



SUB-REGIONAL OFFICE FOR EASTERN AFRICA (SRO-EA)

ISSUES PAPER

ENHANCING FOOD SECURITY IN THE EASTERN AFRICAN SUB-REGION

INTRODUCTION

As highlighted by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)¹, *the 2008 food price crisis and global warming have brought food security and climate change to the top of the international agenda*. This is even truer in the world worst hit region: the Eastern African sub-region, where all countries have recognized food insecurity as a priority and vital issue to be addressed if a brighter future was to be offered to new generations.

Despite the aim to cut hunger by half by 2015 under the *Millennium Development Goals* (MDGs), an increased number of poor still suffer from hunger, malnutrition and food shortages in Eastern Africa. The situation has been exacerbated by poor crop yields in 2009 due to low precipitations and highly variable season patterns, soil erosion, scarcity of water resources, insufficient rainwater harvesting as well as conflicts and displacement of people. Local populations are losing their resilience to shocks and lack alternative livelihoods. FAO estimates that around 20 million people depend on food assistance in the sub-region.

Existing trends in food insecurity are jeopardizing poverty alleviation related efforts and are at the origin of most social unrest, conflicts and political instability in the sub-region. Food security encompasses such a high number of diverse and complex factors that it often appears as a huge Pandora's box endlessly sprouting overwhelming challenges for small-scale farmers and policy-makers in the sub-region.

This paper represents an attempt to identify the issues and challenges confronting food security in Eastern Africa. This will not be exhaustive by any means and shall be complemented by other views which will be identified in the course of the meeting. A series of questions are also provided to facilitate discussions on the identified issues and challenges. The issues paper will complement the overview on the state of food security in Eastern Africa. An attempt has been made to offer policy options and strategies that could lead to an improvement of the food security situation in the sub-region. Participants will be invited to interrogate these suggestions and/or propose others that could lead to better outcomes. Ultimately this would lead to the meeting reaching an agreement on the framework for a Programme on Food Security in Eastern Africa.

Food insecurity is not a new issue. Since the apparition of humankind, search and production of food have been at the core of daily life, with a high level of vulnerability of people to unforeseen events such as wars, conflicts, the weather, earthquakes and other natural disasters, etc. resulting in periodic food crises.

Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) (764 million people in 2008) is the world's most food-insecure region. Half of the region's population was estimated to consume below the nutritional requirement of 2,100 calories per capita per day in 2008. (United States Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, Food Security Assessment 2008-2009)

¹ FAO, *Food Security and Agricultural Mitigation in Developing Countries: Options for Capturing Synergies*, October 2009.

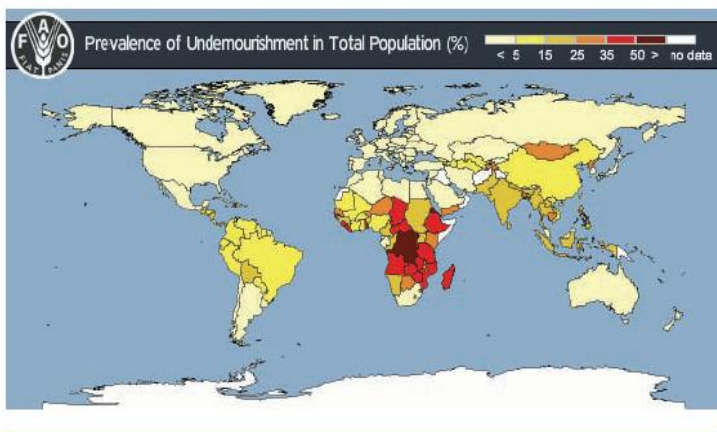
*“Food security as a concept originated only in the mid-1970s, in the discussions of international food problems at a time of global food crisis. The initial focus of attention was primarily on food supply problems - of assuring the availability and to some degree the price stability of basic foodstuffs at the international and national level. That supply-side, international and institutional set of concerns reflected the changing organization of the global food economy that had precipitated the crisis. A process of international negotiation followed, leading to the World Food Conference of 1974, and a new set of institutional arrangements covering information, resources for promoting food security and forums for dialogue on policy issues. The issues of famine, hunger and food crisis were also being extensively examined, following the events of the mid 1970s. The outcome was a redefinition of food security, which recognized that the behaviour of potentially vulnerable and affected people was a critical aspect. A third, perhaps crucially important, factor in modifying views of food security was the evidence that the technical successes of the Green Revolution did not automatically and rapidly lead to dramatic reductions in poverty and levels of malnutrition. These problems were recognized as the result of lack of effective demand (J. Shaw, *World Food Security: A history since 1945* (2007, Palgrave Macmillan).”*

DEFINITIONS

FAO states in 1996 that “*food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life*”. This definition relates to the principle that everyone has a right to adequate food, to be free from hunger, and to enjoy general human dignity, enshrined in the International Bill of Human Rights (ECOSOC 1999). The definition also makes it clear that food production does not equal food security. In this context, hunger is an outcome of food insecurity. This definition evolved from the initial one under the influence of world renowned economists such as Amartya Sen for whom the problem was not so much lack of food but of poor people’s access to it. As an example, the success of the Green revolution, which started in India did not always lead to a significant reduction of poverty and malnutrition because of a lack of demand.

This definition leads us to the *Myth of Scarcity* in Africa. Reports about failing agriculture and growing dependence on imports and food aid often tend to give a misleading picture of limited resources as one root cause to the situation. In fact, Africa has enormous still unexploited potential to grow food, with theoretical grain yields 25 to 35% higher than maximum potential yields in Europe or North America, and with still ample arable land to be used (*Food First, Institute for Food and Development Policy*). Nevertheless, the food crisis remains real and acute for Sub-Saharan Africa as evidenced by the highest malnutrition rates in the world (see figure 1)

Figure 1: FAO World Hunger Map (2009)



In the 60s, Eastern Africa countries used to produce most of their food requirements and large quantities of agricultural export commodities but in the last three decades all has changed; the performance of the sector declined giving way to poverty and food insecurity. Food insecurity is most acute in urban areas while poverty is mainly a rural phenomenon with more than 80 percent of the poor residing in rural areas.

Therefore, the question which comes to mind is then why this is happening?. What have been the constraints and challenges that have prevented countries from keeping their population safe from food insecurity, hunger and malnutrition? (described in the first part of the paper on “Key Constraints and Challenges”). Is there anything –in terms of strategies, mechanisms, resources and modalities- we can do as one single community of stakeholders to address these constraints and challenges at all levels? (discussed in the second part of the paper on “From Food for Thought to Food Security”).

KEY CONSTRAINTS AND CHALLENGES

Though declining in the rest of the world, population growth in the next decades will still continue to soar in Eastern Africa representing an overwhelming pressure on natural resources. Agriculture, livestock and fisheries are the major economic sectors for countries in the sub-region as well as the sole livelihoods for their population. However, numerous constraints including low investment in agriculture, price fluctuations and recurrent extreme weather events among others compromise the farmers’ capacity of supplying an increasing food demand.

