

FOURTH CAADP
BIENNIAL REVIEW
BRIEF
MAURITIUS



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

Africa Agriculture Transformation Scorecard: Performance and Lessons

Fourth CAADP Biennial Review Brief: Mauritius

Fitsum Hagos,¹ Greenwell Matchaya,² Krishna Chikhuri,³ and Varuna Dreepaul-Dabee⁴

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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 International Water Management Institute (IWMI), Eastern and Southern Africa; corresponding author.

2 ReSAKSS-ESA, International Water Management Institute (IWMI), South Africa.

3 Ministry of Agro-Industry, Food Security, Mauritius.

4 Ministry of Agro-Industry, Food Security, Mauritius.

1. Introduction

Addressing Africa's agricultural challenges has the potential to unlock inclusive economic growth, benefit smallholder farmers, boost food production, and end hunger. It is with this in mind that the Heads of State and Government of the African Union (AU) endorsed the Maputo Declaration of 2003, which legitimized the Comprehensive Africa Development Programme (CAADP) as the principal framework to foster agricultural investments and development in Africa (AUC 2014). The CAADP aims to increase public investments in agriculture by allocating a minimum of 10 percent of national budgets to the sector and targets an average consistent agricultural productivity growth of 6 percent per year.

The 2014 Malabo Declaration outlines Africa's vision to accelerate agricultural growth and transformation on the continent by 2025 through seven broad commitments:

1. Upholding the principles and values of the CAADP
2. Enhancing investment finance in agriculture
3. Ending hunger in Africa by 2025
4. Halving poverty 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
7. Ensuring mutual accountability for actions and results by conducting a continent-wide Biennial Review (BR) to monitor progress in achieving the seven Malabo Declaration commitments

To meet the seventh commitment on mutual accountability, African countries present a report to the AU every two years, detailing their progress toward agricultural transformation. In addition to gauging the country's 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, peer review, and mutual accountability. To date, AU Member States have submitted four cycles of BR reports. The inaugural BR (BR1) was compiled and presented in 2017 (AUC 2019), and the second (BR2) in 2019 (AUC 2020). The third BR (BR3) report of 2021 and the associated Africa Agriculture Transformation Scorecard were launched at the 35th AU Summit in February 2022 (AUC 2021). This fourth BR highlights the country's performance against the 47 indicators in BR1, BR2, and BR3, which have been further refined in this fourth BR (2023) to track the progress towards a fully transformed agriculture. The fourth BR (BR4) 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 priorities of the Malabo Declaration endorsed in June 2014. Mauritius has consistently submitted reports for all BR cycles, with the exception of BR3.



This report built on the lessons learned from the three previous reviews, the efforts deployed to ensure data quality, and the use of the electronic Biennial Review (e-BR) system. Forty-nine (49) countries reported in this fourth BR, down from the 51 countries that reported in BR3 and similar to the 49 countries in the BR2 cycle. This figure was still higher than the 43 countries which reported in the inaugural BR. Notably, the BR4 report recorded a departure from the progress reported during BR3 when one country was on track to achieve the Malabo commitments, and twenty-five had increased their overall score between 2019 and 2021. While no country is on track in the BR4 cycle, 26 countries have improved their scores since the BR3 cycle. The BR4 report was endorsed by African Heads of State and Government during the February 2024 Assembly (AUC 2023).

2. Main Findings

In the following section, we present the review findings and incorporate comments from the National Focal Points for Mauritius.

1.1 Progress in Achieving Commitments at Country Level

1.1.1 General performance

In the inaugural BR, Mauritius scored 4.11 out of 10, against a benchmark of 3.94, and the country was rated as being on track to achieving the Malabo commitments. In BR2, the country scored 4.41 against a benchmark of 6.66. Mauritius did not participate in the BR3 process, while in BR4, Mauritius scored 3.77 against a benchmark of 9.29. Even though Mauritius did not meet the benchmark score in BR4, the country was rated as progressing well toward achieving the commitments. In BR1, Mauritius was on track on four themes (Themes 1, 4, 5, 7) and its overall performance, while in BR2, the country was on track in Theme 6. Mauritius has generally been inconsistent in its performance, but the country has recorded improvements on Themes 1 and 7.

1.1.2 Country performance by thematic area

This sub-section presents a detailed examination of the seven commitments where the country was rated as not being on track. The BR4 results indicate that Mauritius underperformed in all thematic areas, representing a regression for the country as it was on track on 4 of the 7 themes (Themes 1, 4, 5, and 7) in BR1 and Theme 6 in BR2. However, the country's performance improved in 2 of the 7 themes in comparison to BR2: Recommitment to CAADP (Theme 1) and Mutual Accountability for Actions and Results (Theme 7).

