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Regional approaches to food security in Africa

The CAADP and other relevant policies and programmes in COMESA

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Acronyms

ACTESA	Alliance for Commodity Trade in Eastern and Southern Africa
AfDB	African Development Bank
AfT	Aid for Trade
ARD	Agriculture and Rural Development
ASARECA	Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa
AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
DFID	UK's Department for International Development
DPs	Development Partners
EAC	Eastern Africa Community
EAFF	Eastern Africa Farmers Federation
EC	European Commission
ECDPM	European Centre for Development Policy Management
ECOWAP	Economic Community of West African States' Agricultural Policy
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
FAMIS	Food and Agricultural Marketing Information System
FANRPAN	Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FTA	Free Trade Area
HQ	head-quarters
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDTF	Multi-Donor Trust Fund
MS	Member States
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NPCA	NEPAD Planning and Coordination Agency
NSA	Non state actors
NTBs	Non-Tariff-Barriers
ODA	Official Development Assistance
RAP	Regional Agricultural Policy
REC	Regional Economic Community
RI	Regional Integration
SACAU	Southern African Confederation of Agricultural Unions
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SPS	Sanitary and Phytosanitary (measures)
UK	United Kingdom
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WB	World Bank

Executive Summary

In 2003 the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) was established by the assembly of the African Union (AU) aiming to raise agricultural productivity by at least 6% per year and increasing public investment in agriculture to 10% of national budgets per year. After an initial phase focused primarily on interventions at the national level, there is growing awareness on the need to work more on the regional dimensions of the CAADP. In this context, the European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM) has undertaken policy-oriented analysis and stakeholder consultations on regional CAADP processes - and issues at stake - as well as on its linkages with the broader regional integration dynamics, in various African regions. This paper focuses on the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), with the objective to stimulate further discussions among involved stakeholders, to contribute to the consultative processes around the implementation of CAADP at regional level, as well as to contribute to lessons-sharing across Africa on regional approaches to food security.

COMESA regional CAADP compact versus a 'Tripartite' compact approach

The COMESA regional compact was designed through a multi-stakeholder consultation process in the region, concluded in August 2010, and is ready to be adopted by member states. COMESA Ministers however decided that this draft compact should be finalised within the Tripartite COMESA-Southern African Development Community (SADC)-East African Community (EAC) framework and the definition of a possible 'Tripartite CAADP compact'. This 'catch 22 situation' should be solved quickly: COMESA should design its own regional investment plans to show concretely the potential added value of a COMESA compact vis-à-vis the national CAADP compacts; though designing credible and realistic plans requires knowing which programmes to undertake as COMESA and which jointly with other Regional Economic Communities (RECs) as part of the possible 'Tripartite' compact. Despite the temporary pause in the COMESA compact process, informal consultations between officials of the three RECs Secretariats have now started, with a view to agree on which specific areas of cooperation will be covered by a 'Tripartite' food security framework. All stakeholders in the COMESA region, including development partners, should support such process, by respecting its pace and different status of CAADP preparations in different RECs, but also by providing any assistance that the RECs may require.

Articulating the national-regional nexus: more progress needed

There seems to be consensus in COMESA about the importance of regional action in agriculture and the fact that the value of the COMESA regional compact lies in the delineation of strategic regional investments that individual countries, acting alone, cannot afford. Agricultural growth at country-level could benefit from regional spillovers and economies of scale in technology, human and policy development, trade and investment. However, more progress is needed in the region in articulating clearly such national-regional nexus. Strategic thinking about those sub-sectors and concrete measures where the regional CAADP compact needs to complement action at national level can be fostered by both: more regular multi-stakeholder policy dialogue throughout the region; and analysis of the gaps the national compacts present in terms of possible joint action among neighbours. This would enhance the ownership of regional food security plans and the 'vertical coherence' between the regional and national CAADP compacts. The COMESA Secretariat, with support of its development partners, could facilitate such dialogue and analysis as part of the process to finalize the COMESA regional compact and possibly design a Tripartite plan.

Non-State Actor engagement: multi-stakeholder ownership is key

Experiences with non-state-actors engagement (in particular farmers' organisations) and differing views on the quality of the regional compact formulation process show that it is now very important to identify the stakeholders who shall participate in the regional compact finalisation and signature (representation of

specific groups, mandates as well as roles and responsibilities for implementation). A good basis for this was already established through the consultations for the current draft compact, and future steps should be based on the outcomes of that process (without starting from scratch), given that for all actors -even those who are critical- existing documents are acceptable as starting point for the regional compact formulation. Coordinated capacity development initiatives, in particular for the benefit of farmers' organisations, will be crucial to support the needed increased engagement of key actors in the regional CAADP preparations.

Role of the COMESA Secretariat: clarity of task-division needed for future implementation of CAADP

Most actors in the region seem satisfied with the COMESA Secretariat's role on CAADP. However, some have suggested that more operational synergies should be created between different sectors and policies relevant for food security, beyond CAADP. This regional cooperation and coordination is demanding, presenting financial and human resource challenges for the COMESA Secretariat. On the one hand, increasing the number of Secretariat officials in the Agriculture Unit responsible for CAADP would be important to support institutional strengthening and the streamlining of CAADP in COMESA's activities. On the other hand, the synergies between the Secretariat and COMESA's specialized agencies such as the Alliance for Commodity Trade in Eastern and Southern Africa (ACTESA) should be maximised around CAADP plans, especially with a view to clarify task-division among regional institutions for future CAADP implementation.

Role of pan-African institutions and development partners: much to be improved

In terms of the role of pan-African institutions and development partners (DPs) in regional CAADP preparations in COMESA, many stakeholders believe there is room for significant improvement, mostly due to: lack of coordination among key involved African agencies; an underlying misunderstanding on the side of certain DPs and continental bodies about the nature of CAADP regional action and the relationship between CAADP and the overall regional integration dynamics in COMESA; insufficient donor coordination and weak engagement between DPs and COMESA around implementation of CAADP at the regional level.

Firstly, past failures at continental level to communicate effectively and timely with regional stakeholders about various aspects of the CAADP processes should be addressed urgently. Secondly, pan-African institutions and DPs should align to the approach currently followed by the key regional players in COMESA: mainstreaming CAADP objectives and modalities into ongoing regional programmes (also in other sectors relevant to food security) and making them more coherent and coordinated is the priority for implementing regional dimensions of CAADP, rather than the finalisation of the regional compact document itself. In this respect, more regular dialogue between COMESA, African Union Commission (AUC)-NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency (NPCA) and DPs around the implementation of regional CAADP plans should be promoted. Lastly, the role of DPs should be improved on several fronts. Donors committed to strengthening food security in COMESA should increase their attention and support for ongoing regional programmes, beyond CAADP, as these are likely to be the backbone of any future regional CAADP investment plan. DPs coordination should be enhanced within the food security sector, between agriculture and other regional cooperation sectors, as well as between donor headquarters and regional donor offices, possibly devolving more management decisions on CAADP-related support to such offices in Lusaka. This could also translate in the establishment of a regional donor working group on food security as counterpart of all relevant COMESA agencies (without duplicating the bi-annual overall COMESA-DPs engagement mechanism), and the appointment of a 'lead donor' there.

CAADP and Regional Integration

Another emerging message from stakeholders in COMESA is that the regional agricultural plans should take into account the cross-cutting general bottlenecks to regional integration experienced so far by

COMESA, such as overlapping membership of RECs and lack of full enforceability of regional decisions, often not translated into national legislation by member states. In addition, food security action will have to be accompanied by a much better 'campaign' in each country in COMESA to raise awareness about the benefits of regional approaches in every proposed regional cooperation area relevant to food security, and about the results achieved so far.

There is in general full support in the region for an effectively multidimensional regional CAADP, anchored in ongoing programmes implemented by COMESA. Indeed, many actors in COMESA believe that it is very important to ensure the 'horizontal' coherence between regional policies and investments in food security and in other sectors of regional cooperation. Synergies should be identified and promoted between the regional CAADP compact and ongoing initiatives on agriculture, trade, infrastructure and natural resources. This paper shows that some linkages will naturally emerge, such as on the elimination of agricultural tariff and non-tariff barriers (especially related to Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) measures), aid for trade and 'agriculture trade corridors', and existing regional agricultural programmes and institutions. Other synergies will need to be carefully analyzed, in order to design a regional CAADP compact which includes policies and investments that are coherent, complementary and coordinated with those that COMESA is taking forward in other RI areas. In specific cases, framing a regional initiative within a comprehensive and multi-stakeholder policy process like CAADP could contribute to removing some of the current obstacles or resistances to its launch or full implementation, for instance in the area of natural resources management, a crucial part of a regional food security approach but which is very new for cooperation at COMESA level.

A flexible, 'differentiated-gear', Tripartite CAADP compact?

The current plan is that the COMESA regional compact will be finalised as a framework to address food security challenges specific to COMESA, within the context of a 'Tripartite' CAADP compact through which COMESA-EAC-SADC will work together to address issues common to all three RECs. An emerging idea among key players in COMESA about a realistic way forward is that the 'Tripartite' compact should be an overarching framework, comprehensive and multidimensional, but also flexible, not a rigid and binding agreement with the same policies, programmes, and implementation time-frame for all the three RECs. While maintaining a common CAADP framework and objectives, this could be a 'differentiated gears' 'Tripartite' compact, with RECs or blocs of countries entering different programmatic partnerships on specific sectors/themes, gradually, depending on existing progress of various parts of regional cooperation and on a voluntary basis. A 'faster' gear would mean for instance a more urgent investment plan for a specific sector/theme and a particular group of countries. This would assist achieving two important objectives: i) implement the required regional plans (both REC-specific and common to the three RECs) according to a realistic time-frame, which may be different for different RECs and countries, depending on different starting points and actual implementation drive; ii) ensure both the 'vertical coherence' between national CAADP compacts and the REC-specific regional compact, as well as the 'horizontal coherence' between CAADP and other sectors of regional cooperation which the specific REC is bringing forward.