Constraints and challenges to food security in Eastern Africa can be grouped into three institutional, financial and technical blocks that constitute an inseparable trio. Indeed, they are closely inter-linked and cannot really be dissociated. They are discussed in detail in the section below. Lack of prioritization associated to insufficient funding and absence of genuine political will at all levels complicate the situation. An overview of essential constraints and challenges at national, sub-regional and global levels will be provided in this section. The section will also include key questions to be discussed by participants.

Policy and institutional weaknesses: undercapitalization of agriculture, livestock and fisheries and technological stagnation

Despite agriculture accounting for 70% of the labor force in the Eastern African sub-region, it continues to be given low priority, with a decreasing participation into GDPs over the last three decades (see Table 1).

FAO’s State of Food Insecurity report (2002) refers to four elements of food security: “*food availability, food accessibility, food utilization and food system stability. Availability focuses on food production whereas accessibility focuses on the ability of people to obtain food, either through production, purchase or transfers. Food utilization focuses on the nutritional value of food, the interaction with physiological condition and food safety. Food system stability focuses on stability of supply and access, as well as the ability to respond to food emergencies*”.

Poor political and economic governance are twin root causes of much of the malaise that afflicts Africa... In the specific case of agriculture and rural development (broadly defined), improvements are sorely needed to adapt to changing market conditions and food security priorities (NEPAD, *Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development (CAADP)*, 2002).

However, most often one of the principal institutional root causes put forward for poor performance in terms of development of agriculture, livestock and fisheries sectors is a highly detrimental understaffing in ministries and institutions.

Table 1: Share of agriculture in GDP by REC (percentage)

RECS	1979-81	1989-91	1999-01	2002-04
EAC	47.2	41.1	36.5	34.6
IGAD	48.4	39.2	33.1	28.7

Source: UNECA 2007

This represents a paradox when it is known that investment in agriculture has multiplier effects of that can generate high economic and social returns and enhance economic diversification as well as social development. Low investment, poor infrastructure, lack of funding for agricultural research, insufficient use of yield-enhancing technologies, weak linkages between agriculture and other key productive sectors, and unfavorable policy and regulatory environments continue to characterize national policy interventions in the fields of agriculture, livestock and fisheries.

Public resources, including research and agricultural credit, have been channeled to export crops in expense of traditional crops such as millet, sorghum, and root crops. In the 1980s, pressure to increase exports with a view to generating revenue, paying interest on foreign debt further reinforced this imbalance. Pastoralists and fishermen have been even more marginalized even though they represent the main source of livelihoods in several countries of the IGAD region. Pastoralist communities continue to face challenges related to poor marketing facilities, drought spells and search of pastures as well as disease outbreaks.

Africa has extensive marine fisheries that are exploited mostly by foreign commercial fleets most of the time in an unsustainable way. These industries constitute enclaves that have very little linkages with the local economy. The policy environment and institutional framework to facilitate the participation of local entrepreneurs in large-scale fishing is not conducive.

The small-scale fisheries sector faces similar constraints. Depletion of stocks, lack of financial, environmental degradation compound the problem. The case of aquaculture is particularly telling. *Aquaculture development in Africa has lagged behind. It currently produces less than 5% of Africa's fish. Over the past decade, however, growing demand, the availability of suitable technologies and growing capacity has produced aquaculture success stories in several countries. In Uganda production grew at an average of around 142% annually between 2004 and 2006².*

² WorldFish Centre, *Fish Supply and Food Security for Africa*, 2009.

Budgetary allocation to the agriculture and rural sector in countries of the sub-region is around 3% with the exception of Ethiopia which in last few years stepped up its financial allocation. For most countries, budgetary allocations have remained very low compared to the green revolution times in Asia when most countries spent between 11 and 14% of the budget on agriculture in addition to a lot more support from international community. Inadequate budgetary allocations have continued even after the declaration by the African Heads of States and Government in Maputo, in 2003, that the sector be allocated at least 10 percent of national budget resources. Surprisingly, in some countries allocations have nose-dived.

Agriculture research and extension services are insufficient due to low government funding which shifts resources among staff and programmes impacting on the performance of national agriculture research systems. *The private sector plays an exceptionally small role in funding agricultural research in Africa. This is not likely to change soon because the potential profits from conducting research on important crops in Africa are not sufficiently high to attract the interest of either domestic or international private firms. In industrial countries, private enterprises fund over 50 percent of agricultural research*³.

Importation of technology is made difficult by tariff and non-tariff barriers such as quarantine which prevent most countries in the sub-region from benefitting from knowledge and technological development. However, some countries have decided to further invest in research.

Agricultural processing is limited by lack of capital and credit, lack of appropriate technology, inadequate information, marketing and other externalities that make private investment in agro-industries generally less profitable in the short run.

Soil nutrient depletion has become a very big problem in terms of soil fertility in Eastern Africa as indicated by the study of the International Centre for Soil Fertility and Agricultural development (IFDC)⁴. Countries in the sub-region top the list of countries which have lost large amounts of nitrogen, phosphates and potassium. The gap is very big between Egypt, which has lost 9 kg while Burundi and Rwanda have lost 77 kg and Uganda 66 kg. Soil erosion and leaching are the major causes of soil fertility loss in Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi. The potential of yield-enhancing practices such as use of fertilizers, pesticides, rainwater harvesting in those countries with high precipitation rates such as Rwanda and irrigation have been insufficiently implemented.

IGAD ranks very low in terms of irrigated land in comparison with other regions in Africa (only 6.3% of cropland is irrigated). Fertilizer consumption (10,720

“The business activities that follow when commodities cross national borders are largely disregarded. The consequence is that African food and agricultural markets are extremely fragmented along regional, national and even local lines. This often results in segmented markets of sub-optimal size, which does not encourage sizeable private investments in the different stages of the commodity chain (FAO, 2007). In addition, African agribusinesses have had to compete under unfavourable terms with lead firms in global agricultural markets. The lead firms that set the “rules of the game” in the global agricultural market, mostly due to their ability to create powerful brand names and enforce standards, are usually based in developed countries”. (UNECA, ERA 2009)

³ NEPAD, *Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development (CAADP)*, 2002

⁴ IFDC, *Agricultural production and Soil Nutrient Mining in Africa; implications for resource Conservation and policy Development*, March 2006

In Uganda, despite growing demand, production response is low for various reasons. The primary factor underlying low productivity is land fragmentation – food production is dominated by smallholders with 1–2 hectares of land. These producers do not have access to credit markets and cannot afford fertilizer or high quality seed varieties. This situation has led to a decline in both land fertility and crop quality. Moreover, the food market (with the exception of sugar) is fully liberalized, meaning that there are no input or production subsidies and no tariffs on exports and imports. Government expenditures on agriculture accounted for about 1.5 percent of total expenditures in 2006 and 2007. With no farm organizations to enhance producers' bargaining power, cash-strapped farmers tend to sell their crops soon after harvest rather than store their crop and wait for higher prices (FAO, *The State of Food Insecurity in the World, 2009*).

