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NEPAD
Comprehensive Africa Agriculture
Development Program
(CAADP)

LIBERIA

Strategic Analyses and Knowledge Support Systems to Inform and Guide the CAADP Implementation Process

The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) has made political and economic governance a cornerstone of its strategy, as illustrated by its adoption of and commitment to the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM). At the sectoral level, this philosophy translates into recognition of the need to improve policy and strategy planning and implementation. This in turn calls for tools to help generate the necessary knowledge to inform and guide sector policies and strategies in order to facilitate a successful implementation of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP).

CAADP AS A STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

CAADP is a strategic framework by which to guide country development efforts and partnerships in the agricultural sector. Similar to the broader NEPAD agenda, it embodies the principles of peer review and dialogue, which, when adequately followed and applied, will stimulate and broaden the adoption of best practices, facilitate benchmarking and mutual learning and, ultimately, raise the quality and consistency of country policies and strategies in the agricultural sector. The following are some of the most important CAADP principles and targets:

- Designating agriculture-led growth as a main strategy to achieve the Millennium Development Goal of halving the proportion of people living on less than a dollar a day (MDGI);
- Pursuing a 6% average annual sector growth rate at the national level;
- Allocating 10% of national budgets to the agricultural sector;
- Exploiting regional complementarities and cooperation to boost growth;
- Adopting the principles of policy efficiency, dialogue, review, and accountability, shared by all NEPAD programs;
- Strengthening and expanding partnerships and alliances to include farmers, agribusiness, and civil-society communities;
- Assigning programme implementation to individual countries, coordination to designated Regional Economic Communities (RECs), and facilitation to the NEPAD Secretariat.

The successful application of these principles and the broad realisation of the targets require knowledge tools to encourage and support: (a) the move toward evidence-based and outcome-oriented programme design and implementation; (b) the practice of inclusive policy review and dialogue within and across countries; and (c) effective coordination and advocacy at the regional and continental levels.

REVIEW AND KNOWLEDGE PROCESSES FOR A SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF CAADP

Achieving the CAADP objective of broad-based agricultural sector growth across Africa cannot happen without greater efficiency and consistency in the planning and execution of sector policies and programmes, increased effectiveness in translating government expenditures into public goods and services, an adequate level of these expenditures to sustain an annual sector growth rate of 6%, and the expertise and mechanisms to regularly and transparently measure performance against targets and keep policies and programmes on track.

The review and dialogue processes under the CAADP agenda operate at three different levels:

1. **Mutual Review at the Continental Level:** There are two main mechanisms for review and dialogue at the continental level. The first is the African Partnership Forum (APF), which targets African leaders and their G8 partners and is supported by a technical secretariat at the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). It is a forum for dialogue and review, at the highest level, with respect to programme performance and progress across the broad NEPAD agenda. The second mechanism, the CAADP Partnership Platform, focuses more specifically on the CAADP agenda. It brings together representatives of the leading RECs and other regional organisations dealing with agriculture, major bilateral and multilateral development agencies, and private-sector and farmers' organisations.
2. **Peer Review at the Regional Level:** The leading RECs facilitate dialogue on and review of the CAADP implementation agenda through two distinct processes. The first regroups country representatives at the level of permanent secretaries and directors of planning. It focuses primarily on a collective review of implementation performance in individual countries and mutual learning to spread and accelerate progress toward CAADP goals and targets. The second process allows the leadership of the RECs and representatives from the private sector, farmers' organisations, and development agencies to track program progress and performance at the regional level and align development assistance and country policies and strategies with the CAADP targets and principles.

THE REGIONAL STRATEGIC ANALYSIS AND KNOWLEDGE SUPPORT SYSTEMS (RESAKSS)

As part of the CAADP implementation process, three of the leading RECs—the Common Market of Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and the Southern African Development Community (SADC)—have established the ReSAKSS in collaboration with the four Africa-based centres of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR): the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) in Ibadan, Nigeria; the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI), in Nairobi, Kenya; the International Crop Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe; and the International Water Management Institute (IWMI), in Pretoria, South Africa.

The objective of the three ReSAKSS nodes, which have been established in Ibadan, Nairobi, and Pretoria and are being coordinated by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), is to facilitate access by the RECs and their member states to policy-relevant analyses of the highest quality in order to generate the necessary knowledge to improve policymaking, track progress, document success, and derive lessons that can feed into the review and learning processes associated with the implementation of the CAADP agenda. They operate under coordination and governance structures chaired by the RECs. Although facilitated by the CGIAR centres, the ReSAKSS are not research entities or projects within these centres. The main tasks of the ReSAKSS can be summarised as follows:

Knowledge Management: to mobilise existing networks and centres of expertise at the international, regional, and national levels to assemble the needed capacities and knowledge and provide first-rate analytical and advisory services to countries and RECs in the design, implementation, and evaluation of CAADP programs.