This 'comprehensive, internally coherent and differentiated gears' 'Tripartite' compact could be realistically built around existing REC plans and groups of countries which already cooperate well in specific areas, even beyond activities belonging strictly only to COMESA or EAC or SADC programmes. The added value of this approach would be to look at existing sector progress in each REC and member states and find a niche for CAADP either as synergy-creation across sectors and countries or in some cases as promotion of multi-purpose programmes related to food security, e.g. value chain development plans which identify and address, in parallel, bottlenecks on natural resources, infrastructure corridors, and trade.

Careful design of such 'differentiated gears Tripartite' compact would require a step-by-step multi-stakeholder consultative process, a Road-Map facilitated through strong leadership, for instance by a

Committee of the COMESA/SADC/EAC CAADP Focal Points; or a “Friends of the Tripartite Compact” group representing all key stakeholders. Such a leading group would have to start with identifying a minimum common ground among RECs and their member states on what major bottlenecks and opportunities in each region are regarding: stronger linkages between CAADP and other regional programmes; articulation of multi-sector priorities into the REC-specific and the ‘Tripartite’ CAADP compacts; ways for regional actors and their development partners to work more effectively together to fast-track implementation of the regional CAADP.

1. Introduction

After an initial phase focused primarily on interventions at the national level, there is growing awareness on the need to work more on the regional dimensions of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP). This was also formally recognised at the 7th CAADP Partnership Platform meeting in Yaoundé, Cameroun (March 2011): of particular importance was the acknowledgement by all CAADP stakeholders that the development and implementation of regional CAADP compacts should be accelerated. This would require greater involvement of all CAADP partners at the regional level and effective harmonization of their interventions, including bringing countries together to share lessons, providing support to link regional and country processes, identifying and addressing cross-border issues.

The ECDPM works actively with African institutions on how to better integrate agriculture, trade and aid policies and processes. Improved coordination, coherence and complementarity between agriculture, trade, regional integration processes and development partners' support is key for Africa's development agenda. While CAADP implementation at national level has gained momentum in recent years, implementation at the regional level has been slow, and progress differs between regions. For example, ECOWAS articulated and launched a regional CAADP compact, the Economic Community of West African States' Agricultural Policy (ECOWAP), and its Regional Agricultural Investment Plan (RAIP); and a well functioning regional donor group exists in West Africa for CAADP. On the other hand, COMESA, EAC and SADC started preparations but currently still lack a regional CAADP compact and structured regional donor coordination for CAADP; but they have made significant advancements on other policies and programmes which are key for food security, such as trade corridors.

The rate and degree of progress emphasise the need for lesson-sharing between Regional Economic Communities (RECs). To contribute to the CAADP, ECDPM undertakes policy analysis on regional CAADP processes -and issues at stake- as well as on its linkages with the broader regional integration processes in Africa, including by facilitating deeper dialogue and lesson-sharing among and between the RECs and development partners working on CAADP in various African regions. In those regions where the preparations for a regional CAADP compact are under way, ECDPM's work included in 2011, in collaboration with RECs, development partners, and other key CAADP actors such as the NEPAD Planning and Coordination Agency (NPCA), the analysis of:

1. progress made in implementing and supporting CAADP Regional Plans and other relevant regional programmes linked to CAADP Pillars (natural resources management, trade, infrastructure, etc.);
2. how regional integration is dealt with within the CAADP and the linkages between CAADP and other regional programmes (and whether these are effectively utilised to achieve CAADP objectives).

This paper outlines the results of such 'mapping exercise' for COMESA, and is meant to stimulate further discussions among involved stakeholders and to contribute to the consultative processes around the implementation of CAADP at regional level. Indeed, the first key step is to make important information about regional strategies and plans available to everyone to contribute to multi-stakeholder ownership.

This paper, a contribution in this direction, is part of a series of publications, made possible by the financial support of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, presenting an independent assessment by ECDPM on the status of regional approaches to food security. It is the outcome of: extensive and regular consultations and interviews with stakeholders in the regions (including RECs Secretariats, the NPCA, government officials, donors, civil society, the private sector, and other experts from regional institutions); ECDPM's informal contributions to the formal CAADP-related processes; as well as deep investigation of the existing literature (which is already very extensive on regional integration and growing rapidly on CAADP).

Section 2 of this paper describes the status of preparations in COMESA for a regional CAADP compact, highlighting the role played so far by key involved stakeholders and the relationship between food security processes and the overall progress on regional integration. Section 3 analyses other regional initiatives relevant to food security and the possible synergies between CAADP and such policies and programmes. Taking into account these existing challenges and opportunities, Section 4 presents some ideas and recommendations on the way forward for regional food security plans, both in terms of what each actor could do to contribute positively and what features could characterize a regional CAADP compact in COMESA.

2. The Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme in COMESA

2.1. Progress made in implementing and supporting CAADP Regional Plans: Lessons & Challenges

COMESA Regional CAADP: compact nearly ready but waiting for a 'Tripartite' approach

The Treaty to establish the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) stipulates that the overall goal of regional cooperation in agriculture is the achievement of regional food security. To this end, COMESA embraced the CAADP and launched the 'regional CAADP compact' preparation process in 2008.¹ The Food Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network (FANRPAN)² won the COMESA competitive bidding in May 2008 to assist developing a **regional CAADP compact**. FANRPAN's consultative process began in January 2009 and focused on: i) achieving consensus on priority areas for the Compact; ii) identifying gaps in the ongoing regional programmes; iii) identifying potential investment programmes for the compact and institutional arrangements for implementation. The outcomes of this were submitted by **FANRPAN** to the COMESA Secretariat in August 2010:

- a Framework Document providing the context within which the compact was developed and highlighting the existing and recommended programmes and institutional arrangements that will need to be developed to achieve food security in the region;
- a draft COMESA regional CAADP compact, meant to become the CAADP agreement between involved stakeholders on regional principles, investment programmes and implementation aspects.

While the Framework Document is public³, the draft compact is not, as it was never formally adopted and signed by the relevant stakeholders in the region, such as the COMESA Governments, regional farmer organisations, development partners, etc. Despite COMESA Member States (MS) apparently endorsed in principle the general features of the draft regional compact, the COMESA management recommended to the Technical Committee on Agriculture that the draft be folded into a **'Tripartite' regional CAADP compact**.⁴ Indeed, at their third joint meeting in July 2010, COMESA Ministers of Agriculture, Environment

¹ See Box 1 for a brief explanation on the CAADP.

² FANRPAN is an "autonomous stakeholder driven policy research, analysis and implementation network", based in Pretoria, South Africa. For more information see www.FANRPAN.org

³ Available on line at www.fanrpan.org/documents/d00996

⁴ The COMESA-EAC-SADC Tripartite is an umbrella organization created in 2005 (overseen by a Tripartite Summit of Heads of State and Government) to assist in the process of harmonising programmes and policies within and between the three RECs and to advance the establishment of the African Economic Community. This paper refers to a possible 'tripartite' CAADP compact, or any 'tripartite' food security initiative, only in a broad sense, as joint approaches by COMESA-SADC-EAC, i.e. 'trilateral'; without any judgment on the merit of food security being tackled through the same processes and steps that the three RECs chose for the Tripartite FTA. Such steps, the political decisions behind them and their timing will depend on the governments of the three RECs member states.

and Natural Resources, decided that: "Given the progress made on the Tripartite Agreement between COMESA, EAC and SADC, COMESA Member States should take this development into consideration and approve further development of the COMESA Regional Compact within the tripartite framework. The Tripartite CAADP Regional Compact will have to be approved and adopted by the three RECs" (FANRPAN, 2010 a).

After this decision, and building on FANRPAN's draft compact, the COMESA Secretariat has worked on a **shorter version of the regional compact**, differing to some extent from FANRPAN's, and which is not finalized yet and still confidential. Priority areas of the regional CAADP compact are the same in both documents: i) food and priority agricultural systems productivity (along value chains); ii) infrastructure and trade development corridors (for value addition); iii) institutional/human development at all levels (for e.g farmers, traders, processor, etc). What seems different in the draft by the Secretariat mainly relates to:

- stronger emphasis on natural resources management and Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) measures;
- no changes proposed in the existing COMESA governance structures in terms of regional CAADP implementation (whereas FANRPAN's draft proposed some new bodies like a 'Stakeholders Review Forum' to assess progress on implementation);
- much less articulate and binding commitments for each of the signatories to the regional compact.

Other implementation proposals in FANRPAN's draft have not been decided upon yet, for instance: anchoring the first of the priority programmes of the regional compact (agricultural systems productivity) in the Alliance for Commodity Trade in Eastern and Southern Africa (ACTESA); or transforming the Agriculture Unit of the COMESA Secretariat in charge of CAADP into a fully-fledged Agriculture Division (given the added long-term responsibility of both coordinating the regional compact and facilitating CAADP processes in the COMESA countries).

Though from a formal point of view, the next step for implementation of the CAADP regional plans is simple (i.e. submit the draft COMESA compact to the SADC and EAC Secretariats and discuss how this would relate to a possible Tripartite compact), according to some stakeholders, the current state is a '**catch 22 situation**'. On the one hand, COMESA should design its own regional investment plans to show concretely the potential added value of a COMESA compact⁵ vis-à-vis the national CAADP compacts; on the other, designing credible and realistic plans would require knowing which programmes to undertake as COMESA and which jointly with other RECs as part of the possible 'Tripartite' compact. After the decision by the SADC Council of Ministers in August 2011 that SADC should join the process for a 'Tripartite' compact, informal consultations between officials of the three RECs Secretariats started, with a view to agree on which specific areas of cooperation will be covered by a 'Tripartite' food security framework as well as on which REC will take the lead in the preparations under each thematic areas. Moreover, despite the temporary pause in the COMESA compact process, the COMESA Secretariat continues to implement its overall CAADP work plan (financed through a Child Trust Fund)⁶ which includes contributing to the formulation of a regional compact.

⁵ In principle, this should not be too complex, as the Framework Document, for each identified priority area, provides, an inventory of existing programmes, as well as gaps identified by the COMESA stakeholders.

⁶ In 2010, a \$4.5 million Child Trust Fund was approved to finance the 2010-2013 action plan of COMESA for CAADP implementation (6th CAADP Partnership Platform Communiqué, April 2010).