This situation in Uganda well summarizes the type of constraints that can emerge and lead to food insecurity. However, reading this paragraph, some experts will argue that food shortage is not only a question of productivity but also a question of access to markets and resilience to shocks. Drivers of food insecurity can be indeed multi-faceted and lead to different perspectives and therefore different ways to address challenges.

g/ha of arable land) and agriculture machinery (11.8 tractors/100 km² of arable land) also rank very low in the IGAD region (UNECA 2009).

Land productivity is low and labour productivity is also very low. This is also linked to low access to credit by the farmers for buying inputs and enabling policies for wide distribution of fertilizers. The use of fertilisers is generally low due to low levels of awareness, high cost and non-availability of fertilisers which was exacerbated by structural adjustment reforms resulting into governments withdrawing from marketing of most agricultural inputs and providing subsidies.

The development and diffusion of GMOs is growing very rapidly internationally and some activities are already taking place within Eastern Africa but the sub-region has not come up with concrete framework with policies and guidelines.

In Eastern Africa, we find the source of River Nile, the world's longest river which crosses ten countries, eight of which belong to the SRO-EA sub-region (Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda); and several fresh water lakes including Lake Victoria, the second biggest fresh water lake in the world and the biggest in Africa. Notwithstanding this abundance of water, rainwater harvesting is still very rare and irrigation has not been given enough importance.

Question for discussion: → How can Eastern Africa overcome the policy and institutional constraints that affect the sub-region's capacity to be food secure?

Inadequate land tenure systems and gender inequality, land degradation and unsustainable land management

"Land is becoming an increasingly globalised commodity, fuelled by rising demand for food and agrofuels, for minerals, for tourism, and for ecosystem services including carbon sequestration. Resource-poor land users are facing increased competition for land with other land users, national elites and global investors"⁵.

Land is central to sustainable development since it is an economic resource – it confers power, both political and society-wise as well as

⁵ ILC, *Increasing commercial pressure on land: Building a coordinated response*, 2009 (www.landcoalition.org)

wealth. Property rights regimes typically address four types of land rights: the right to use it; the right to manage and transform it; the right to transfer one's rights; and the right to own it. In Eastern Africa, land tenure and policy reforms that have been implemented so far have largely been inadequate and have been fraught with poorly defined property rights. Insecure land tenure systems have led to unequal control over land and inequitable access to land resources fuelling tensions between land user groups as well as severe conflicts over different land uses thus constraining farmer innovation and investment in agriculture, and access to land by pastoralists. This situation aggravates poverty through serious impacts upon food security, environmental sustainability and social security.

Gender inequality with respect to land and property rights has been entrenched by most land laws conferring land titles and inheritance rights upon male family members only with females being dependants; a situation which has played out unfavourably to agricultural productivity and food security. Women are also discriminated in predominantly patriarchal systems in terms of education translating into poor nutritional status of families, insufficient skills in land husbandry and low access to credit. As a result women, have been denied the necessary skills and tools and have no decision making powers on farms despite tilling the land. This situation has been exacerbated by often poor health status and impacts of HIV/AIDS. That is the reason why, though being responsible for producing almost 80% of the food in the sub-region, women are the first victims of food insecurity.

Land degradation from unsustainable agriculture practices, deforestation and overgrazing has reached alarming levels and about 50 percent of the farmland suffers soil erosion and up to 80 percent of rangelands are degraded in some way due to use beyond their carrying capacity. As land fails to satisfy vital needs, land use conflicts between resources and between herders and sedentary farmers are more frequent.

In addition, sustainable land management (SLM) is facing several challenges including insufficient enabling policy environment for further investment and scaling-up of success stories and community efforts; weak capacity at institutional level; and insufficient partnerships.

Another emerging key constraint is related to the increasing commercial pressure on land. As covered by the press, the case of South Korea leasing for 99 years half of the arable land in Madagascar led to a popular uproar and political instability (the Daewoo Deal finally collapsed). In other cases, where the investor country is a neighbor and faces a detrimental situation for agriculture development, it would seem easier to justify the purchase of land on smaller surfaces (to secure regular food supply) in those

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) defines mitigation of climate change as a human intervention to reduce the *sources* or enhance the *sinks* of *greenhouse gases* and adaptation to climate change as adjustment in natural or *human systems* in response to actual or expected climatic stimuli or their effects, which moderates harm or exploits beneficial opportunities.

"Many agricultural mitigation options, particularly those that involve soil carbon (C) sequestration (which is 89 % of the technical mitigation potential of agriculture), also benefit adaptation, food security and development, referred to as co-benefits. These options involve increasing the levels of soil organic matter, of which carbon is the main component...However, some of these options involve difficult trade-offs, with benefits for mitigation but negative consequences for food security and/or development. For example, biofuel production provides a clean alternative to fossil fuel but can displace or compete for land and water resources needed for food production. Restoration of organic soils enables greater sequestration of carbon in soil, but may reduce the amount of land available for food production. Restoration of rangelands may improve carbon sequestration but involves short term reductions in herder incomes by limiting the number of livestock. Some trade-offs can be managed through measures to increase efficiency or through payment of incentives/compensation. Other options may benefit food security or agricultural development but not mitigation". (FAO, Food Security and Agricultural Mitigation in Developing Countries: Options for Capturing Synergies, October 2009)

The IPCC estimates that there will be 150 million environmental refugees by 2050. At present there is no international law to protect their rights. The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) recognizes Small Island Developing States (SIDS), Africa and the Least Developed Countries as being particularly vulnerable and the IPCC confirmed that the majority of climate refugees will come from these regions.

Bio-energy constitutes a further challenge to the agricultural sector, representing the largest source of new demand for agricultural commodities in recent years. Production of biofuels, particularly ethanol and bio-diesel for use in the transport sector, has tripled since 2000 and is projected to double again within the next decade. Fischer et al. (2007) find that expansion of first generation biofuels is likely to continue to compete with food production for land and water resources, with potentially significant negative impacts on food insecurity. However, second generation biofuel development could decrease competition for arable land use from biofuels, indicating the importance of research and development in this area (Fischer et al. 2007; Kahn and Zaks 2009), (FAO, Food Security and Agricultural Mitigation in Developing Countries: Options for Capturing Synergies, October 2009).

countries which can afford it without affecting their own production. However, the problem is complex and cost-benefit analyses are needed to arrive at a best possible outcome. The topic would deserve a renewed attention in light with the recent food price and financial crisis.

Questions for discussion: →What are the success stories in developing new land policy frameworks and implementing SLM? →What can we learn from the Kenyan case study? →How have conflicts at the interface between different stakeholders and land uses (farming, grazing, ranches, protected areas, etc.) and commercial pressure been addressed?