Building Country-Level Knowledge Management Capacity: to provide assistance to countries in the establishment of national knowledge system nodes, and to promote cooperation with respect to generating, disseminating, and accessing knowledge products to support CAADP implementation, particularly shared standards and protocols for the collection, storage, and exchange of data as well as cutting-edge methodologies for policy and strategy analysis.

Support to Review and Dialogue Processes: to work with the national nodes to provide relevant and timely information to guide mutual review at the continental

3. Progress Review at the National Level: Country-level implementation requires an inclusive dialogue and review process to ensure that policies and programmes, including budgetary policies and development assistance, are aligned with CAADP principles and are on track to meet CAADP objectives. The choice of mechanisms to facilitate this process depends on individual countries' institutional and technical realities, but each country must carry out a transparent, broad, and inclusive dialogue that ensures the effective participation of the agribusiness sector and farmers' organisations. The identification of the appropriate mechanisms takes place during the country roundtable process.

The review and dialogue processes described above add real value to current and future development outcomes to the extent that they are well informed and are supported through accurate and intelligent data derived from rigorous analysis of: (i) the strategic and operational challenges of implementing the CAADP agenda at the regional and country levels; (ii) the adequacy of the conception and execution of the programmes and policy measures adopted to address these challenges; and (iii) the outcome of such programmes as well as their impact in terms of realizing the growth, poverty, and food-security objectives of CAADP. This requires human capacities, technical infrastructure, analytical tools, and communication instruments to gather the relevant data and information and analyse it to generate credible, high-quality knowledge products, which can be stored and accessed as needed to inform and guide the debate associated with the review and dialogue processes.

The above capacities, tools, and instruments are needed both at the regional and country level and can be acquired by building upon and strengthening existing institutions and expert networks. In addition, these institutions and networks can be linked within and across countries at the regional level to create the necessary critical masses and exploit technical complementarities. To this end, three Regional Strategic Analysis and Knowledge Support Systems (ReSAKSS) have been established. The following sections describe the operation and key tasks of the ReSAKSS and provide an outline of the country-level knowledge system to be established to support the implementation of the CAADP agenda in Liberia, as defined through the Food and Agriculture Policy and Strategy (FAPS) under the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS).

level, peer review at the regional level, and progress review at the country level. The corresponding support forums are the African Partnership Forum and the CAADP Partnership Platform at the continental level, the REC-specific coordination and governance structures at the regional level, and the review and dialogue mechanisms to be established at the country level as part of the CAADP implementation process.

The ReSAKSS also provides assistance to country nodes and helps foster collaboration and exchange among the various nodes in the region. In West Africa, the regional node (ReSAKSS WA) is hosted by IITA-Ibadan and operates under a coordination and governance structure chaired by ECOWAS which is implementing CAADP in its region in tandem with its Common Agricultural Policy.

THE COUNTRY STRATEGIC ANALYSIS AND KNOWLEDGE SUPPORT SYSTEM IN LIBERIA (LIBERIA-SAKSS)

The aim of the knowledge-management component of the CAADP agenda is to add value to the efforts of individual countries, where necessary, to ensure that they have an information and knowledge system that aids dialogue and evidence-based decision-making. As a complement to and an extension of the ReSAKSS described above, Liberia will establish a Country Strategic Analysis and Knowledge Support System (Liberia-SAKSS) as a technical component of an inclusive review and dialogue mechanism to facilitate better policy design and implementation and thus ensure successful implementation of the PRS/FAPS agenda.

The Need for a Liberia SAKSS Node under the PRS/FAPS Agenda

At the moment, the development policy processes in Liberia are very dynamic and require a knowledge and information system that will support the ongoing debates and decisions that have to be made. The establishment of a Liberia SAKSS node will provide a framework within which targeted knowledge products emanating from policy-relevant research, objective analysis, and high-quality local data can be made available and used during the policymaking processes related to the design and implementation of these programmes.

During the analytical phase of the roundtable process, strategy elements and options for agricultural growth, poverty reduction, and food security in Liberia have been defined. Although critical questions regarding the PRS/FAPS

agenda have been answered, it is certain that additional gaps will be identified as the process moves toward the operational, post-roundtable phase. A host of design and execution questions will emerge that will require immediate answers in order to ensure steady and successful implementation of the programmes. A number of policy and strategy issues will also require attention. Leaving such questions and issues unaddressed, working with less-than-satisfactory answers, or having to rely on time-consuming, ad hoc, and sporadic consultancy services to provide the necessary answers would significantly reduce the chances of success. Moreover, policy and strategy design and implementation are ongoing processes that require steady access to high-quality information.