Box 1: CAADP in brief

CAADP is the agricultural programme of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), which is a programme of the African Union. Established by the AU assembly in 2003, CAADP's goal is to eliminate hunger and reduce poverty through agriculture. To do this, African governments have agreed to increase public investment in agriculture by a minimum of 10 percent of their national budgets. CAADP identifies four key pillars for food security improvement and agricultural investment: (1) Sustainable Land and Water Management; (2) Market Access; (3) Food Supply and Hunger; and (4) Agricultural Research.

The CAADP is centered around the definition of national and regional plans ('Compacts'), an agreement between all stakeholders (public, private as well as donors) serving as a framework for partnerships, alliances, and dialogue to design and implement the required policy interventions and investment programmes. The formulation of national and regional investment plans is one of the most important activities to implement CAADP after the definition and signature of the Compact (to date more than 25 Countries in Africa have signed the CAADP Compacts, 18 have reviewed Investment Plans and 12 have convened Business Meetings; for more information: www.caadp.net)

CAADP therefore is not a (donors') programme, it is a common framework for stimulating and guiding national, regional and continental initiatives on enhanced agriculture productivity and food security which each region and country can develop and implement as preferred. CAADP is a very advanced attempt at fully implementing the Paris Declaration and Accra Agenda for Action on Aid Effectiveness. It is difficult to identify similar partnerships, even sector-wide approaches, that can claim to have the same: degree of African ownership (at political-bureaucratic-experts level), including at national level (unlike other AU/regional initiatives such as FTAs); robust plans for mutual accountability (serious monitoring & evaluation is built into CAADP); outreach to other sectors (trade, capacity development, natural resources, infrastructure, research and technology, safety); level of ODA predictability (substantial commitments of funds and relatively advanced alignment by donors) and regular donor coordination (e.g. headquarters focal points work together via teleconference every other week to task-divide and harmonize their CAADP activities).

The clear linkages between trade and agriculture within CAADP are confirmed by the fact that around thirty percent of the investment needs included in national CAADP investment plans formulated so far relate to the development of market access and value chains. Weaknesses remain, with CAADP criticized by some stakeholders for lacking sufficient: private sector involvement; regional level implementation; and clarity on the continental-regional-national nexus.

Formulation and implementation of CAADP-related initiatives is driven by a broad range of actors. CAADP being a continental framework, the African Union, and particularly the NPCA, is tasked with its coordination. Designated Pillar Lead Institutions oversee and support work that falls under the four CAADP pillars. RECs facilitate the formulation and implementation of a regional compact and a regional agricultural investment plan, while supporting their member states with CAADP initiatives on the national level. At the national level, governments facilitate the formulation and implementation of a national compact and investment plan. Bilateral and multilateral donors provide financial and technical support to CAADP processes and investment.

One specific financial donor vehicle to support the CAADP processes (not investments), is the CAADP Multi-Donor Trust Fund (MTDF) hosted at the World Bank. The MTDF aims to strengthen institutional capacities of African drivers of CAADP, particularly on the continental and regional level, to effectively lead, implement, monitor and evaluate CAADP processes. Beneficiaries of so-called 'Child Trust Funds' include the NPCA, Pillar Institutions and the RECs. Among the contributing donors are UK's DFID, the European Union, France, Ireland, the Netherlands and USAID.

Strong support for regional action in agriculture but more progress needed in articulating the national-regional nexus

In terms of *substance* of the regional CAADP, i.e. policies and investments, it is crucial to design regional food security plans that are coherent and foster synergies: vertical coherence and synergy between the content of national CAADP compacts and the regional compact; as well as horizontal coherence and synergy between policies and investments in the food security sector and other sectors of regional cooperation in SADC.

There seems to be widespread **consensus in COMESA about the importance of regional action** in agriculture and the fact that the value of the COMESA regional compact lies in the delineation of strategic regional investments that individual countries, acting alone, cannot achieve. Most actors, including national stakeholders and regional donors, concur that the regional compact would serve to accelerate individual country agricultural growth by enabling them to benefit from regional spillovers and economies of scale in technology, human and policy development, as well as in trade and investment. However, strategic thinking about concrete plans, issues and sectors where a regional compact needs to complement action at national level is certainly more advanced in regional circles than among national actors.⁷ Most of them, including some key actors in the Agricultural Ministries, seem to know little about the regional compact formulation process and documents. At national level, a regional compact has clearly not been a priority so far, both in COMESA countries who already signed a national CAADP compact and those without a compact.

Strong support for a regional approach to agriculture and food security stems from both the recognition by many stakeholders of the need to strengthen the overall efforts for agricultural development in COMESA as well as specific ideas on programmes that should be part of a regional compact. A regional approach could **catalyse political and investment traction**, attracting important stakeholders from all sectors to the regional cooperation processes, including ministries such as those responsible for agriculture which so far have worked less regularly with COMESA agencies (compared to the trade ministries for instance, given COMESA's focus on trade and related sectors). A number of COMESA regional agricultural programmes are already coordinated by the Secretariat, and some actors in the region believe that a regional CAADP could provide a more holistic approach to food security and launch additional regional interventions, such as:

- development of agriculture trade corridors⁸ and regional trade tools (regional market information systems, business facilitation initiatives, match-making exercises between buyers/sellers): this could be considered a regional CAADP plan to complement ongoing COMESA infrastructure programmes, through the support to regional value chains development so to strengthen the 'software part' of the trade corridors. Key information such as surplus/deficit areas of food production and overall regional food balance sheets are key to enhance food security.⁹
- human and institutional capacity strengthening for trade policy and natural resources management, for regional farmer organisations, local-level leaders and administrations, and all actors who are

⁷ See e.g. FANRPAN. 2010a: "The regional CAADP Compacts are not a synthesis of the various national CAADP Compacts. They will also not replace the national CAADP Compacts. They will constitute an agreement among Member States around investments that are needed to enable individual countries to better deal with transboundary issues that impact on agricultural development in their respective countries".

⁸ This should include raising awareness of small farmers on the potential benefits of -and how to use- such corridors, since today many farmers are not aware and have not experienced concrete benefits from them, including due to lack of knowledge.

⁹ Agri-food value chains as 'software' contribution to corridors is not yet an official policy by COMESA but de facto agencies like ACTESA are working along these lines. Moreover these plans would build on many business-led initiatives at national-level which could become regional, such as the 'e-transport SMS' project in Zambia: truckers send SMS on empty trucks; farmers are provided with this info and can come in supplying their goods; so that trucks tend to travel with full load.

crucial to make implementation of any policy smooth and effective; research capacity could also be pooled at regional level, as national institutions are too small.

These are important ideas but there seems to be consensus on the fact that **more progress is needed in articulating the national-regional nexus**, in order to: help COMESA MS and local administrations realize what is needed as regional level action to contribute to COMESA's food security objectives; and increase awareness on what a regional CAADP compact can bring in addition to a national CAADP compact. For instance, lack of domestication by provincial and local governments of regional decisions is a typical bottleneck to regional integration in COMESA. It was suggested that meetings and policy dialogues should be targeting specifically provincial and traditional leaders (and administrative public officials) who really influence local dynamics, including informal cross-border agricultural trade in COMESA. Most national compacts indeed did not address regional cooperation in any depth (despite some obvious issues came up during compact preparation, such as SPS and trade policy issues), nor the regional compact preparatory process seemed to have analysed in depth what gaps the national plans present in terms of possible joint action among neighbours. Finally, despite lack of attention so far, most national-level actors concur that the national and regional level food security processes should be promoted in parallel, given the potential great contribution of regional action to national food security.

Non-State Actor engagement, and differing views on the multi-stakeholder ownership and quality of the regional compact preparatory process

The formulation of a regional food security plan should guarantee stakeholders' ownership and aim at gathering support for its implementation. The regional CAADP process therefore should: be inclusive and transparent; effectively take into account the different points of view of all relevant stakeholders; include the design of mutual accountability mechanisms allowing for the monitoring of stakeholders' implementation responsibilities and the evaluation of food security impacts. Arguably farmers and other private sector actors are the most important groups to be involved in the design and implementation of CAADP-related policies and investment, both as key contributors to food security and as beneficiaries of support programmes.

Some stakeholders in the region have questioned the real openness of the preparatory process for the COMESA regional compact, deemed as "not truly multi-actor". **Regional farmer organisations complained that their national members were not sufficiently consulted** and that the regional process did not link to the national CAADP compacts.¹⁰ The Eastern Africa Farmers Federation (EAFF) formally expressed their criticisms through a letter to the COMESA Secretary General, adding that many of the exchanges to formulate the compact took place only through emails and often stakeholders were given only few days to comment on the relevant preparatory documents. The EAFF recently also commissioned a consultancy assignment to collect and compile proposals for a regional compact representing the views of farmers and farmers' organizations¹¹; they view the outcomes of the FANRPAN-facilitated process only as good background information for the compact formulation, and not as the regional compact itself. According to EAFF, this new series of consultations should also be based on experiences developed so far through the national compacts¹².

Other criticisms of the regional compact preparatory process relate to quality. Certain stakeholders believe that **FANRPAN's capacity** and staff was fairly limited compared to the task, and that the Framework Document by FANRPAN is too broad, both in terms of regional priorities for investment and range of issues

¹⁰ See EAFF. 2010.

¹¹ See www.FANRPAN.org/documents/d01166/

¹² EAFF is also quite critical with the national-level CAADP processes, arguing that their members were never consulted enough even for the formulation of the existing compacts and investment plans.

addressed.¹³ Other actors on the other hand think the FANRPAN-led process and its documents were satisfactory and wonder whether an optimal degree of participation could ever be achieved. Consultations lasted more than one year and several regional meetings of different stakeholders were held, though only few dedicated country visits took place.¹⁴ Legitimacy and representation in public policy-making processes will always be problematic, especially for non-state actors (NSA), and even more so in a region with overlapping membership to different RECs. Some think it is not the COMESA Secretariat's role to deal with national-level farmers' organisations, but only with regional ones: each government should indicate who are the legitimate representatives of farmers.