Impacts of climate change and climate refugees, food production vs. biofuels

Eastern Africa, like most other parts of Africa and people are suffering from the effects of climate change, although Africa's contribution to greenhouse gas emissions is minuscule (3.8 %). A warmer climate is bringing intensive destructive and erratic rains; and island states and coastal areas are threatened with the likelihood of being submerged. Floods and droughts alternate in causing havoc in Eastern Africa, destroying crops, livestock and property while famine and starvation ravage the population. Deserts are slowly expanding into fragile pastoral lands; water levels in rivers, lakes, wetlands and other water bodies are falling and in some cases, the very existence of these resources is threatened. The year 2008/9 was particularly harsh. Drought affected most parts of the Horn of Africa as well as Eastern and Northern Uganda, and Kenya. This led to poor harvests and destruction of crops (maize production -80% of total production- was 28% lower than normal in Kenya in 2009). The effects of El Niño, which have been bringing heavy rains since the end of 2009, are making matters worse, resulting in floods and mudslides, destroying crops both in the field and in stores, increasing livestock losses and damaging infrastructure and housing.

To aggravate matters, most farmers, livestock herders and fishermen in the sub-region do not hold any insurance scheme to save them in times of need. Poor market and storage facilities as well as inappropriate infrastructure such as roads worsen their situation in case of extreme weather events and often make them lose their sole livelihoods and source of food.

With a view to preventing and addressing climate change impacts, most of the countries in the sub-region have formulated their National Communications" on climate change (inventory of climate data and recommendations) as well as their National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPAs). They are also designing Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMAs) in response to the outcomes of climate change negotiations. Agriculture mitigation activities would represent ideal NAMAs with strong adaptation benefits and enhanced food security.

Development in the bio-fuel sub-sector provides both opportunities and challenges to sustainable agricultural development and food security in Africa. Increases in production in response to high oil prices means substantial income for farmers, but the sustainability of this income could be highly uncertain in view of the extreme volatility of oil prices. Furthermore, increased bio-fuel production often means reduced production and supply of food crops. Governments and farmers often face a tough choice in terms of adopting one or the other option and require expertise and advice to inform their final decision.

Questions for discussion: ->To which extent, have the different line Ministries including the Ministry of Environment been discussing together potential trade-offs related to sustainable agriculture management and livestock/fisheries planning, sustainable land management, mitigation/adaptation to climate change, and impacts on poverty alleviation? →What are the main constraints faced by all key stakeholders in such a dialogue? →Which contributions could post-Copenhagen discussions bring to the debate?

Inadequate access to domestic and international markets as well as capital and infrastructure, and commodity price fluctuations

East Africa is the dominant consumer of cassava (46 %), beans (38 %), and freshwater fish (44 %). Although large quantities of food requirements are produced locally, imports of cereals have escalated - a worrying trend since most of these countries can ill afford spending the scarce foreign exchange on food imports and the practice would make it difficult to accomplish national food security strategies. Domestic markets are sparse and dispersed and disposable incomes are insufficient to create a perennial demand. Many small farmers would like to take advantage of the new income-generating opportunities presented by high-value products (meat, milk, vegetables, fruits, flowers), but countries have difficulties in producing in the required quality and quantity levels to penetrate international markets. In addition, they face unfair competition from subsidized large-scale producers. Furthermore, smallholders have little access to credit facilities to enhance production and productivity and invest in their land in terms of inputs and quality seeds.

For pastoralists, lack of adequate pasture has worsened livestock conditions and reduced market prospects, impacting their incomes and ability to access staple foods. Moreover, reproduction rates of livestock have suffered from successive poor seasonal rains since 2007, making the recovery of the pastoral livelihood systems more difficult and worsening

“Over time, agricultural trade policies evolved in ways that differed radically from those applied for manufactured goods. The changes were marked by a host of domestic and export subsidies including non-tariff barriers such as variable levies, minimum import prices, voluntary export restraints and quantitative import quotas. These policies have increasingly become a source of international friction. For example, many developed countries have used domestic agricultural subsidies to guarantee farmers an “adequate” income. These subsidies stimulate production far beyond the capacity that their domestic markets can absorb generating surpluses that are purchased and held by governments in developed countries. Some governments then use export subsidies to sell the resulting surpluses on world markets. The surpluses on world markets undercut the developing world’s competition by depressing prices by up to 12%. It is these prices that undermine unprotected farmers from developing countries and make it impossible for their products to compete with those from the developed countries (Tupy, 2004) (Doreen Alusa, Regional Integration and Food Security in East Africa, 2004).

At international level, as overall support is reduced and overall import barriers come down or preferences are widely granted, the formal barriers to trade – duties, quotas, licensing– will have an increasingly minor role to play in trade prevention. In the EU, the Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) (the EU wanted to finalize EPAs with all Africa-Caribbean-Pacific (ACP) countries meeting the World Trade organization (WTO) but negotiations have been very difficult due to divergence of interests between African LDCs and non-LDCs states) and requirements will erode the Everything But Arms (EBA) –which is the most liberal unilateral trade regime available to African LDCs- preferences for LDCs and, to a lesser and slower degree, Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) reform will erode preferences for all ACP countries. Thus, trade preferences, while important for maintaining existing trade, are not for the most part major trade boosters (Common Fund for Commodities, UNCCD, FAO, African Drylands Commodity Atlas, 2009).

The *Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP)*, which provides the NEPAD Framework for Agriculture Development at national level, revolves around four main pillars:

Pillar 1: Land and Water Management

Pillar 2: Market access

Pillar 3: Food supply and hunger

Pillar 4: Agriculture research

“A major concern with the CAADP process is that it faces information gaps as well as coordination weaknesses at continental, regional and national levels (Gerecke 2006). In addition, the CAADP pillars, which ought to be mutually reinforcing, have not been implemented in a coordinated manner, because the policy clusters coordinating activities under the various pillars are convened separately” (UNECA, Economic Report on Africa (ERA) 2009).

A paper written by several centres of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) and published in 2010, Smart Investments in Sustainable Food Production: Revisiting Mixed Crop-Livestock Systems, “argues that the world’s small-scale mixed crop-and-livestock farmers are the farmers feeding most of the world’s poor today, are the farmers likely to feed most of the world’s growing poor populations tomorrow, and are the farmers most neglected by current investments and policies worldwide. The ‘relatively extensive’ mixed crop-livestock farming systems – located in most tropical developing regions of the world between intensively farmed fertile highlands and semi-arid low rangelands – could be the future breadbaskets of the developing world.” (www.ilri.org)

long-term food insecurity. Forced migrations in search of water supplies and pasture have worsened livestock conditions, increased disease outbreaks and exacerbated resource-based conflicts among pastoralists.

Small-scale farmers in developing countries desperately need real investments not only in agriculture itself, but also in the institutions and infrastructure that underpin healthy agricultural economies (IPFRI). This includes not only roads but also road/rail transport, telecommunications, power, ports, shipping and transit facilities as well as storage facilities, which are necessary for making food reserves that will prove vital in case of natural disaster or extreme weather event. Where storage warehouses exist (e.g. Kenya) they are on occasions empty or half-empty due to difficult access, poor information channels and inadequate management. This points to the fact that in addition to hard infrastructure, agriculture systems in Africa require also investments in soft infrastructure, including management systems.