Therefore, the establishment of a country node, combined with the large expertise network of the West Africa ReSAKSS, will be invaluable for policymakers and other actors within and outside of the government who are involved in the implementation of the PRS/FAPS agenda. It will also help build institutional and technical capacities and foster collaboration among the various centres of expertise as well as other suppliers and users of the country's knowledge products.

The Role of the Liberia SAKSS

The ultimate goal of the Liberia SAKSS node is to improve the quality of policy and strategy design and implementation in Liberia through the facilitation of well-informed planning, review, and dialogue processes. When it is established and fully functional, its main functions will be to:

- Generate, compile, and share analyses and data relevant to Liberia's agricultural and rural development in line with the PRS/FAPS objectives;
- Perform strategic investment analyses for the agricultural sector, especially for the different sub-sectors, providing practical policy and investment options;
- Undertake monitoring and evaluation of the PRS/FAPS programmes to facilitate evidence-based planning and implementation;
- Produce knowledge products for dissemination and outreach through a combination of real (stakeholder forums) and virtual (interactive multimedia services) mechanisms;
- Contribute to fostering constructive, cross-sectoral policy debates on future agricultural and rural development alternatives;
- Encourage dialogue and the exchange of data and knowledge among the different stakeholders at national, regional, and international levels;

- Facilitate access to a growing analytical and visualization toolkit using information and communication technologies (ICTs); and
- Strengthen local capacity to conduct objective, timely, and relevant policy research and analysis through a variety of short- and long-term training processes.

Operation and Governance of the Liberia SAKSS Node

It is necessary to set up an inclusive Steering Committee or other oversight structure whose role will be to ensure that the agenda of the SAKSS node remains relevant to the planning and implementation of the PRS/FAPS. The steering committee will comprise of major stakeholders in the agriculture sector including the ministry of agriculture, farmers' organizations, the private sector, the universities and non – governmental organizations. It will be chaired by the Minister of Agriculture. The oversight structure will review both the outputs and the agenda of the SAKSS node. The activities of the node will be identified through an inclusive and dynamic process involving all major stakeholders in constant dialogue with PRS/FAPS implementers on the government side (MOA, county and district officials).

A technical unit or secretariat will need to be created to carry out the day-to-day activities of the node. The unit will be of a limited size and will rely on a network of both users and suppliers of knowledge at the national and regional levels, particularly the ReSAKSS-WA node, the existing national centres of expertise, and the technical organs of existing professional organisations in the country. The most important operations to be carried out within the unit are: (i) the coordination of the collaborative and network framework to mobilise the available expertise in order to generate targeted knowledge products to support implementation of the PRS/FAPS agenda as defined above; and (ii) the packaging, accessible storage, and dissemination of such products.

The Liberia SAKSS node will not operate in a vacuum. Recently several surveys and studies on agriculture and food security were carried out by the ministry of agriculture in collaboration with a number of international agencies. The SAKSS node will collaborate with these agencies and organize similar activities. It will also work closely with the Liberia Institute for Statistics and Geo-Information Services (LISGIS) to ensure that the new National Strategy for the Development of Statistics has a detailed agriculture component. These planned collaborative activities will contribute to review and dialogue mechanisms to support the successful implementation of the PRS/FAPS agenda. The Central Agricultural Research Institute (CARI) is best placed to be the secretariat of the SAKSS node because

it has the government mandate to carry out agriculture research in the country and already has on-going collaborations with relevant national and international research institutions. In addition, it will also benefit from capacity building activities under CAADP.