In general, in COMESA like in other African regions, the engagement of NSA on regional policy-making is limited as **platforms for regular involvement are lacking**. However, both the EAFF and Southern African Confederation of Agricultural Unions (SACAU) are currently involved in regional food security initiatives and are among the organisations that should probably sign the regional compact. They also plan to do more to empower their national members in COMESA, by assisting in developing capacity (e.g. to develop investment plans), raising awareness around CAADP, helping the formation of national umbrella organizations of farmers where they do not exist, informing on the links between national and regional CAADP.¹⁵ Also **private businesses** face challenges with their representation in the regional CAADP process. Though many think that at national level most intermediary business organisations in this region are quite strong, the COMESA Business Council for instance, the main private sector body for coordination with various policy organs of COMESA, does not seem to have played any particular role in the regional CAADP so far.¹⁶

It is difficult to assess whether such doubts about multi-stakeholder ownership and quality of the regional compact preparatory process can be considered causes for the delay in finalizing the COMESA regional compact. In any case, three lessons emerge for the way forward for regional food security plans. It is very important to urgently and openly identify the various stakeholders who shall participate in the regional compact finalisation and signing process, in terms of scope of stakeholders coverage, representation of specific groups, mandates as well as roles and responsibilities for implementation. Moreover, future steps should be based on the outcomes of FANRPAN's consultations, given that for all actors -even those who deem the process as not participatory enough- the existing documents are acceptable as starting point for a regional compact formulation. Finally, coordinated capacity development initiatives for the benefit of NSA, and in particular farmers' organisations, will be crucial to support the increased engagement of all regional actors in regional CAADP preparations.

The role of the COMESA Secretariat: positive feedback, but room to clarify task-division for future implementation with other regional institutions

Another key stakeholder in the regional food security processes is the COMESA Secretariat, responsible for overall coordination of regional policies as well as implementation of a number of relevant programmes. **Most actors are satisfied with the COMESA Secretariat's role for CAADP progress** in the region, pointing to the effective assistance to member states with the identification of their food security needs and coordination of external support to them. The fact that those SADC MS who are also member of COMESA

¹³ Few have also questioned FANRPAN's independence from this COMESA process given that the Chair of the FANRPAN Board is the Secretary General of COMESA.

¹⁴ For details on the consultation process see FANRPAN 2010b

¹⁵ For more details on regional farmers organisations work-plans, see 'Strategies of Smallholder Farmers to achieve Food Security and Income Growth in Africa', Proceedings of the 2010 CAADP AFRICA FORUM.

¹⁶ According to some stakeholders, private-sector involvement better works when agriculture-specific or sub-sector specific coordination and initiatives are in place since general umbrella organisations representing all sectors, like COMESA Business Council, probably include many members who are not interested in CAADP. Examples in the region include: Eastern and Southern African Dairy Association; East African Fine Coffees Association; Eastern African Grain Council.

signed a CAADP compact thank to the assistance of COMESA Secretariat is also often mentioned as positive feedback.¹⁷ More in general, in COMESA MS the Secretariat is widely perceived as trustworthy, also since it tends to outsource substantial technical work on regional cooperation issues to experts in the MS and to limit its role to that of a 'good process facilitator' and manager of external experts. Examples mentioned by interviewed stakeholders include the outsourcing of the CAADP regional compact facilitation process to FANRPAN as well as the frequent choice of Secretariat's staff and further needed expertise on a project-by-project and technical basis, rather than through political appointments. On the other hand, for some, the Secretariat is at times so proactive in pushing forward regional initiatives that in certain cases it ends up substituting MS for their work and responsibilities, given the passive attitude of some parts of the MS bureaucracies. Finally, few stakeholders also observed that the Secretariat is very effective in the trade-related sectors, as the 'core business' of COMESA, while it is too early to judge on a relatively new area of competence such as food security.

In terms of regional CAADP preparations, the COMESA Secretariat enhanced its **interdepartmental coordination**, with regular meetings among different involved units. These apparently work together in a team spirit, with the results of ongoing programmes outside the CAADP framework feeding also the regional CAADP process. However, according to other interviewed actors, there are no real long-term vision and directives from high-level management at the Secretariat to really create operational synergies between different sectors and policies, and to some extent the overall picture is still one of a collection of many disconnected programmes run by the Secretariat. In terms of the CAADP processes, it was suggested that: internal coordination and effectiveness of the Secretariat could be part of the monitoring and evaluation framework for the future regional CAADP; and that for implementation of the regional compact a more formal coordination structure would probably be required, also to encourage staff members from all departments to follow-up and contribute more regularly to CAADP and optimize on synergies through a joint planning process. Coordinating regional cooperation entails a set of complex and demanding tasks and, like in other RECs in Africa, the COMESA Secretariat faces several challenges, including financial and human resource constraints, also due to an ever expanding agenda for regional integration.¹⁸ Therefore increasing the number of Secretariat officials in the Agriculture Unit responsible for CAADP would be important to support institutional strengthening and the streamlining of CAADP in COMESA's activities.¹⁹

Finally, it was noted that improving internal coordination should also mean better synergies between COMESA Secretariat and **COMESA's specialized agencies** such as ACTESA. ACTESA was created in 2009 by the Heads of State of COMESA as a Specialized Agency to develop regional agricultural policies and integrate small farmers into national, regional and international markets, in response to the Pillar II and Pillar III agenda of CAADP. When substantial funds allocated by donors to COMESA were passed on to ACTESA to implement the 'COMESA Regional Agro-Inputs Programme'²⁰, according to stakeholders in the region, tensions arose as some of the staff working at the Secretariat on CAADP transferred to **ACTESA**, leading to a capacity gap at the Secretariat and possibly contributing to delays in the delivery of important regional programmes. Learning from this experience could be important to make coordination between regional institutions smoother, especially for the formulation of the CAADP regional investment plans, as well as to clarify task-division for future CAADP implementation functions.

¹⁷ "The meeting also appreciated the significant role COMESA played in rolling out CAADP especially in countries characterised by overlapping REC membership" (7th CAADP Partnership Platform Communiqué, March 2011).

¹⁸ ACBF. 2008

¹⁹ For 2009 and good part of 2010, this Unit in COMESA had only one core staff member, which led to a slowdown in the CAADP implementation process in the region (FANRPAN. 2010a)

²⁰ This programme is funded through 20 million euro from the EC Food Facility, see www.comesa.int

The role of pan-African institutions and development partners: much to be improved

Institutions responsible for CAADP implementation at pan-African level, such as the AUC and NPCA, as well as the major international donors supporting with substantial funds and other inputs the CAADP and other related programmes, are also important actors in the regional food security processes. 'Mixed feelings' are found among stakeholders in the COMESA region regarding the role that continental institutions and development partners (DPs) have played on the regional dimensions of CAADP so far. Technical and financial support from them is obviously acknowledged, but apparently donors and pan-African organisations could do much better to really promote implementation of CAADP at regional level in COMESA. According to such view, this is mostly due to: lack of coordination among African institutions; an underlying **misunderstanding** on the side of continental bodies and DPs about the nature of CAADP regional action and the relationship between CAADP and the overall regional integration dynamics in COMESA; insufficient donor coordination and weak engagement between DPs and COMESA around implementation of CAADP at the regional level.

Despite that official mandates of all involved actors are clear vis-à-vis CAADP implementation²¹, different approaches and sometimes disconnected priorities of different agencies lead to insufficient coordination among major African players such as RECs and NPCA. As a result, there are risks of duplication of efforts, high transaction costs and unnecessary burden for the ultimate beneficiaries i.e. the African countries and their farmers. The NPCA for instance would have often failed to communicate effectively and timely with regional stakeholders about various aspects of the CAADP processes, including in terms of opportunities to share lessons across different RECs as well as avenues to access external funding through 'multilateral' mechanisms such as the CAADP MDTF.²²

The second problem mentioned by stakeholders relates to the fact that NPCA and some Headquarters (HQ) donors would have attached so far **too much value to the regional CAADP compact as a policy document**, to be urgently finalised as a panacea for regional action implementation. This would constitute an indirect criticism to regional organisations for not implementing swiftly the regional CAADP through the formulation of the 'compact document'. Such criticism would fail to consider that implementing CAADP at the regional level should rather be a coherent combination of processes aimed at food security, building especially on everyday work the REC performs in all sectors through ongoing programmes and without necessarily waiting for new initiatives launched after finalisation of the CAADP compact. Indeed, the COMESA Secretariat and other actors involved in COMESA processes stress an important point which they think others outside the region may have misunderstood. The regional CAADP compact is an overarching framework that: i) will give guidance to, and fast-track, a number of interventions for food security which are already in place (e.g. work on SPS, or value chain development); ii) will promote new policies and investments where gaps exist today; iii) will clarify synergies and coordination among ongoing and new initiatives. Accordingly, DPs should also increase their attention and support for ongoing regional programmes as these are going to be the real backbone of any future Regional CAADP Investment Plan. Indeed several challenges to the effective cooperation between COMESA and DPs emerge from consultations with stakeholders, and they could represent important lessons for the way forward on regional food security plans in COMESA. First of all, there is a serious lack of coordination in all sectors of regional cooperation, even in those areas where there is traction and ongoing programmes by COMESA agencies and already extensive support by many different donors, such as for trade corridors²³. In general,

²¹ For details see NEPAD. 2010

²² According to some regional actors, the MDTF is skewed towards supporting activities that are far away from regional decision-making centres, undertaken by the NPCA directly or often by consultants hired and managed through the WB system and procedures.