Unpredictable prices are among the farmer’s greatest enemies. As food prices continue to fluctuate, threatening the livelihoods of many poor people, some observers have pointed a finger at speculation as a culprit. Slow-growing supply, low stocks, and supply shocks at a time of surging demand for feed, food, and fuel have led to drastic price increases. Speculative behaviour such as food hoarding also has been on the upswing in other areas of the world food economy. Across Eastern Africa, prices of maize, a major staple, have shown a declining trend since the beginning of the year, but remain higher than they were two years ago. In Uganda and Kenya, for instance, prices of maize in June 2009 were almost double their level 24 months earlier.

In short, *the major constraints to agro-industrial development in Eastern Africa are fragmented markets, poor infrastructure and technology dissemination, and weak institutional and policy frameworks governing agricultural development. The agricultural sectors of most countries are barely integrated into regional and international markets, yet all agricultural systems are linked to one another through the flow of goods and services. Agricultural market development has been pursued according to national priorities, including the promotion of national agro-processing industries and export markets⁶.*

Questions for discussion: What have been the experiences of countries in going through prices fluctuations, pressure of subsidies and lack of widespread micro-credit facilities, markets and infrastructure? What are the main challenges that prevent the countries from widely establishing micro-credit facilities using new technologies? What needs to be done?

Poor harmonization of agricultural, livestock and fisheries initiatives at national, sub-regional and continental levels

Most of the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and Inter-Governmental Organizations (IGOs) in Eastern Africa including the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the East African Community (EAC) and the Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries (CEPGL) have developed strategies and projects aimed to enhance sustainable agriculture development and natural resources management as a way to increase food security of vulnerable populations.

The ICGLR projects include a Regional Food Security Project revolving around three main components related to agriculture, livestock and fisheries development. With the assistance of ECA, IGAD developed a Minimum Integration Plan (MIP) highlighting challenges and proposals related to priority sectors such as food security and natural resources management. Developing a regional framework on agriculture, natural resources, food security and environment is a key pillar of IGAD strategy to support national efforts on development issues and to promote regional integration. The MIP is expected to provide IGAD with tools to assist and complement the efforts of the Member States to achieve, through increased cooperation, food security and environmental protection.

EAC has developed an action plan to address food security related issues in the member States. It was approved by the Sectoral Council on Agriculture and Food Security held on 14-18 September in Arusha, Tanzania. The plan of a duration of twenty years (2010-2030) revolves around the following pillars: (i) Provision of an enabling policy, legal and institutional framework; (ii) Increase food availability in sufficient quantity and quality; (iii) Improved access to food; (iv) Improve food stability in the EAC region; (v) Promote food utilization; (vi) Implementation strategy and monitoring; and (vii) Resource mobilization.

Summary of conclusions of discussions held at the Partners' Workshop on the Programme on Food Security of Eastern Africa (Bujumbura, Burundi, 14-15 September 2009)

(i) Food security is a national security issue and encompasses all sectors (agriculture, livestock and fisheries). It is important to identify the target beneficiaries (vulnerable groups, etc.) and understand why they have become vulnerable.

(ii) The national compacts developed within the framework of CAADP are national strategies and represent entry points for developing sub-regional initiatives. Special reference to CAADP Pillar 3 on food supply and hunger needs to be considered. Assessments already carried out nationally will help to capitalize on the knowledge and identify the programme components.

(iii) The requirements for the sustainability of an efficient agricultural system should refer to the concept of food stability that can be translated secured food reserves (French meaning). Food stability can also refer to the issue of quality and safety of available food (English meaning).

(iv) Food security is a corollary of the issue of national security. Each country is free to decide on the quantity of food reserves and the life cycle of these reserves may vary from one country to another. The question that is raised is that of food reserves at the sub-regional level, can this be implemented? And will this have impacts at national level?

(v) The right to food must be considered.

(vi) An extension and technical education system for rural areas should be promoted by the public sector.

(vii) All food security programmes should include a monitoring and evaluation system that will contribute to information and knowledge sharing.

“In 2008, the right to adequate food was recognized as a fundamental component of a sustainable solution to the world food-security crisis caused by high food prices. The reasons are twofold. On the one hand, the crisis is proportionately affected those who were already vulnerable, typically people who spend large proportions of their income on food. On the other hand, there was wide recognition that, when it came to responding to the crisis, the “business-as-usual” approach would not work....

Traditional approaches, which dealt with the technical dimensions of food insecurity in terms of both their emergency and structural aspects, needed to be complemented with an additional dimension focusing on the promotion of the right to adequate food and the reform of both global and national food-security governance and financial crises”. (WFP, FAO, The State of Food Insecurity in the World (2009))

The revived programme on agriculture and food security of CEPGL aims to improve food balance and security in member States and increase agriculture trade. Several projects related to supply of high-yield seeds and inputs, livestock breeding, agriculture mechanization, storage facilities for agriculture products, etc. have been planned as part of the implementation of the revived programme. The planned projects will be finalized and executed through a collaboration framework with the CEPGL-based Institute of Agronomic and Zootechnic Research (IRAZ).

The initiatives listed earlier share similar objectives and have strong commonalities. Notwithstanding, inter RECs/IGOs collaboration is limited. This can potentially lead to duplication of efforts, overlapping of mandates and increase in the transaction costs to those member States which are members of several of these RECs/IGOS. In addition, some RECs/IGOs are understaffed and underfunded, which hampers capacity to implement their work programmes.

Mainstreaming regional integration into national policy, legal and regulatory frameworks remains a serious challenge. In particular, countries have difficulties in quantifying the costs and benefits of their integration in regional blocks. Equally, regional integration frameworks (e.g. the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme of NEPAD (CAADP)), targets and convergency criteria are not easily met by national institutions or, in worst cases, there is no awareness about their existence. This can lead to cases in which national policy frameworks are in contradiction with regional frameworks particularly in the case of land policies and/or environmental and forestry codes.

Questions for discussion: → To which extent the number of RECs/IGOs in Eastern Africa supports or not the food security agenda? →What are the main problems experienced by countries in mainstreaming sub-regional strategies in national frameworks (is it only a funding issue)? →What are the main shortcomings -if any- of existing planning frameworks related to agriculture, livestock and fisheries at sub-regional and national levels?

Other challenges

Among the key challenges that would deserve debate, food aid is an essential one. As noted, food assistance is increasing and will keep upwards. Will this lead to further dependence from the beneficiaries’ side? Is ‘food for work’ a way to go? Ideally, if the countries reach food security and food aid would intervene only in case of emergency (what it was initially aimed for), what will be the implications in terms of food exchange at sub-regional and international levels?

Discussion of environmental security is equally important in the context of the strong correlation that exists between food security and environmental changes due to conflicts. How to increase the participation of the private sector, CSOs and farmers in securing food in Eastern Africa remains also a key issue for debate.