The Relationship between the ReSAKSS and Liberia SAKSS Nodes

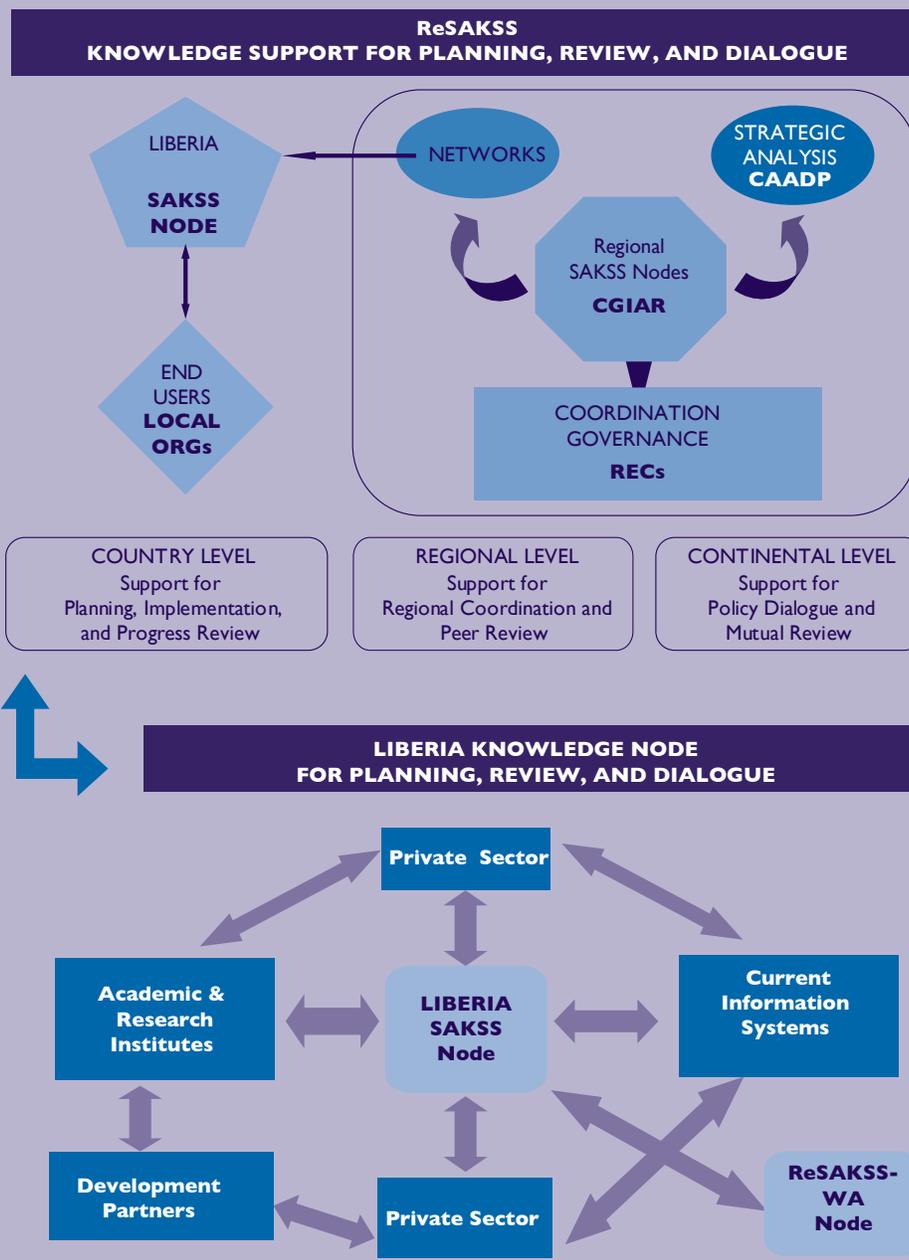
The diagram below illustrates the structures of and relationships between the regional and country SAKSS nodes. The ReSAKSS node, which operates under the coordination of the respective REC (in this case, ECOWAS) and with technical assistance from the CGIAR (in this case, IITA), focuses on generating strategic analysis and information to guide the CAADP agenda in the region. It collaborates with sub-regional research organisations and uses their networks to mobilise expertise and generate the required knowledge products. The ReSAKSS also provides assistance to country nodes and helps foster collaboration and exchange among the various nodes in the region.

In general, the country nodes operate under the coordination and technical support of the government and of research institutions that are involved in the design and implementation of policies and strategies linked to the CAADP agenda as well as in the creation of knowledge and other information to support these policies and strategies. At the forefront of these institutions are the National Agricultural Research Systems (NARs), universities, statistics offices, the technical arms of professional organizations, and other relevant research entities. The country nodes do not just cater to the needs of national institutions and stakeholders, but also serve the needs of local organisations and administrations.

The Liberia SAKSS node is not an institution, but rather a mechanism by which to bring together the users and generators of knowledge by working with existing institutions and individuals within Liberia, as well as by establishing links with the ReSAKSS node and international partners. A small secretariat composed of a coordinator and two or three technical staff will be sufficient to run the node, which will rely on people from other institutions in the country to satisfy the large demand for knowledge products. The bottom part of the diagram shows a schematic representation of the links between the Liberia SAKSS node and various stakeholders in the country.

The L-shaped arrow on the left symbolises the link between the Liberia SAKSS node and the ReSAKSS node. The ultimate goal of both is to complement each other in supporting the review and planning processes mentioned in the middle of the diagram and described earlier in the text.

Figure 1 – Relationship between CAADP, PRS and FAPS



Based on modeling conducted by ReSAKSS-West Africa in collaboration with experts from Liberia and financial and technical assistance from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the African Union Commission (AUC), the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), USAID (United States Agency for International Development), SIDA (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency), GTZ (German Agency for Technical Cooperation) and International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA).

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