²³ In the case of important regional corridors, a strong leadership comes from Trade Mark and DFID in Pretoria, while donors interacting with COMESA in Lusaka, such as EC, are not involved and lack basic information about progress and future plans.

few donors are involved in regional programmes and those who are often do it from different locations, therefore there is no culture or urgency for donor coordination and fewer resources to put into coordination²⁴. A few donors, such as the European Commission (EC), who attempted to push for coordination on regional action from Lusaka have found very little appetite for it both among donors and by COMESA Secretariat. Some DPs finance regional programmes that contribute to one or more of the CAADP thematic areas, but coordination is lacking in the agriculture and food security sector. Some steps have been taken, with coordination to support the Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa (ASARECA), ACTESA, and the development of a regional seed alliance, but it is too early to see results on the ground.²⁵

An additional problem seem to be that CAADP donor support is managed centrally. Despite this many stakeholders believe the regional level is the right one for donor coordination while HQs are far away from the regional dynamics. Indeed the major source to support CAADP processes, the MDTF, is hosted at the World Bank (WB), so regional players and donor offices working with COMESA in Lusaka on regional agriculture issues are hardly involved. A related structural problem is the weak coordination between HQs and regional donors resulting in planning and implementation bottlenecks. It was mentioned for instance that some important regional actors such as COMESA Secretariat and regional farmer organisations tend to view donor HQs as their primary contact point, while others, like ACTESA, interact more regularly with regional offices.

In terms of **COMESA-DPs engagement structures**, twice a year donors are invited to COMESA high-level meetings to discuss their support to the general annual COMESA work plan. These formal events however involve too many participants and no discussions on specific sectoral issues, with subsequent little operational outcomes. Indeed, some DPs have asked the COMESA Secretariat to be consulted more regularly on regional CAADP issues (few seem to have received the outcomes of the FANRPAN-led process), but no such mechanism exist and many at the Secretariat believe that this can happen only after internal arrangements (regional and/or a 'tripartite' compacts) are finalised. Some regional-level donors think the Secretariat underestimates the importance for aid effectiveness of COMESA explicitly requesting them for more regional-level donor coordination. Others, however, warn that establishing a parallel COMESA-donor mechanism only for CAADP would duplicate the existing high-level engagement structure.²⁶

Finally, it was suggested by interviewed stakeholders that some of the above problems could be addressed by increasing **presence of regional donors in Lusaka** and stepping up the number of donors engaging specifically on regional food security action. This would require also more efforts for coordination at regional level, through a donor agricultural working group as counterpart of all relevant COMESA agencies (without duplication of the work of the high-level engagement mechanism). A 'lead donor' would probably also be needed as no individual DP acting at regional level has currently the convening power required to

²⁴ Support at regional level is only undertaken by: USAID (from Nairobi and Pretoria offices for COMESA and SADC respectively); Germany but only for SADC; WB (from Washington DC); DFID and CIDA from Pretoria; JICA from Tokyo; EC which is the only major regional donor operating from its Lusaka offices (Norway is also involved from Lusaka, but is a much smaller donor, with regional action only on the COMESA Climate Initiative). AfDB and FAO contribute to corridors and SPS respectively.

²⁵ According to the "USAID's East Africa Feed the Future 2010 implementation plan", eight donors signed a formal Memorandum of Understanding to coordinate their approach in support of CAADP, and informal donor groups were set up for coordination for the northern and central transport corridors. These efforts are meant "to be coordinated within the framework of the CAADP regional Compact once it is completed", which shows the little traction of such coordination given delays in the CAADP process.

²⁶ This was felt when a parallel donor platform, beyond the overall COMESA engagement structures, was created for ACTESA. More in general, the overall donor alignment to the COMESA mid-term strategic plan is seen as satisfactory by many actors in the region. This apparently ensures all funds are devoted to regional integration objectives, and it is noted that any CAADP specific work should try and keep this approach, avoiding any diversion from COMESA's own agenda.

effectively improve coordination. Enhanced coordination would also require strengthening human resources for some of the donor regional offices, which often lack adequate capacity.

2.2. CAADP regional plans and linkages with the overall framework for regional integration

A very important dimension related to the progress of regional approaches to food security which emerges from consultations with COMESA stakeholders is the relationship between such regional plans and the overall framework for, and status of, regional integration (RI) initiatives. The draft COMESA regional compact has RI and cross-sector synergies at its core, as it is directly linked to the overarching COMESA's Medium Term Strategic Plan. The priorities identified in the Strategic Plan and in the compact are very similar (regional policy and regulatory framework, building productive capacity, infrastructure and trade development corridors). Synergies are likely to emerge across policies and programmes related to existing regional frameworks on natural resources, trade, infrastructure and 'agriculture and rural development' (ARD). The next section of this paper analyses such possible synergies across different sectors of regional cooperation that are relevant for food security. However, here it is important to emphasise that, despite good progress in many areas of economic cooperation, **COMESA RI still faces serious challenges** which are likely to be reflected also in the implementation of regional CAADP. And this is generally reflected in the expectations by various stakeholders on the impact of CAADP on RI progress.

General institutional and economic challenges to RI in COMESA²⁷ include: overlapping membership of RECs²⁸; lack of full enforceability of regional decisions (often they are not translated into national legislation by MS)²⁹; continued unnecessary road blocks, customs barriers, corruption and administrative requirements at border-posts, which also substantially differ from one MS, and one border-post, to the other (further complicating policies harmonization and regional investment)³⁰. Despite that stronger economies such as Kenya and certain competitive companies from other COMESA MS took advantage of RI opportunities, many stakeholders refer also to the **need to show more clearly the benefits of RI**, especially to weaker MS and population segments like small farmers, before all relevant actors embrace the idea of designing and implementing a regional approach to CAADP. There is very little explicit opposition to regional trade liberalisation in COMESA and no particular evidence of damage caused by the COMESA free trade area (FTA), even among farmers' organisations (which typically are wary of potential competition from agricultural imports from other countries).³¹ On the other hand, several of the interviewed stakeholders point to the lack of evidence on the benefits of regional programmes for the population at large. A regional CAADP implemented to take into account the key underlying bottlenecks to RI and the above lessons learnt would have better chances to achieve its objectives. Delivering results in a crucial sector such as agriculture could also be a real contribution to the overall integration and cooperation in COMESA.

Another clear link between CAADP regional plans and overall RI dynamics in COMESA is the idea of a possible **Tripartite compact**. During FANRPAN-led consultative process, it was recognized that the

²⁷ For a summary of these general challenges see 'Regional integration in COMESA - state of play and challenges', Mangeni (2010)

²⁸ Eastern Africa has the largest number of RECs and intergovernmental regional bodies in Africa, with most of COMESA MS belonging to two or more RECs, which often results in duplication of resources and conflicting goals and policies; see AfDB (2010)

²⁹ UNECA. 2010

³⁰ ASARECA (2008)

³¹ Of course specific cases of sub-sectors both suffering and benefiting already exist, e.g. programmes like COMESA "simplified trade regime" seem to benefit informal and small traders, though most liberalisation benefits so far are enjoyed by exporting companies and wholesale importers (several farmers operate on contract-farming basis, so trade benefits are indirect only).

Priority Compact Programmes identified in the COMESA CAADP compact would have maximum impact if implemented across all three RECs. Certainly many actors in COMESA are interested in designing a 'Tripartite' compact, as this would address fundamental issues related to overlapping RECs membership, such as SPS and other types of agricultural trade barriers. Despite that the willingness on the side of SADC and EAC is less explicit, the three Heads of RECs have agreed to work on a possible 'Tripartite' compact. Informal consultations between officials of the three Secretariats started, with a view to agree on which specific areas of cooperation will be covered by a 'Tripartite' food security framework as well as on which REC will take the lead in the preparations under each thematic areas.

On the development partners side, it is well known that DFID is more advanced in terms of political, technical and financial support for the 'Tripartite' initiatives, while others are not on board yet. A 'Friends of the Tripartite' group of donors exists for support related to the trade sector, and according to some stakeholders in COMESA a similar approach could be considered in the future as basis for RECs-donors engagement for a possible 'Tripartite' CAADP compact.³²

3. Other regional initiatives relevant to food security and possible linkages with CAADP

Under the overarching framework of the multi-sectoral Medium Term Strategic Plan, COMESA has already in place several policies and programmes which are very important to achieve food security objectives, especially in terms of economic cooperation. In many cases these initiatives precede the CAADP. In order to assess the progress and future prospects of regional food security plans therefore it is important to analyse also the status of such policies and programmes. Understanding their strengths and weaknesses, what major bottlenecks they encounter, is crucial to:

1. avoid duplications and identify opportunities and challenges for the creation of synergies with CAADP;
2. understand whether the implementation of CAADP at regional level can build on the progress in other sectors and possibly contribute to removing current obstacles to those existing regional initiatives (if any);
3. design a regional CAADP compact which includes policies and investments that are coherent, complementary and coordinated with those that COMESA is taking forward in other RI areas.

This section can only provide some examples and preliminary ideas about possible synergies between CAADP and other relevant regional initiatives. Many other programmes, policies and investments could be looked at to derive lessons for regional food security cooperation. Synergies could be explored more in detail during the regional compact finalization process and other multi-stakeholder dialogues, when actors will be able to discuss concretely about coherence, complementarity and coordination of specific CAADP actions within the regional compact with other existing policies and investments. In certain circumstances, even if synergies were clear, there may be challenges to their operationalisation, for instance political sensitivities, potential conflict between institutions involved in those programmes, or simply the preference by one or more COMESA MS to deal with that particular issue outside of the CAADP framework.

³² In addition to this, at the moment of publishing this paper, the Secretariat and MS of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) (Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, and Uganda) together with their international partners announced the launching of a process to formulate an IGAD Regional CAADP Compact. This adds to the uncertainties related to the Tripartite.

Agriculture: recently launched programmes as good basis to develop a more holistic framework

To achieve the overall goal of improved regional food security, COMESA adopted an Agricultural Strategy for the period 2010-2014, with three strategic areas of intervention: facilitation of efficient agricultural markets; accelerating adoption of productivity-enhancing technologies; promoting an enabling agricultural policy environment. This Strategy guides several initiatives at different stages of implementation, coordinated by the COMESA Secretariat and supported by different DPs³³, related to: regional agricultural markets promotion (including agro-inputs and FAMIS, the 'Food and Agricultural Marketing Information System'); food reserves and famine early warning system; biotechnology and bio-safety; livestock and fisheries sectors development; pest management and other sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) measures.