FROM FOOD FOR THOUGHT TO FOOD SECURITY

Food insecurity can be caused by many and diverse factors that tend to overwhelm affected people and communities as well as policy-makers at the time of calling for remedies and implementing them. The world is changing fast, getting globalized and imposing a certain pattern of development, which is often oblivious of social and ecological dimension of its impacts on vulnerable communities. Excesses from this development model combined with rising demand for natural resources including land and water and high financial speculation in some parts of the world have very recently led to the most acute global financial and food crises resulting in dramatic repercussions for the poorest. Therefore, tackling food security along consensual ways and means will have to be considered in the context of a paradigm shift towards a 'new development model' that will support in a more appropriate way the overall process and respond to the expectations of all. The Eastern African sub-region and its member States are very well positioned to experiment innovation and propose a new thinking model, through learning from mistakes and success stories from other regions of the continent and the world.

A vibrant agricultural sector is very important for Eastern Africa as it is the bedrock of most economies and practically all the food is grown locally, except in some island and desert countries; a developed agricultural sector is a pre-requisite for poverty reduction, increased economic development, political stability and social harmony. This involves overcoming institutional rigidities and ensuring coherence of macro-economic frameworks. Policy, regulatory and institutional shifts are required to enable a structural transformation of the agriculture system along value chain, i.e. from production to markets. New capacities in both the public and private sectors are required; this calls for priority investments in human and social capital.

As indicated in the introduction and first part of this paper, food security is a very complex issue and it would be a daunting task indeed to address it in an exhaustive way. The first part focused on those key points which would need to be tackled in the short-term. The answers provided by the participants to the questions raised will help shape responses on the two following themes: (1) A way forward to implement regional value chains; and (2) An approach to address policy and programme overlaps at sub-regional level.

The CAADP vision for agriculture is that the continent should, by 2015:

- Attain food security (in terms of both availability and affordability and ensuring access of the poor to adequate food and nutrition);
- Improve the productivity of agriculture to attain an average annual growth rate of 6 percent, with particular attention to small-scale farmers, especially focusing on women;
- Have dynamic agricultural markets between nations and regions;
- Have integrated farmers into the market economy, including better access to markets, with Africa to become a net exporter of agricultural products;
- Achieve the more equitable distribution of wealth;
- Be a strategic player in agricultural science and technology development; and
- Practice environmentally sound production methods and have a culture of sustainable management of the natural resource base (including biological resources for food and agriculture) to avoid their degradation.

CAADP AND THE WAY FORWARD

The most important actions at this stage should focus on advancing the implementation process on the ground by accelerating the alignment of strategies and scaling up investments. Action is required at three levels:

- Regional and national strategy alignment and investment programs. Two sets of actions are to be considered: completion of all country round tables, adoption of country CAADP compacts, and initiation of implementation of all sector policy, budgetary, and investment programs.
- Partnership and Alliance Building at the Level of Individual Pillars. A good indicator of progress would be the launching of important partnership programs involving the private sector and facilitating collective action towards better management of food emergency crises.
- Policy dialogue and Review to ensure successful implementation. The next steps includes the establishment and satisfactory operation of all review, dialogue, and knowledge mechanisms at all levels at the continental, regional, and country level, in particular the CAADP Partnership Platform and the monitoring and evaluation activities.

A value chain encompasses all integrated value-generating activities, sequential or otherwise, required to produce, deliver and dispose of a commodity (Schmitz, 2005). More specifically, it “describes the full range of activities which are required to bring a product or service from conception, through the different phases of production (involving a combination of physical transformations and the input of various producer services), to delivery to the final consumer and final disposal after use” (Kaplinsky and Morris, 2000). (UNECA, ERA 2009)

“Harnessing crucial linkages to the global market calls for a proactive approach to connect smallholder producers, who form the majority of farmers in Africa, to consumers, who may include processing firms, wholesalers, retailers or individuals at home and abroad....For African agriculture, especially smallholders and small- and medium-size enterprises (SMEs), increasing competitiveness is key to ensuring access to local, national, regional and international markets. This requires increasing efficiency, mainly to reduce costs of production, and adding value in order to offer quality products at competitive prices” (UNECA, ERA 2009)

Regional value chains or how to bridge the gap between food production and food security?

The section builds on and further elaborates on the findings of the UNECA *Economic Report on Africa 2009: Developing African Agriculture through Regional Value Chains*, which advocates for the adoption of the ‘value chain’ principle with a view to inducing a structural transformation of agriculture systems. The section highlights a series of interventions needed to ensure a successful implementation of regional value chains. In considering them, participants will have to pay attention at the different trade-offs and advise on the best policy options.

“Developing regional value chains for strategic agricultural commodities, especially those identified by the AU Food Security Summit in Abuja, is essential for African countries to enhance their agricultural transformation and global competitiveness (AU, 2006). This can be done in the context of the AU/NEPAD Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), which offers a platform for joint action by African governments, regional organizations, farmers, private agribusiness and development partners (UNECA, 2007).

However, the four pillars of CAADP - are necessary but not sufficient conditions for enhancing agricultural production and trade in Africa. In the context of increasingly globalized agricultural markets, African countries need to form strategic partnerships through regional value chains that enhance investment, trade, marketing and food security. Regional value chain development could also be one of the ways in which the CAADP process can be strengthened and implementation of core activities under CAADP pillars enhanced (UNECA 2009).

Regional markets also provide opportunities for upgrading and diversification that come with shared facilities such as distribution channels and technical facilities, and the transfer of skills around a cluster of related and mutually reinforcing business units. Regional markets are by themselves closed niches, which not only increase market access for producers, but also expand choice of commodities for consumers within the region. In addition, regional value chains could foster national and regional food security through the development and management of increased production, transport, storage and marketing of food crops.

Strategies for agricultural transformation need to be implemented in an economy-wide framework whereby productivity gains are accompanied by improvements in market conditions, taking into account the entire commodity value chain, from input acquisition to production, transformation, marketing and end use. Innovations along commodity value chains would be self-sustaining if agriculture forges inter-linkages with other sectors by taking advantage of reciprocal influences arising

from shared infrastructure, logistics and market corridors across national borders. This logic is consistent with the express desire by African countries to establish a common market for strategic agricultural commodities and to invest in supporting facilities and infrastructure under the CAADP.

Agricultural development depends on increasing the productivity of the entire system, not just farming. Thus, efforts to increase efficiency throughout the physical transformation phases and transaction links of the commodity chains would involve an array of strategies to enhance research and development, input markets, farm level production, product processing, storage, handling, transport, marketing and trade, financing etc. (Figure 1)".

Figure 1 illustrates the different stages involved in the 'food business' from the farming/production stage (which can also be divided into different steps related to land husbandry's activities such as water and land management, use of fertilizers and pesticides, etc.) up to the final consumption stage (which can directly influence on the demand components). It is what is happening with the emergence of quality labels such as 'fair trade' and "certified organic product" for which consumers are willing to pay more, marking the success of coffee brands in the sub-region.

