	7.5	Not on track	7.92	9.50	Not on track	220.66
3. Ending hunger by 2025	2.65	3.71	Not on track	1.47	5.04	Not on track	2.9	6.32	Not on track	1.46	9.26	Not on track	-49.73
4. Halving poverty through agriculture	3.13	2.06	On track	0.55	3.94	Not on track	0.47	5.81	Not on track	5.29	8.94	Not on track	1026.40
5. Intra-African trade in agriculture	3.85	1	On track	1.9	3	Not on track	3.5	5	Not on track	3.94	9.00	Not on track	12.53
6. Enhancing resilience to climate change	4.01	6	Not on track	5.83	7	Not on track	8.33	8	On track	6.74	9.75	Not on track	-19.13
7. Mutual accountability	6.16	4.78	On track	5.1	7.67	Not on track	4.94	8.33	Not on track	7.35	8.60	Not on track	48.76
All commitments	4.11	3.94	On track	3.41	6.66	Not on track	4.08	7.28	Not on track	5.63	9.29	Not on track	38.08

Source: Authors' calculations, based on country BR scores (2023).

As **Figure 1** shows, the performance for **Commitment 1** (Recommitment to CAADP) was generally getting better over the three BR cycles due to improvements in creating an enabling policy environment. However, this trend declined in BR4 due to poor performance in the area of quality of multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder coordination and evidence-based policies, supportive institutions, and corresponding human resources.

For **Commitment 2** (Enhancing agricultural finance), Eswatini performed well in BR1 and BR3, while it performed poorly in BR2 and BR4. The poor performance in BR4 is due to a number of factors, including low fertilizer consumption per hectare of arable land (less than the recommended 50 kg/ha), slow expansion in the size of land area under irrigation, inadequate growth in the supply of quality agricultural inputs; insufficient agricultural research spending as a share of agriculture GDP, and low levels of ownership or access to secured land by farm households.

**Commitment 3** (Ending hunger by 2025) saw general improvements across the first three BR cycles, followed by a decline in BR4. The reason for this decline was the low increase in agricultural value added per hectare of arable land, as well as a slow increase in yields of the country's priority agricultural commodities. There were poor reductions in post-harvest losses and insufficient spending on social protection for vulnerable social groups based on the government budget.

**Commitment 4** focuses on halving poverty through agriculture. The country experienced an improving trend from BR1 to BR3, but this declined in BR4. Reasons for this decline include slow poverty reduction rates based on national and international poverty lines and low proportions of youth engaged in new job opportunities in agricultural value chains.

**Commitment 5** (Intra-Africa trade in agricultural commodities and services) is one of the thematic areas where the country has consistently shown improvement across the four BRs. However, this performance still fell below the respective benchmarks.

Similarly, **Commitment 6** (Enhancing resilience to climate change) is one of the thematic areas where the country has consistently improved across the four BRs, although this performance still fell below the respective benchmarks. Eswatini continues to record a low share of agricultural land under sustainable land and water management, including climate-smart agriculture practices.

For **Commitment 7** (Mutual accountability for actions and results), Eswatini performed well during the BR1 and BR2 but failed to meet the benchmark in BR3 and BR4. The key challenges under this commitment are related to inadequacies in terms of inclusive institutionalized mechanisms and platforms for mutual accountability and peer review.

## 2.2 Regional Comparisons

Table 2 shows that Eswatini's BR4 performance was better than that of its peers in the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC). All SADC countries submitted their BR reports, representing a 100 percent submission rate. For BR4, Eswatini achieved an overall score of 5.63 compared to the average overall regional score of 4.26. However, similar to its regional peers, Eswatini is not on track to meet the CAADP Malabo Declaration commitments when assessed against the 2023 benchmark of 9.29. For BR4, Eswatini performed better than its SADC peers in Themes 1, 2, 3, 5, and 7, but for Themes 4 and 6, the country's performance was lower in comparison to SADC. Eswatini made significant progress on the commitment to Eradicate Poverty through Agriculture and also performed well (alongside Lesotho) in terms of the commitment to investment finance in agriculture.