It is probably too early for a sound and comprehensive evaluation of most of these COMESA programmes and the clear identification of success-stories, as most ARD initiatives are relatively new compared to other regional cooperation sectors (e.g. the Preferential Trade Agreement Treaty dates back to 1993 and the FTA was established in 2000). However what seems clear to many stakeholders in the region, and is also recognized in the COMESA Agricultural Strategy, is that the agriculture programmes are not systematically coordinated and appear to be approached as individual projects rather than coherent components of one overarching ARD programme. To be fully effective, a more holistic approach to their implementation is needed, linking clearly markets, institutions, natural resources and infrastructure with agricultural development. Indeed, the role and value-addition of regional CAADP could be the systematization and coordination of existing, pipeline and future programmes, in the context of a unifying policy framework (the CAADP compact) with mutual accountability mechanisms and complementarity between regional and national commitments and choices (vertical coherence between regional and national compacts).

Another message emerging from stakeholder consultations in the region is that existing ARD initiatives in COMESA (with their strengths and weaknesses) should both be the building blocks of, and provide lessons for, the regional CAADP. Regional frameworks covering important dimensions of food security, for instance SPS and 'agricultural research and technology', constitute sub-sectors where supporting regional institutions and strategies are in place, and the regional CAADP compact would only need to integrate them into the overarching food security plan for the region, while facilitating their faster implementation. On SPS, for example, the COMESA Secretariat coordinates regional work such as the COMESA SPS Technical Committee of member states officials, the establishment or rehabilitation of regional laboratories to test agricultural produce, and the improvement and harmonization of SPS legislation in MS. The Technical Committee could be given the mandate as part of the regional CAADP compact to oversee all those activities in the region, avoiding duplications of administrative layers by creating new institutions and coordinating bodies. On the other hand, while preparation of a new specific CAADP-related SPS framework for COMESA would not be necessary, the regional compact and investment plan could include action to: further harmonize SPS measures in the MS and regularly update them; enhance participatory training, institutional development and collaboration on SPS (e.g. commitment by MS to strengthen the 'national SPS committees'); improve relevant data and information collection and sharing throughout the region.

³³ The Annexes and the Secretariat's website (www.comesa.int) provide more details on these agriculture sector initiatives.

Trade: markets are increasingly open but NTBs and structural inequalities still limit trade

The COMESA free trade area came into force in January 2000 providing for elimination of tariff and non-tariff barriers to trade. **Tariff liberalization** progressed well and all tariffs have now been eliminated on trade between COMESA MS (with few temporary exceptions, granted by the COMESA Council of Ministers, in particular sectors, such as sugar, where some forms of protection are still in place as safeguard for the local industries)³⁴. Four COMESA MS however have not joined the FTA (Eritrea, Uganda, Democratic Republic of Congo and Ethiopia). A work programme coordinated by the COMESA Secretariat is currently being implemented for the transition period 2009-2012 from the FTA to the Customs Union, providing time for MS to adjust to the requirements of the Customs Union (e.g. alignment of the national tariffs to the COMESA Common External Tariff). Work is also ongoing on the liberalisation of trade in **services**: 'regulations' were adopted in June 2009, and recently good progress was achieved on negotiating the MS's individual liberalisation schedules. Preliminary schedules have already been exchanged and are currently under discussion, with plans to conclude negotiations in 2012.³⁵

The COMESA FTA has had a positive effect on trade in the member countries³⁶, but challenges still exist and represent serious bottlenecks to cross-border investment and further expansion of intra-regional trade³⁷. One of such challenges is that countries belonging to both COMESA and SADC may apply two separate frameworks for several trade procedures, with subsequent potential conflict between regulations and negative impact on the investors' and exporters' confidence about the business environment in the region.

According to stakeholders, another important bottleneck to regional trade expansion is the persistence of non-tariff barriers (**NTBs**), considered by many the "everyday rule" in COMESA rather than the exception.³⁸ SPS measures for instance often are not safety-based but respond to a trade protection rationale.³⁹ The COMESA Secretariat provides capacity building support for MS to reduce NTBs, assisting with border inspection and surveillance systems⁴⁰ and sponsoring training and participation of national officials to international standard-setting processes. Moreover, the Tripartite 'NTB Monitoring Reporting and Removal System' is a regional online monitoring system through which any private operator can report NTBs encountered in one of the three RECs. However, gaps in the regional legal framework and slow regional policy implementation at national level delay the implementation of regional commitments to address NTBs. Also in the context of the 'Tripartite monitoring' little follow-up action is taken by national governments: the information on NTBs is collected but the system does not include an effective enforceable mechanism to remove the identified NTBs. In fact, most COMESA MS do not respond timely with the type of feedback that the Secretariat would need to coordinate appropriate responses. MS probably weigh the costs of implementing regional policies at national level against immediate gains, therefore delaying the removal of NTBs.

³⁴ OECD. 2011. African Economic Outlook 2011

³⁵ COMESA does not follow a 'ratification by parliament' approach for regional decisions: once ministers agree, the 'regulations' enter directly into force without need for domestic approval.

³⁶ Between 2004-2008, trade among FTA member countries grew by over 39% annually (Mangeni 2010).

³⁷ Intra-regional trade in COMESA still only accounts for 5% of total trade for the COMESA countries (Notenbaert, A., et al. 2010)

³⁸ For a recent discussion on the challenges to address NTBs in the region see Pearson, M. 2011

³⁹ The FAMIS websites reports that "COMESA would like to put in place stringent SPS measures, to check on the spread of pests and diseases of both plant and animal origin, which are of economic and social importance within the region. At the same time, COMESA would like to prevent the abuse of these measures by member States, as a means of preventing trade between or amongst member States" (<http://famis.comesa.int>).

⁴⁰ COMESA recently procured equipment to be used in three regional laboratories meant to enhance SPS requirements. This is part of efforts by the regional bloc to establish SPS regional reference laboratories.

A final structural weakness affecting regional trade is the continued **supply-side-constraints** in most COMESA MS, which limit the possibilities of exploiting liberalised trade even when no tariffs or NTBs are in place. Aid for Trade (AfT) is one of the available opportunities to address such constraints. The COMESA AfT Strategy, adopted in 2009, covered a two year period and focused on two main aspects: coherent packages of interrelated investments in trade-related infrastructures, trade development and trade facilitation instruments; access for COMESA MS to mechanisms to address trade and integration related adjustments. The COMESA AfT Strategy is currently being revised to enhance its effectiveness.⁴¹ In COMESA, donors provide significant levels of support on trade, including AfT, assistance on SPS issues and substantial training activities, despite they are criticised by some stakeholders due to insufficient coordination (Annexes 2 and 3 provide a snapshot of existing overlaps among different DPs' support programmes).

All this is very relevant for the development of a COMESA regional food security approach. The linkages between CAADP and the different COMESA trade policy initiatives may be less direct than the links with ongoing ARD programmes, and will certainly need to be elaborated further. Nonetheless, given the importance of food trade and regional agricultural markets for food security, a regional CAADP will have to cover the trade dimension, both by taking into account progress and obstacles in the overall COMESA integration initiatives and possibly by including synergetic actions on agricultural trade. For example a trade chapter in the regional CAADP compact could possibly envisage measures to improve intra-COMESA trade in agricultural products through the continued facilitation and elimination of agricultural trade barriers within COMESA, including by those MS who have not yet joined the FTA. Bearing in mind the lessons learnt from the overall trade liberalization and reforms in COMESA, a regional compact could also include actions to: fill the gaps in the regional legal framework on SPS; attach to NTB monitoring systems an effective and enforceable mechanism to remove the identified NTBs; promote agricultural aid for trade, possibly building on the process to revise the "COMESA AfT Strategy".

Infrastructure and corridors: progress on hardware but remaining bottlenecks on software

A well known feature of RI in COMESA is the 'economic corridor-based approach' adopted to facilitate trade and transport across the region. Economic and trade **corridors** have strong potential to contribute to CAADP objectives in terms of regional markets development and food security, through: support to regional agri-food chains and increasing the value of regional agricultural products; facilitation of private sector involvement in agri-food investment; and operational linkages between production and distributions aspect of agriculture development. Good progress on corridors is under way in COMESA, with substantial infrastructure work ongoing in many MS on their part of competence of the corridors. For instance, the Tripartite North South Corridor is progressing well, with a specific Investment Programme launched in April 2009 through a donors pledging conference which raised US\$ 1.2 billion. Coordination of different involved actors is also improving, for instance through the establishment of the Authority of the Northern Corridor and the Central Corridor Authority.

Serious challenges remain, however, especially in terms of lack of the needed synergies between 'hardware' and 'software' aspects of the corridors, i.e. what should be the conducive environment accompanying the infrastructure, for example business facilitation, harmonization of administrative regulations across countries, smooth customs clearance, etc. Very different custom procedures in MS constitute a particularly serious bottleneck to trade and investment, with different national-level systems not integrated and still too much reliance on paper-work at the border posts. Moreover, most interviewed stakeholders in COMESA refer to the importance of applying food security and agricultural development

⁴¹ See 'Review of the COMESA Aid for Trade Strategy' (ECDPM Discussion Paper 128, forthcoming 2012)

lenses to trade corridor infrastructure efforts, including by establishing a 'Committee on Agriculture' to focus on how to better support and integrate the development of agricultural production, processing and trade.

In addition to infrastructure development, many **other programmes and trade facilitation initiatives** are ongoing along the corridors, including to promote integrated border management, 'one stop border post' and the 'trade single window' concept, all aimed at the reduction of time and cost of transportation in the region and the coordination amongst border agencies for effective and efficient border clearance procedures. Donor support contributes substantially to corridor development and related initiatives, including through infrastructure investment, capacity building and training activities; but more could be done also by DPs for better 'software' development along the corridors.

Different views exist on whether the partial success on corridors would be enhanced or diminished by a full-fledged regional coordinated approach to corridors management, with some actors pointing to the fact that corridor development is a 'collection of bilateral arrangements' rather than a real regional cooperation framework. **Possible solutions** to existing bottlenecks may include:

1. improving not only customs procedures at the border (e.g. number of forms to be filled in) but also expand use of automated data clearance (otherwise the former improvement is useless);
2. harmonization of tendering procedures and standardized bidding documents for infrastructure development and a 'special purpose vehicle' to run the corridors, especially with a view to attracting the much needed private investors.