The country's overall weak performance is attributed to the following thematic areas, which were rated as not being on track: (Theme 2) Enhancing agricultural finance; (Theme 3) Ending hunger by 2025; (Theme 4) Halving poverty through agriculture; (Theme 5) Boosting intra-African trade in agricultural commodities and services; and (Theme 6) Enhancing resilience to climate change and all commitments, as Table 1 shows.



Table 1: Summary of BR scores for Mauritius by Malabo commitment

Malabo Commitments	BR1 (2017)			BR2 (2019)			BR4 (2023)		
	Score	Benchmark	Progress	Score	Benchmark	Score	Benchmark	Progress	
1. Recommitment to CAADP	4.79	3.33	On track	4.26	10	8.89	10.00	Not on track	
2. Enhancing agricultural finance	4.16	6.67	Not on track	4.48	10	3.66	9.50	Not on track	
3. Ending hunger by 2025	2.65	3.71	Not on track	1.47	5.04	2.03	9.26	Not on track	
4. Halving poverty through agriculture	3.13	2.06	On track	0.55	3.94	0.63	8.94	Not on track	
5. Boosting intra-African trade in agricultural commodities and services	3.85	1	On track	1.9	3	0.12	9.00	Not on track	
6. Enhancing resilience to climate change	4.01	6	Not on track	5.83	7	3.33	9.75	Not on track	
7. Mutual accountability	6.16	4.78	On track	5.1	7.67	7.76	8.60	Not on track	
All commitments	4.11	3.94	On track	3.41	6.66	3.77	9.29	Not on track	

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



Figure 1 shows that Mauritius has generally improved its performance in **Commitment 1 (Recommitment to CAADP)** over the 2017-2023 period covering the four BR cycles (Mauritius did not report data in BR3). This is largely due to improvements in creating an enabling policy environment. Mauritius has performed poorly under **Commitment 2 (Enhancing agricultural finance)** over the three BRs. Although the country scored 6.99 out of 10 on public expenditure toward agriculture, the poor rating for Commitment 2 can be attributed to the low levels of domestic and foreign private sector investment.

Mauritius has consistently underperformed in **Commitment 3 (Ending hunger by 2025)** from BR1 to BR4. Data availability is a key challenge in this regard, especially related to the indicators on post-harvest losses; prevalence of underweight and wasting among children under 5 years old; prevalence of undernourishment; slow growth rates in the proportion of women and children under 23 months meeting Minimum Dietary Diversity standards; and high incidence of moderate and severe food insecurity among the population based on the Food Insecurity Experience Scale. Data gaps led to poor scores in this performance area. For instance, Mauritius received a score of zero for social protection due to lack of data, yet the country has substantive social protection programs in place. In other cases, the data have not been captured, as a certain health issue is not a significant concern in the country.

The country registered performance declines from BR1 to BR4 under **Commitment 4 (Halving poverty through agriculture)**. This was partially because Mauritius had data gaps that affected the score's computation, although some data based on expert estimates could have been included.

For **Commitment 5 (Boosting intra-African trade in agricultural commodities and services)**, the country recorded slight improvements under BR1 and BR2 but saw a decline in BR4. The reduction rate in the gap between wholesale and farm-gate prices has slowed. There are also limited agricultural commodity value chains that have PPPs with strong linkages to smallholder agriculture, and the Trade Facilitation Index (TFI) is low. The country's export market has traditionally focused on Europe, which is reflected in the low levels of intra-African trade. However, the establishment of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) has seen an increase in momentum toward greater market exchanges with other African countries.

Similarly, in **Commitment 6 (Enhancing resilience to climate change)**, Mauritius saw improved performance from BR1 to BR2 against the respective benchmarks but then experienced a decline in BR4. The low percentage of farm, pastoral, and fisher households that are resilient to climate and weather-related shocks and the low share of agricultural land under sustainable land and water management, including climate-smart agriculture (CSA) practices, contributed to this decline. Various data gaps, for instance, on land devoted to sustainable agricultural practices and greenhouse gas emissions, have affected the country's performance in this regard.

For **Commitment 7 (Mutual accountability for actions and results)**, Mauritius performed well during BR1 and BR2 but failed to meet the benchmark in BR4. The key challenge under this commitment is related to the country's use of BR results.



1.1.3 Regional comparison

Table 2 shows that Mauritius performed worse than the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) region as a whole in BR4. All SADC countries submitted their reports, representing a 100 percent submission rate. The overall average score for the region in BR4 was 4.26, which was higher than the 3.77 score that Mauritius obtained. Neither the country nor the region is on track to meet the CAADP Malabo commitments when assessed against the 2023 benchmark of 9.29. In BR4, Mauritius performed better than the SADC region in Themes 1, 2, and 7 but attained lower scores than the region in Themes 3, 4, 5, and 6.