**Table 2: Eswatini's performance relative to the SADC region by theme during BR4**

Theme	Benchmark	SADC Region	Eswatini	Eswatini Progress
Recommitment to CAADP	10.0	7.59	6.47	Not on track
Enhancing agricultural finance	9.50	3.05	7.92	Not on track
Ending Hunger by 2025	9.26	3.19	1.46	Not on track
Halving poverty through agriculture	8.94	2.17	5.29	Not on track
Boosting intra-African Trade in agricultural commodities and services	9.00	2.14	3.94	Not on track
Enhancing resilience to climate change	9.75	4.65	6.74	Not on track
Mutual accountability for actions and results	8.60	7.03	7.35	Not on track
All commitments	9.29	4.26	5.63	Not on track
Progress on all commitments	Not on track		Not on track	

### 3. Highlights on Selected Indicators

This report includes a section on the implementation of ten AU Decisions that are thematic in nature and specific to agricultural transformation in Africa. To develop a picture of agricultural transformation, we focus on assessing progress in fertilizer consumption, share of irrigated area, share of land under sustainable land management (SLM), and increase of supplied quality agricultural inputs (Table 3).

**Table 3: Indicators on irrigation and SLM**

Indicators	Malabo Target	Target Year	Achievement Score 2022	Score (%)
Size of irrigated area	100%	2025	6.3%	0.63
Share of land under SLM, including CSA practices	30%	2025	0.39%	0.01
Fertilizer consumption per hectare of arable land	50 kg/ha	2025	6 kg/ha	1.13
Increase of supplied quality agricultural inputs	100%	2025	Missing	Missing

Eswatini reported that it increased the land area under irrigation by nearly 6 percent earning it a lower score of 0.63 out of a possible 10. The country's fertilizer application rate is also low, standing at only 6 kg/ha compared to the target of 50 kg/ha in 2025. Further, less than 1 percent of the land is under SLM compared to the 30 percent target Eswatini must reach by 2025.





## 4. Challenges and Lessons Learned from BR4

The BR process to assess Eswatini's performance encountered challenges related to the process of conducting BR4 and the data used for the review.

**4.1 Process challenges and lessons:** The ongoing Russia-Ukraine War, which commenced in February 2022, has had devastating impacts on agricultural input supply chains in Africa and significantly disrupted the development of Eswatini's 2023 BR report. Disruptions in the production and distribution of inputs, like fertilizers and agricultural chemicals, have led to higher prices, adding to the costs borne by Africa's farmers. However, BR4 generally had fewer significant challenges than those experienced in previous reviews. The cumulative lessons learned from the first to the third rounds of the BR were used to improve the fourth BR. In addition, the coordination of the fourth BR was better in comparison to the first, second and third review cycles, following the establishment of inclusive multi-stakeholder and mutual accountability mechanisms. This resulted in improved scores on some Malabo Declaration commitments between the third and fourth BRs. Use of the electronic BR (e-BR) platform for BR4 removed the burden of manually calculating the BR indicators at country level and simplified the process of checking for missing data or outlier cases.

The SADC Secretariat also hosted a validation workshop for the fourth BR, which resulted in improved data quality for Eswatini and other SADC member states. Once Eswatini submitted its BR report, the SADC Secretariat conducted a regional validation exercise with the Regional Strategic Analysis and Knowledge Support System (ReSAKSS). This involved subjecting the Eswatini country report to close assessment and review alongside the BR reports from other SADC countries. Comments from this validation exercise were brought to the attention of the Eswatini BR team. This was followed by a writing workshop to further improve the reported data by identifying gaps in both the physical data and the e-BR platform. These processes uncovered several data challenges, many of which were addressed.

Support from the SADC Secretariat and ReSAKSS was essential to improving Eswatini's data quality and reporting rates for the fourth BR. The African Union Commission (AUC) also trained one or two experts from each country undertaking BR4. However, the need for better data calls for the training of even more people in each country for future BRs. Eswatini will have to expand its BR team to meet these demands effectively.