Making agriculture in COMESA more productive requires better roads, storage, irrigation and other infrastructural enhancements. But more specifically, given the central role of food trade and regional agricultural markets for food security, the COMESA CAADP compact will have to take into account the strengths and weaknesses of corridors development. According to some stakeholders in the region, considering the lesson learnt on the importance of the software dimension, a possible synergy between CAADP and corridors could be the identification of ways for a regional CAADP compact to contribute to the development of 'agriculture trade corridors' and regional trade tools (regional market information systems, business facilitation initiatives, match-making exercises between buyers/sellers).

Natural resources: fundamental but tricky issues and lack of regional cooperation

Natural resources management is not directly addressed by COMESA at regional level given the fundamental economic nature of COMESA policies, programmes and the related capacity and focus of the technical and coordinating structures. However, some COMESA MS which are also members of SADC are part of regional cooperation frameworks there, including the overarching "SADC Protocol on Shared **Water Courses**", a multi-country arrangement, reinforcing -on a subsidiarity basis- single basins protocols. Similarly, Easter African MS cooperate through the Lake Victoria Basin Commission, and EAC countries are signatories to the "EAC Protocol on Environment and Natural Resource Management", aimed at harmonization of national policies and integrated management of shared natural resources and ecosystems. But progress is limited on both processes, given the prevalence of national interests. More recently, climate change regional initiatives are under discussion within COMESA, and staff was hired to work on climate change international processes, towards a framework for regional cooperation on climate change adaptation, and coordination of a regional position at international level.

Land remains dramatically political (in most COMESA countries these are constitutional matters), and some stakeholders believe that taking this forward regionally is probably premature. The draft CAADP regional compact envisages future cooperation on water resources, especially for irrigation, and could help with a better integration of natural resources management in regional agricultural policies and investment, given the multidimensional nature of food security challenges. This could also lead to increasing donors'

attention around natural resources in COMESA. Finally, the Eastern Africa Power Pool aims at optimising the use of **energy** resources available in the COMESA region, but it may be too early to evaluate the impact of the Pool as it became a specialized institution of COMESA only at the end of 2006.

Natural resources management is obviously a crucial part of the development of a regional food security approach, but regional cooperation in this field is just at the beginning in COMESA. Therefore despite that CAADP currently receives high level political attention and seems to progress well at national level, expectations should be managed carefully on the possibility for a COMESA compact to also cover water, land and energy. On the other hand, it may also be the case that framing certain initiatives in such areas within a comprehensive, multi-dimensional and multi-stakeholder policy process like CAADP could also contribute to removing some of the obstacles that were limiting regional cooperation in those new fields.

4. Concluding remarks: towards a regional CAADP compact in COMESA

Previous sections analysed the status of preparations for the COMESA regional CAADP compact, highlighting the role played so far by key involved stakeholders, the relationship between food security processes and the overall progress on RI, as well as the possible synergies between CAADP and other regional policies and programmes. Taking into account these existing challenges and opportunities, the final part of this paper presents some ideas and recommendations on the way forward for regional food security plans, both in terms of what each actor could do to contribute positively and what features could characterize a regional compact. Given the complexities and sensitivities involved, such concluding remarks can only be considered preliminary, and will have to be tested against the results of upcoming policy dialogues and formal decisions by the relevant COMESA institutions. Nonetheless, the clarifications and suggestions provided here can hopefully shed some light on the way forward and be useful in the process, as they emerge from a series of stakeholders consultations and reflect the current plans around the regional compact formulation.

Emerging messages on the way forward

The COMESA Regional Compact is nearly ready but COMESA is now waiting for a 'Tripartite' approach to CAADP. This 'catch 22 situation' should be solved quickly: COMESA should design its own regional investment plans to show concretely the potential added value of a COMESA Compact vis-à-vis the national CAADP compacts, though designing credible and realistic plans requires knowing which programmes to undertake as COMESA and which jointly with other RECs as part of the possible 'Tripartite' Compact. Despite a temporary pause in the COMESA compact process, informal consultations between officials of the three RECs Secretariats have started, with a view to agree on which specific areas of cooperation will be covered by a 'Tripartite' food security framework. All stakeholders in the region, including development partners, could support such process, by respecting its pace and different status of CAADP preparations in different RECs, but also by providing any assistance that the RECs may require.

There seems to be consensus in COMESA about the importance of regional action in agriculture and the fact that the value of the COMESA Regional Compact lies in the delineation of strategic regional investments that individual countries, acting alone, cannot afford. Agricultural growth at country-level would benefit from regional spillovers and economies of scale in technology, human and policy development, trade and investment. However, more progress is needed in the region in articulating clearly such national-regional nexus. Strategic thinking about those sub-sectors and concrete measures where the regional

CAADP compact needs to complement action at national level can be fostered by both more regular multi-stakeholder policy dialogue throughout the region as well as analysis of the gaps the national compacts present in terms of possible joint action among neighbours. This would enhance the ownership of regional food security plans and the 'vertical coherence' between the regional and national CAADP compacts. The COMESA Secretariat, with the support of its development partners, could facilitate such dialogue and analysis as part of the process to finalize the COMESA regional compact and possibly design a Tripartite plan.

Experiences with non-state-actors engagement (in particular farmers' organisations) and differing views on the quality of the regional compact formulation process show that it is very important to identify the stakeholders who shall participate in the regional compact finalisation and signature (representation of specific groups, mandates as well as roles and responsibilities for implementation). A good basis for this was already established through FANRPAN's consultations and future steps should be based on the outcomes of that process (without starting from scratch), given that for all actors -even those who are critical- existing documents are acceptable as starting point for the regional compact formulation. Coordinated capacity development initiatives for the benefit of NSA, especially farmers' organisations, will be crucial to support the needed increased engagement of key actors in regional CAADP preparations.

Most actors in the region seem satisfied with the COMESA Secretariat's role on CAADP. However, some have suggested that more operational synergies should be created between different sectors and policies relevant for food security, beyond CAADP. This regional cooperation and coordination is demanding, presenting financial and human resource challenges for the COMESA Secretariat. On the one hand, increasing the number of Secretariat officials in the Agriculture Unit responsible for CAADP would be important to support institutional strengthening and the streamlining of CAADP in COMESA's activities. On the other, also the synergies between the Secretariat and COMESA's specialized agencies such as ACTESA should be maximised around CAADP plans, especially with a view to clarify task-division among regional institutions for future CAADP implementation.

In terms of the role of pan-African institutions and DPs in regional CAADP preparations in COMESA, many stakeholders believe there is room for significant improvement, mostly due to: lack of coordination among key involved African agencies; an underlying misunderstanding on the side of continental bodies and DPs about the nature of CAADP regional action and the relationship between CAADP and the overall regional integration dynamics in COMESA; insufficient donor coordination and weak engagement between DPs and COMESA around implementation of CAADP at the regional level.

Firstly, past failures at continental level to communicate effectively and timely with regional stakeholders about various aspects of the CAADP processes should be addressed urgently. Secondly, pan-African institutions and DPs should align to the approach currently followed by the key regional players in COMESA: mainstreaming CAADP objectives and modalities into ongoing regional programmes (also in other sectors relevant to food security) and making them more coherent and coordinated is the priority for implementing regional dimensions of CAADP, rather than the finalisation of the regional compact document itself. In this respect, more regular dialogue between COMESA, NPCA and DPs around implementation of regional CAADP plans should be promoted. Lastly, the role of DPs should be improved on several fronts. Donors committed to strengthening food security in COMESA should increase their attention and support for ongoing regional programmes, beyond CAADP, as these are likely to be the backbone of any future regional CAADP investment plan. DPs coordination should be enhanced within the food security sector, between agriculture and other regional cooperation sectors, as well as between donor HQs and regional donor offices, possibly devolving more management decisions on CAADP-related support to such offices in Lusaka. This could also translate in the establishment of a regional donor working group on food security

as counterpart of all relevant COMESA agencies (without duplicating the bi-annual overall COMESA-DPs engagement mechanism), and the appointment of a 'lead donor'.

Another emerging message from the COMESA stakeholders is that the regional agricultural plans should take into account the cross-cutting general bottlenecks to RI experienced so far by COMESA, such as overlapping membership of RECs and lack of full enforceability of regional decisions, often not translated into national legislation by MS. In addition, ARD action will have to be accompanied by a much better 'campaign' in each COMESA MS to raise awareness about the benefits of regional approaches in every proposed regional cooperation area relevant to food security, and about the results achieved so far.

There is in general full support for an effectively multidimensional regional CAADP, anchored in ongoing programmes implemented by COMESA. Indeed, many actors in COMESA believe that it is very important to ensure the 'horizontal' coherence between regional policies and investments in food security and in other sectors of regional cooperation. Synergies should be identified and promoted between the regional CAADP compact and ongoing initiatives on ARD, trade, infrastructure and natural resources. This paper shows that some linkages will naturally emerge, such as on the elimination of agricultural tariff and non-tariff barriers, (especially related to SPS), aid for trade and 'agriculture trade corridors', and existing regional agricultural programmes and institutions. Other synergies will need to be carefully analyzed, in order to design a regional CAADP compact which includes policies and investments that are coherent, complementary and coordinated with those that COMESA is taking forward in other RI areas. In specific cases, framing a regional initiative within a comprehensive and multi-stakeholder policy process like CAADP could contribute to removing some of the current obstacles or resistances to its launch or full implementation, for instance in the area of natural resources management, a crucial part of a regional food security approach but which is very new for cooperation at COMESA level.

A flexible, 'differentiated-gear', Tripartite CAADP compact?