None of the twelve SADC countries is on track, and the region's performance has not changed over the four review cycles. The region was also not on track in any of the seven Malabo commitments in the 2023 BR. The region was on track in four Commitment areas in the inaugural BR in 2017. Since then, the region as a whole has put in considerable effort to jointly achieve half of the required milestones for Theme 1 (Recommitment to CAADP) and Theme 7 (Mutual accountability for actions and results).

Table 2: Mauritius's performance relative to SADC Region by theme during BR4

Theme	Benchmark in 2023	SADC Region in 2023	Mauritius' Score in 2023	Mauritius' Progress
1. Recommitment to CAADP	10.0	7.59	8.89	Commendable performance and nearly on track
2. Enhancing agricultural finance	9.5	3.05	3.66	Not on track
3. Ending hunger by 2025	9.26	3.19	2.03	Not on track
4. Halving poverty through agriculture	8.94	2.17	0.63	Not on track
5. Boosting intra-African trade in agricultural commodities and services	9.00	2.14	0.12	Not on track
6. Enhancing resilience to climate change	9.75	4.65	3.33	Not on track
7. Mutual accountability for actions and results	8.60	7.03	7.76	Good Performance and nearly on track
All commitments	9.29	4.26	3.77	Not on track
Progress on All Commitments	Not on track		Not on track	

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

3. Focus on Selected Indicators

The BR4 report includes a section on the implementation of ten AU Decisions, which are thematic in nature and specific to Africa's agricultural transformation. 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 the increase in the supply of quality agricultural inputs (Table 3).

Table 3: Selected indicators on agricultural transformation for BR4

Indicators	Malabo Target	Target Year	Milestone 2022	Value in 2023
Increase in size of irrigated area from 2015	100 %	2025	9.5	
Share of land under SLM, including climate-smart agriculture (CSA) practices	30 %	2023	10	0.00
Fertilizer consumption per hectare of arable land	50 kg/ha	2025	10	above 50 kg/ha
Increase in supply of quality agricultural inputs	100 %	2025	9	-10.85

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

The BR4 scores point to a limited increase in irrigated areas and land under sustainable land management (SLM) and an insufficient supply of quality agricultural inputs. However, a substantial proportion of agriculture in Mauritius is irrigated (around 25 percent), while the rest is rainfed. Mauritius has a high level of fertilizer consumption, which is well above the 50 kg/ha target. This could mean that data on fertilizer use and irrigated agriculture have not been adequately reported. Mauritius needs to improve its data reporting to ensure that the realities in its agricultural sector are not misrepresented.

The Mauritian government is emphasizing sustainable land and water management (SLWM) practices in agriculture and providing relevant support services to farmers. The country's performance in increasing the supply of quality agricultural inputs, relative to the total input requirements for agricultural commodities, was -11 percent. The country, therefore, has to invest significantly to meet the demand for agricultural inputs.

4. Challenges and Lessons Learned from BR4

Assessing the performance of Mauritius in BR4 was not without its challenges, both in terms of the process and the data used in the review.

Process challenges and lessons learned: Various administrative issues led to a lack of reporting across several parameters. Further, the Russia-Ukraine War, which commenced in February 2022, has had devastating impacts on agricultural input supply chains in Africa. Disruptions in the production and distribution of inputs, such as fertilizers and agricultural

chemicals, have resulted in higher prices, making farming more costly for African farmers. In general, however, the fourth BR had fewer significant challenges than those experienced in the previous reviews. Cumulative lessons learned from the first to the third BR cycles were used to improve the fourth BR. In addition, the fourth BR was better coordinated than the first, second, and third reviews. This was done by establishing inclusive multi-stakeholder mutual accountability mechanisms, which resulted in improved scores for some of the Malabo commitments between BR2 and BR4. Moreover, the use of the electronic Biennial Review (e-BR) platform in BR4 removed the burden of manually calculating the country-level indicators and also simplified the process of checking for missing data or outliers.

The SADC Secretariat hosted a validation workshop during the fourth BR, which improved the data quality for Mauritius and other SADC Member States. Once Mauritius had reported on its BR performance, the SADC Secretariat worked with the ReSAKSS team to conduct a BR validation exercise at the regional level. This involved subjecting the Mauritius country report to close assessments and reviews alongside the BR reports from other SADC countries. The Mauritian BR team received useful feedback from this exercise. Validation was followed by a writing workshop to further improve the reported data through the identification of 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 improve the quality and reporting rates for BR4. At the continental level, the AU Commission (AUC) trained one or two experts from each country involved in BR4. However, the demand for better data requires that more people in each country be trained for future BRs. Mauritius should, therefore, expand its BR team to meet these demands effectively.