**4.2 Data challenges and lessons:** Data availability and quality challenges continue to affect the BR process in Eswatini. The data for many indicators are missing, including total agricultural research spending; private sector investment in agriculture; intra-African trade policies and institutions, border administration, and commodity-specific trade volumes and values; climate resilience; and post-harvest losses, food security, nutrition, and food safety. Eswatini also struggles with implementing data standards and collection protocols, which are needed to improve data accuracy, tracing, and verification. However, the use of the digital e-BR platform for BR4 eased data cleaning and verification.





## 5. Notable Improvements, Policy, and Programmatic Changes

Eswatini did not meet the BR4 benchmark for overall performance in making progress toward achieving the Malabo commitments by 2025. However, the country made several important policy and programmatic changes between BR3 and BR4, resulting in some improvements.

The BR process has led to increased dialogue between public and private sector players in Eswatini's agricultural sector. In addition, the country's BR team has met with peers from countries that have conducted successful development processes, such as Rwanda and Zambia. These interactions have generated interest in initiating relevant policy changes in Eswatini's agricultural sector.

Policies and programs to enhance farmer resilience to climate and non-climate-related shocks were put in place, and most farmers were introduced to climate-smart agricultural practices. The country has improved its ties with early warning agencies, focusing on analyzing and disseminating climate-related information. Eswatini's government has channeled public investments toward water harvesting, for instance, supporting the construction of small and medium-sized earth dams, as well as rooftop and in-field water collection to reduce the reliance on rainfed farming. Both livestock and crop-producing households have adopted measures to improve their resilience to weather-related shocks.

Eswatini launched the *AgrInvest Approach*, which creates pathways for leveraging private sector investments in agriculture under a planned Agriculture Development Fund.

The country expanded public-private partnerships (PPPs), which aim to eradicate poverty through agricultural commodity value chains that rely on smallholder agricultural production. These partnerships contribute towards sustainable agricultural development that includes smallholder agriculture.

The government mobilized resources to boost public agricultural expenditure and to ensure its effective use. Public agricultural expenditures reported in BR3 increased from the figures reported in BR1 and BR2. Specifically, more resources were made available for water harvesting and irrigation development, improved access to farm inputs and mechanization, and emergency relief activities, including drought response.

The government also undertook further public investment in water and irrigation through the Mkhondvo Ngwavuma Augmentation Project. The Ministry of Finance, with loan support from the African Development Bank (AfDB), also allocated US\$ 10 million to the Ministry of Agriculture. From this amount, US\$ 3 million was allocated to the Agriculture Development Fund, while the remaining US\$ 7 million (112 million in the local currency, Emalangeni (E)) was allocated to the input subsidy program. This resulted in an increased budget allocation for the Input Subsidy Programme for the 2022/23 farming season from the initially budgeted E42.2 million to E154.2 million, approximately US\$2.6-9.6 million (Government of Eswatini 2023).



## 6. Recommendations to Ensure Achievement of Malabo Declaration Commitments by 2025

The BR4 showed that Eswatini was not on track to meet any Malabo Declaration commitments by 2025, although the country has made good progress on several commitments. Paying specific attention to several key issues will help the country achieve all seven commitments by 2025. Eswatini should therefore implement the following recommendations:

- Create a favorable environment for improved youth access to new job opportunities in agricultural value chains
- Improve spending on agricultural research as measured by the share of agriculture GDP
- Expand social protection programs to protect vulnerable social groups, especially the poor

Going forward, the country needs to strengthen its efforts toward meeting all the Malabo/CAADP commitments. Agricultural investments can be increased by expanding the share of the national budget allocated to the sector and creating a conducive environment for attracting domestic and foreign private investors, as well as public-private partnerships. This will have ripple effects on efforts to end hunger, eradicate poverty, promote intra-African trade in agricultural commodities and services, and achieve resilience to climate variability.

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