Figure 1
Food and Agricultural System Matrix

PRODUCTION AND EXCHANGE FUNCTIONS		COMMODITIES								
		Rice	Maize	Beans	Cotton	Oil Palm	Beef	Dairy	Fishery	Etc...
Input Production	COMMODITY SUBSECTOR	AGRICULTURAL INPUT INDUSTRY								
Input Distribution		AGRIBUSINESS SUBSECTOR								
Farm Production		FARMING SUBSECTOR								
Output Marketing		AGRIBUSINESS (Output Market)								
Output Processing & Product Storage		AGRO - PROCESSING INDUSTRY								
Transportation		AGRIBUSINESS (Product Market)								
Trade										
Wholesaling										
Retailing										
Consumption										

Source: Adapted from Boughton et al (1995).

Marketing, trade and investment policies should put further emphasis on these opportunities for creating lucrative niche markets for small-holders in Eastern Africa. Strong economic growth in these countries is a main driver of a changing world food demand toward high-value agricultural products and processed foods. Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) negotiations must continue to focus on a comprehensive development dimension.

Regional integration represents the main engine for value chain development and synergy creation between countries and products. This would improve not only the

“With globalization, product distinction and branding are becoming increasingly important ingredients for market differentiation and upgrading strategies”. (UNECA ERA 2009)

FAO underlines that to “lift themselves out of hunger, the food-insecure need control over resources, access to opportunities, and improved governance at the international, national and local levels”.

A 2006 Report from the National Research Council in Washington (USA) listed 18 native vegetables (highly resilient and nutritive) that could help solve Africa’s food crisis and boost weak rural economies. These range from celosia and cowpeas to locust beans, native potatoes, okra, shea and eggplant (garden egg). (<http://sites.nationalacademies.org/NRC>)

African governments and development partners have a unique role to play in creating an environment that is conducive to the development of local and regional clusters. Regional value chains and markets for strategic commodities would not only increase competitiveness of agriculture at farm level, but would also trigger development of agro-processing and agribusiness ventures at the regional level. Marketing of African agricultural products can also be improved through greater integration of regional markets, whereby producers, processors and distributors collaborate to manage the commodity delivery systems, and hence counteract the negative impact of imperfect price transmission and poor infrastructure on marketing margins (Conforti and Sarris, 2007). However, most smallholder farmers cannot improve without support from institutions that recognize their products as key to regional as well as global value chains. African farmers are disconnected from regional and global markets primarily because of the failure to develop agro-industries and agribusinesses and the necessary infrastructure and policies for linking them to the market. (UNECA, ERA 2009)

competitiveness of national economies, but also regional logistics strategies and trade arrangements.

Public-private partnerships are key to developing successful regional value chains. For this to happen, there is a need for the creation of an enabling environment for private sector's participation, by addressing constraints related to property rights and contract enforcement, business registration, tax incentives and access to finance.

Skills development is also key to agriculture development through promotion of youth entrepreneurship and stimulating farming innovations. Skill development will also have to include targeted education and extension programmes to promote effective yield-enhancing practices. Ministries and institutions (including research institutes) as well as RECs/IGOs detaining a mandate to tackle food insecurity would benefit from an ambitious employment programme targeting young graduates and more experienced experts.

Establishing effective information gateways, Information, awareness raising and coordination of value chain activities is also key. This is well illustrated by the Regional Strategic Analysis and Knowledge Support System (www.resakss.org) of the Consultative Group on International Agriculture Research (CGIAR Group) providing scientific and socio-economic data and other existing mobile platforms (such as E-soko in Rwanda) facilitating access to information on market conditions.

Land tenure systems would need to be reformed. For this, the “*African Framework and Guidelines on Land Policy*” which was adopted by the 13th AU Summit held in Sirte, Libya, provides a good entry point. The Declaration of the Summit requests Regional Economic Communities (RECs), in collaboration with UNECA, the African Development Bank (AfDB) and other partners to implement measures including the establishment of regional platforms aimed at facilitating mutual learning by member states, experience sharing, lessons learning and dissemination of best practices in land policy formulation, implementation and monitoring as they develop/review their land policies.

Trade-offs between land uses including agriculture mitigation measures should be carefully considered through cost-benefit analyses. This will help to strengthen national land policy frameworks with a view to enhancing soil and water conservation as well as improve land use planning that will prevent further encroachment of farming and grazing on fragile ecosystems and protect water reserves.

The *Abuja Declaration on Fertilisers for the African Green Revolution* adopted by the African Heads of State and Government in 2006 underscored the importance of fertilisers in achieving the African Green Revolution to end hunger and resolved to increase the level of use of fertiliser from the then 8 kg per hectare to an average of at least 50 kg by 2015, by implementing several measures that include harmonisation of policies, improving distribution channels, institute targeted subsidies, establish national financing mechanisms and most importantly, the adoption of a regional approach. Regional integration measures include the establishment of the regional *Fertiliser Procurement and Distribution Facilities* with the support of AfDB, EU, ECA and other regional development banks and work is in progress to put in place some of these measures.

Access to finance needs to be further enhanced for farmers through supply of seeds and fertilizers in advance with agro-processors providing loans and receiving produce payment at a later date, in accordance with purchase agreements. Standards-with direct linkages to quality labels- need to be further promoted and implemented. Small economies can, for instance, find a niche/specialization in which the country can compete and then create links with the rest of the regional or world economy in order to compete effectively. Existing micro-credit facilities would need to be tapped in and new ones created where they are inexistent, using as much as possible new technologies that can speed up the process.

Improved rural infrastructure and marketing are essential to enhance the competitiveness of agricultural products. Provision of enabling infrastructure and services would contribute to the strengthening of linkages between the agricultural and non-agricultural sectors, especially in rural areas. This would encompass an increase of road densities in rural areas as well as an increase of ICT absorption (mobile density), computer connection in rural centres and electricity coverage. This would contribute to the improvement of access to markets, market-related information, cash transfers and micro-credit facilities by farmers, pastoralists and fishermen.

In short, a thoroughly conceived package of combined policy, financial and technical measures with a special emphasis on skills development, sustainable agricultural production systems, as well as research and technology would be required to address key constraints to agriculture development through the implementation of regional value chains.

Questions for Discussion:

- *Is there any impediment against the implementation of 'regional value chains'? If any, how can this be lifted?*
- *On which stage of the value chain, should emphasis be placed (production, processing, marketing)? And why?*

FAO's study shows "that nearly all of the terrestrial-based agriculture mitigation options are the same as those proposed for sustainable land management and adaptation to climate change. The potential for synergies is particularly high for changing food production practices such as improved crop varieties; avoiding bare fallow and changing crop rotations to incorporate food-producing cover crops and legumes; increasing fertilizer use in regions with low N content and adopting precision fertilizer management in other regions; seeding fodder and improved forage quality and quantity on pastures expansion of low-energy irrigation; and, expansion of agro-forestry and soil and water conservation techniques that do not take significant amounts of land out of food production...Restoration of degraded lands often requires that land not be used for production at least in the short-term, whereas avoiding draining or restoring wetlands would directly take land out of production permanently. Trade-offs may also be important for certain stocking rate and rotational grazing practices." (FAO, *Food Security and Agricultural Mitigation in Developing Countries: Options for Capturing Synergies*, October 2009)

“While there are a number of definitions of, and approaches to safety nets, there is consensus that they are a subset of broader social-protection systems.