Data challenges and lessons learned: Data quality and availability continue to affect the BR processes in Mauritius. Several parameters have missing data, namely post-harvest losses, food and nutrition security, as well as resilience to climate related risks and shocks. These data gaps and the lack of awareness of feedback for various indicators negatively affected scoring on some of the commitments.

Mauritius also struggles with implementing the standards and collection protocols needed to improve data accuracy, tracing, and verification. However, the use of the digital e-BR platform in BR4 eased data cleaning and verification. The use of subjective assessments by experts, as recommended in the technical guidelines, could have significantly improved the country's BR scores, especially in those cases where data were hard to find.

5. Policy and Programmatic Challenges

Mauritius did not meet the BR4 benchmark for overall progress toward meeting the Malabo commitments by 2025. Still, the country made several important policy and programmatic changes between BR2 and BR4, resulting in improved scores.

Mauritius set up and formalized the national CAADP technical team and also instituted periodic meetings to track progress in BR reporting across the seven Malabo commitments (Government of Mauritius 2023). To ensure coherence in agricultural policies and strategies, the government-aligned these policies and strategies to the CAADP framework, with input from the World Bank, African Development Bank (AfDB), and the Food and Agriculture



Organization of the United Nations (FAO). The government also intensified project proposal development targeted at funding institutions to increase agricultural sector financing.

The Mauritian government has also been deliberate in cultivating a business-friendly environment to attract private sector and foreign direct investments into the agricultural sector.

To encourage youth participation in agricultural value chains, the Government of Mauritius intensified training programs targeting young people, in addition to setting up the Young Graduate Entrepreneur Scheme targeting graduates of agricultural sciences.

Due to concerns about pesticide use, Mauritius promulgated the Use of Pesticides Act to regulate the use of fertilizers and pesticides in the agricultural sector and limit environmental damage.

The BR process has also led to increased dialogue between public and private sector actors in the Mauritian agricultural sector. Further, the Mauritian BR team met with peers in countries that have conducted successful reviews. These interactions have generated interest in initiating similar policy changes in the country's agricultural sector.

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

Mauritius was not on track in BR4 to meet any of the Malabo Declaration commitments by 2025, although the country had made good progress on several commitments. Specific attention is therefore needed on several issues to enable the country to achieve all seven commitments by 2025. Mauritius should implement the following measures:

- Strengthen its data collection systems
- Closely monitor data entry on the e-BR platform
- Undertake subjective assessments with experts when possible

Mauritius should increase the share of its national budget that goes to the agricultural sector from the current low levels of under 2 percent to the 10 percent target. This will strengthen the sector and boost its role in the economy.

Mauritius should also invest in yield improvement programs for its commodities. Although the country produces sugar efficiently, the productivity of many of its crops is low. Increasing fertilizer application and investing in better crop management can improve the agricultural sector's productivity.

Mauritius has to invest more in strengthening climate resilience, given the rising incidence of cyclones. This entails increasing the share of public spending allocated towards developing climate resilience.

Going forward, the SADC region needs to increase its efforts to meet all the Malabo/CAADP commitments. Greater efforts should be directed toward increasing agricultural investments, expanding the share of national budget allocations to agriculture, creating a conducive

environment for both domestic and foreign private investors, and developing agricultural sector public-private partnerships (PPPs). This will have ripple effects in terms of improving food self-sufficiency, promoting intra-African trade in agricultural commodities and services, and strengthening resilience to climate variability.

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ReSAKSS ESA

Regional Strategic Analysis and Knowledge Support System
by AKADEMIYA2063 & IWMI

ReSAKSS-Eastern and Southern Africa

Hatfield Gardens, Block G - Ground Floor
333 Grosvenor Street, Hatfield 0083
Pretoria, South Africa
Email: resakss@akademiya2063.org
Website: www.resakss.org



AKADEMIYA

The Expertise We Need. The Africa We Want.

AKADEMIYA2063 Headquarters

Kicukiro/Niboye KK 341 St 22
P.O. Box 1855
Kigali, Rwanda
Tel: +250 788 318 315
Email: kigali-contact@akademiya2063.org
Website: www.akademiya2063.org

AKADEMIYA2063 Regional Office

Lot N*3 Almadies
P.O. Box 24 933
Dakar, Senegal
Tel: +221 33 865 28 81
Email: dakar-contact@akademiya2063.org
Website: www.akademiya2063.org

