

Agriculture, food security and rural development



The mission of the agriculture, food security and rural development cluster is to provide coordinated and effective support to the agriculture, food and nutrition security and rural development agenda of the African Union Commission's Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture, the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency (NPCA), the regional economic communities and member States. It aims to ensure coherence, synergy and complementarity, thereby enhancing the coordination of United Nations system-wide support for the Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme, which is the overarching framework guiding the work of the cluster.

Cluster members:

Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture of the African Union Commission, NPCA, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, the World Food Programme, the Economic Commission for Africa, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the International Organization for Migration, the World Bank, the International Atomic Energy Agency, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Children's Fund, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the World Intellectual Property Organization, the World Trade Organization and the Office of the Special Advisor on Africa.

Cluster governance:

The cluster coordinators are Maria Pia Rizzo, of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, and Diana Akullo and Tumusiime Rhoda Peace, of the African Union Commission. NPCA and the World Food Programme are the alternate co-chairs of the cluster.

Cluster priorities:

- Providing coordinated and effective United Nations support to NEPAD and the Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture and the regional economic communities in their efforts to advance food security and agriculture development in Africa
- Promoting agro-industry and agri-business development in Africa, with an emphasis on creating regional value chains

- Providing sustainable land and water resource management, in view of climate change and its impacts
- Undertaking studies requested by NEPAD and the Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture
- Enhancing market access for smallholder farmers
- Tracking agriculture expenditure in the context of the Maputo Platform of Action commitments

Key achievements:

- The cluster completed a gender audit exercise through UN-Women and the gender and development subcluster. The audit exercise was instrumental in strengthening inter-cluster partnership, in line with the recommendations of the tenth session of RCM-Africa on mainstreaming gender as a crosscutting issue. In addition, the preparation of a tailored business plan and work plan for 2013, and a resource mobilization strategy for the Medium-Term Comprehensive Capacity-building Programme has greatly motivated members and strengthened their commitment.
- The cluster helped to organize events and activities to tie in with the “Africa day for food and nutrition security”. The day, which was held under the theme “Towards African renaissance: achieving the right to adequate food and nutrition”, provided an opportunity for African leaders to highlight the role of food and nutritional security in development and call for renewed commitment to take food and nutrition programming and resourcing to a higher level
- The cluster is continuing its work on the Cost of Hunger in Africa study, a project led by the African Union Commission and supported by the Economic Commission for Africa and the World Food Programme. The study, which is breaking new ground in analysing the social and economic consequences of malnutrition, is being carried out in 12 countries in Africa. It has already been completed in Egypt, Ethiopia, Swaziland and Uganda.
- The cluster, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, and the World Bank are working together with national and regional partners to set up a sustainable system for monitoring the impact of food and agricultural policies, by developing common indicators for monitoring key commodities and public expenditure. The methodology helps policymakers and donors to ascertain whether policies are having a positive impact; and also facilitates the comparison of results across participating countries and over time. Specifically, the Monitoring and Analysing Food and Agricultural Policies (MAFAP) programme examines the impact of current policies and considers their coherence with the compact's objectives. By keeping track of public expenditure on agriculture, the programme helps national Governments to track progress towards the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme target of allocating 10 per cent of national budgets to agricultural development. The first phase of the MAFAP programme has just been completed in Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Nigeria, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania. The second phase will include more countries.

For more information, please contact the coordinators, Maria Pia Rizzo (Maria.Rizzo@fao.org) and Diana Akullo (AkulloD@africa-union.org).

Reference: <http://www.uneca.org/nepad/pages/regional-coordination-mechanism>