*Safety nets mostly include transfers that are not dependent on the recipient having previously contributed money. These transfers can be in cash or in kind, and can be conditional or unconditional. In addition to safety nets, social protection also includes labour-market policies and insurance options (e.g. contributory pensions and health insurance), as well as some components of “sectoral” policies whose main focus is on sectors such as education, health, nutrition or agriculture. These other social-protection measures can sometimes overlap with safety nets: the use of weather insurance, for example, represents a common area between safety nets and labour/insurance measures” The Productive Safety Net Programme in Ethiopia is providing cash and food to about 7 million people. (WFP, FAO, *The State of Food Insecurity in the World (2009)*)*

- *What are the priority activities that would need to be implemented first to kick-start the process of materialisation of these chains? In prioritizing them, which criteria should be used?*
- *Which policies, programs and investments in agricultural development can substantially reduce hunger and malnutrition?*
- *How could countries in the sub-region create and maintain a competitive edge for their commodities? What are the current initiatives that could foster intra-trade and inter-regional trade?*
- *What kind of databases on market-related information and other relevant data on food security should be established at sub-regional level? How to link up national information systems to one sub-regional information system for Eastern Africa using ICTs?*

Policy harmonization at sub-regional level: a win-win approach

As highlighted in the previous section, there are numerous initiatives, programmes, projects, studies and activities focusing on food security, in Eastern Africa as well as at the global level with direct and indirect, positive and negative implications and impacts for the sub-region. A wide array of stakeholders are involved in developing and implementing them, from member States to RECS/IGOs; from UN agencies to international, sub-regional and national NGOs; from the public sector to the private sector; from CSOs to farmers, pastoralists and fishermen, from men to women and children; each of them advocating for a unique perspective and focusing on key aspects linked to their respective roles, mandates and interest.

Given the complex nature of the topic of food security and linkages to almost all vital socio-economic, scientific, economic, legal and political issues, which is in part at the origin of the little progress achieved in eradicating food insecurity and hunger in the world and in particular in the sub-region, it has become urgent and necessary to find an innovative way to address it. A holistic approach is required with prioritization of key actions that could deliver tangible and measurable results on the ground, in a short timeframe.

Rationalization of interventions and policy harmonization would contribute to bridge communication and capacity gaps among RECs/IGOs, and between RECs/IGOs and their member States. In addition, it can also help realize economies of scale, and optimize the use of scarce human and financial resources. Staff in charge across organizations and communities could reduce their transaction costs by working jointly in a team of experts. Exchange of data and experiences and study tours would be then easier to organize with direct impacts on overall programme implementation.

The Partners Workshop, held in Bujumbura, Burundi on 14-15 September 2009, discussed the feasibility of a joint sub-regional Programme on Food Security for Eastern Africa, which calls for the harmonization of food security related strategies and projects of RECs/IGOs active in the sub-region, in particular ICGLR, IGAD, EAC and CEPGL. During the ICE meeting, a session will be devoted to the discussion of the detailed outline of the proposed Programme, including the components and prioritized activities as well as implementation modalities.

In addition, participants would be required to outline the mechanisms for inter-RECs/IGOs coordination. Equally important would be to identify the key actors to implement the programme successfully and then roles and responsibilities.

Questions for discussion:

- *How to address communication gaps (exchange of information and interaction) among RECs/IGOs and between RECs/IGOs and member States? What type of mechanisms could be put into place to bridge these gaps and strengthen coordination across RECs/IGOs?*
- *Is the proposed harmonization approach viable? If yes, what would be the priority components of a Programme on Food Security for Eastern Africa based on the commonalities of existing strategies and initiatives? What would the implementation framework look like?*
- *How to translate this approach at national level for maximum benefits for the multi-member States? How to fit the proposed Programme in existing national, sub-regional and continental frameworks? How to strengthen national coordination mechanisms of RECs/IGOs and avoid overlaps?*
- *Who would be the ultimate beneficiaries of proposed initiatives and how to fully involve them? How to further strengthen partnerships?*

"Millions Fed: Proven Successes in Agricultural Development" is a project led by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), with support from The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, to identify interventions in agricultural development that have substantially reduced hunger and poverty; to document evidence about where, when, and why these interventions succeeded; to learn about the key drivers and factors underlying success; and to share lessons to help inform better policy and investment decisions in the future (www.ipfri.org/millionsfed).

EXAMPLE

Unlocking the Market: Fertilizer and maize in Kenya (Joshua Ariq and T. S. Jayne)

In Kenya, policy reforms in the early-1990s contributed to the rapid growth of private investment in fertilizer and maize marketing, resulting in a dramatic reduction in farmers' time, effort, and costs associated with purchasing fertilizer and selling surplus maize production. The average distance to the nearest fertilizer retailer for small farmers has decreased by more than half between 1997 and 2007, reflecting a large expansion in the number of fertilizer retailers serving smallholder areas. The distance travelled by farmers to sell their maize to private traders also declined over this period. The proportion of small-scale farmers using fertilizer on maize during the main growing season rose from 56 percent in 1996 to 70 percent in 2007, contributing to improved productivity and availability of maize, a vitally important staple crop for Kenyan consumers.

The mantra, “No agriculture, no deal” – echoed by civil society organizations in Copenhagen for agriculture to be part and parcel of any post-Kyoto climate regime – puts agriculture firmly in the spotlight at the interface of global change, and at the heart of global development challenges like food security. Just as sustainable agricultural practices hold considerable potential to offset carbon emissions and boost food production, Aid for Trade (AfT) provides opportunities to increase small-scale farmers’ access to markets enabling them to capitalize on the economic potential of their produce. The Global Donor Platform for Rural Development (GDPRD) – a partnership of bilateral and multilateral donors and development agencies – has been successful in positioning agriculture and land vis-à-vis climate change adaptation and mitigation on the UNFCCC COP15 agenda. The recent Annual General Assembly (AGA) of the GDPRD, held in Rome on 26-27 January 2010, and organized by IFAD and the GM, provided an excellent opportunity to advance and harmonize approaches on agriculture and rural development (ARD), whilst looking at major policy processes such as trade and climate, investments into land and key processes for channelling financial resources into agriculture such as the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP)”.(The Global Mechanism, 2010).

- *What could be the role of SRO-EA? In which area, could SRO-EA further assist RECs/IGOS and member States in its capacity as think tank on regional integration?*

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

It is expected that the discussions on the theme “Enhancing Food Security in the Eastern African Sub-Region” during the 14th ICE will generate a body of knowledge on the status of food security in Eastern Africa as well as clarify the components of a Joint Programme on Food Security for Eastern Africa.

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