The prevailing position among key COMESA stakeholders, including COMESA Secretariat and other drivers of change within NSA, donors and experts, is that the COMESA regional compact will be finalised as a framework to address food security challenges specific to COMESA, within the context of a possible 'Tripartite' CAADP compact through which COMESA-EAC-SADC will work together to address issues common to all three RECs. Given different challenges and processes in the three RECs, including different stages of development of CAADP, the emerging idea is that such 'Tripartite compact' should be an **overarching** framework, comprehensive and multidimensional, but also **flexible**. A 'Tripartite' compact, or anyway a joint approach by three RECs to food security issues of common concern, cannot be a rigid and binding agreement, with the same policies, programmes, rules and implementation time-frame for all three RECs and their MS. Rather, a flexible compact would be a 'Tripartite' framework allowing each REC to:

1. Achieve its **internal coherence**, i.e. the vertical coherence between national CAADP compacts and the REC-specific regional compact, as well as the horizontal coherence between CAADP and other sectors of regional cooperation which the specific REC is bringing forward;
2. Implement the required regional plans (both REC-specific and common to the three RECs) according to a realistic time-frame, which may be different for different RECs and countries, depending on different starting points and actual implementation drive. While keeping common CAADP framework and objectives, this would translate into a '**differentiated gears**' 'Tripartite' compact, with RECs or blocs of countries entering different programmatic partnerships on specific sectors/themes, gradually, depending on existing progress of various parts of regional cooperation and on voluntary basis.⁴² A 'faster' gear in a particular sector/theme for a specific group of countries would mean for instance prioritizing an investment plan for these specific sectors/theme.

⁴² This approach is similar to what the COMESA Council recently approved upon ACTESA's proposal, in fact going beyond COMESA member states: a "cluster approach" of programmes involving four to five countries depending on

This 'comprehensive, internally coherent and differentiated gears' 'Tripartite' compact can be realistically built around existing REC plans and groups of countries which already cooperate well in specific areas, even beyond activities belonging strictly only to COMESA or EAC or SADC programmes. The **added value** of this approach would be to look at existing sector progress in each REC and MS and find a niche for CAADP either as synergy-creation across sectors and countries or in some cases as multi-purpose programmes related to food security, e.g. value chain development plans which identify and address in parallel bottlenecks on natural resources, infrastructure corridors, and trade.

Such gradual approach would allow SADC, for instance, to simultaneously formulate its part of the 'Tripartite' CAADP and complete its ongoing process for the Regional Agricultural Policy (RAP, i.e. the SADC regional CAADP compact), maintaining the objective of having RAP as a legally binding framework for SADC, but without imposing to non-SADC countries the same degree of legal value for other programmes that will be common to all the RECs on certain shared challenges. Similarly, if one REC does not have within its priority mandate a specific cooperation area, it can still achieve full multidimensionality of a 'Tripartite' CAADP at its own pace. This for instance would be the case of COMESA, for which including regional water resources management in its CAADP framework would require first an expansion of the traditional agenda of COMESA, focused at present more on economic regional integration.

In terms of concrete cooperation programmes, examples of REC-specific action building on existing progress could be: a COMESA investment plan for regional market information system along the trade corridors; a SADC programme to link sustainable regional water management with food security objectives for the region; and an EAC financing mechanism for agricultural input development. In other areas where it makes sense to move jointly as 'Tripartite' bloc, the three RECs could launch common policies and investment, for instance on SPS measures, Tripartite corridors, or 'monitoring and evaluation' (M&E) on the overall CAADP progress. Finally, a 'differentiated gear' approach could also mean that specific groups of countries could design and implement joint programmes only among those with concrete interest in that particular area, and regardless of membership to one or more of the RECs. An example could be sub-regional irrigation programmes only among those who share water resources (building on existing structures and processes led by lake and river basin commissions), e.g. Zambia, Angola, Zimbabwe, Mozambique for the Zambesi; Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania for lake Victoria; Indian Ocean countries given the peculiar challenges they share.

Acting by clusters of programmes and countries would also be coherent with the need expressed by many stakeholders in the COMESA region to develop regional and especially sub-regional value chains to support both commercial growth of farmers as well as food security and sustainability objectives; for example promoting a food-secure basket of goods for consumption in a specific sub-region linked to the sustainable use of water resources there.⁴³ Of course one should expect this process, and especially the design of multi-purpose programmes, to **take time** for identification, consultation, and agreement, given the many countries involved and the complexities at stake⁴⁴. Nonetheless Tripartite programmes (e.g. North South Corridor, climate smart agriculture⁴⁵) and joint plans by different RECs (e.g. the 'COMESA/SADC Fertilizer Joint Procurement Strategy') already exist and should be looked at as building-blocs for a possible Tripartite compact.

the reality on the ground, e.g. common market shed for DR Congo and Rwanda given the size and growth of informal trade across those borders.

⁴³ This would mean agricultural production that is not too water intensive, but rather drought-resistant, resilient, low cost in input, using simple and more environmental friendly techniques, e.g. cassava vis-à-vis maize.

⁴⁴ "The most recent effort – in the form of the tripartite COMESA–EAC–SADC negotiations – to harmonise the trade regimes of these different bodies is promising; but, given the different objectives of the three bodies, such negotiations do not offer much hope of a short-term solution." (in Mutai. 2011)

⁴⁵ The "SADC/COMESA/EAC Climate Initiative" was established in 2008, funded by the Norwegian Government. And a five-year Tripartite programme entitled "Agriculture Adaptation Framework for the COMESA-EAC-SADC Region-Up scaling of Climate Resilient Agriculture" will run from 2010 to 2015, also funded by the Norwegian Government.

In terms of the **implementation governance** for this flexible overarching compact (i.e. long-term institutional arrangements/structures that can coordinate 'Tripartite' CAADP investment programmes), the existing Tripartite structures should be considered the starting point, together with interesting proposals already on the table, such as the coordination structures proposed in the FANRPAN-led COMESA consultation process, for example the 'Stakeholders Compact Review Platform' that would incorporate the ACTESA Partnership Forum for trade issues, the North-South Corridor stakeholders, and other relevant sub-regional organisations (e.g. EAFF, SACAU, FANRPAN, ASARECA) to deal with human capacity development.

Careful design of a 'comprehensive, internally coherent and differentiated gears' compact would require a step-by-step multi-stakeholder consultative process, a **Road-Map** facilitated through strong leadership, for instance by a Committee of the SADC/COMESA/EAC CAADP Focal Points; or a "Friends of the Tripartite Compact"⁴⁶ group representing all key stakeholders. Such a leading group would have to start with identifying a minimum common ground among RECs and their MS on what major bottlenecks and opportunities in each region are for: stronger linkages between CAADP and other regional programmes; articulation of multi-sector priorities into the REC-specific and 'Tripartite' CAADP Compacts; ways for regional actors and their development partners to work more effectively together to fast-track implementation of the regional CAADP.⁴⁷ In this context, some important **COMESA-specific dimensions** should be taken into account:

- given the general institutional challenges in COMESA, particularly the slow degree of domestication at national level of regional decisions, the 'Tripartite' Compact policies, programmes and clusters should envisage a focus on fast-tracking implementation of existing regional cooperation frameworks in parallel to the definition of new initiatives;
- synergies should also be created between different resources mobilization mechanisms that exist for CAADP and other related COMESA programmes (e.g. aid for trade), bearing in mind the importance of joint approaches to supporting CAADP-specific capacity development for regional institutions;⁴⁸
- possible new region-specific financing strategies and architectures (e.g. pooling resources from sectoral support programmes) could be identified. Though many actors believe it may be early for COMESA to talk about a regional fund for CAADP, general budget support such as the EC's contribution agreement with COMESA has led to more strategic alignment by donors. Establishing a COMESA financial mechanism to receive and route CAADP-related funds will have to deal with the lack of institutional and human capacity to manage disbursement for regional projects, the difficulty in working with donors' procedures, as well as the real prospects of donors' interest in contributing;
- national CAADP processes in COMESA showed that: slow design of a compact is not necessarily negative, and in some MS it meant better ownership and inclusiveness; at particular steps of the process, small technical teams and high-level engagement are more effective than fully inclusive - but very large- preparatory teams. Provided effectiveness and inclusiveness are maintained, regional and 'Tripartite' preparations could take such national-level lessons into account;
- given the widespread feeling in COMESA that the benefits of RI should be documented and disseminated more regularly and clearly, an M&E system should be built into regional and 'Tripartite' CAADP compacts to allow for success-stories sharing and demonstration of results.

⁴⁶ A 'Friends of the Tripartite' group of donors exist for cooperation in the trade sector, and might be considered in the future as basis for RECs-donors engagement for a possible Tripartite CAADP Compact, but this type of discussion is only in its infancy.

⁴⁷ Such process would entail both region-specific consultative meetings and Tripartite Dialogues convened by the Tripartite Task Force to translate the outcomes of regional consultations into concrete input for designing the Tripartite CAADP Compact.

⁴⁸ This should include financial resources and assistance for more consultations of farmers as ultimate beneficiaries of CAADP and for local-level leaders and administrations, who are crucial to make implementation of any policy smooth and effective.

Annex 1

(source FANRPAN 2010 a)

	Regional Programmes	Funding Source	Lead Institutions
Pillar 1. Land and Water	1.1 Water Resource Management (project still under design, undergoing consultation, to include irrigation)		
	1.2 Conservation Agriculture	NORAD	
	1.3 Climate Change Initiative, Irrigation Programme, Fisheries Strategy, Forestry Strategy	NORAD	
	Adaptation to climate change (pipeline)	USAID/East Africa	
Pillar 2. Trade and Infrastructure	2.1 TradeMark	DFID	
	2.2 Northern and Central Corridor Diagnostics Programme	DFID, JICA	
	2.3 North-South Development Corridor, African Development Corridor Platform (ADCP)		COMESA Secretariat
	Northern Corridor Transit Facilitation	AfDB	COMESA Secretariat
	2.4 Food and Agriculture Market Information System (FAMIS)		COMESA Secretariat
	2.5 Risk management Programme for Eastern and Southern Africa (REFORM)	EC	COMESA Secretariat
	2.6 Cross Border Trade Initiative (CBT)		COMESA Secretariat
	2.7 Competitiveness and Trade Expansion Programme (COMPETE),	USAID/East Africa	USAID/East Africa
	Establishing the Centre of Excellence in Pest Risk Analysis (COPE) at KEPHIS, Kenya	WTO STDF / East Africa	KEPHIS and CABI in Kenya
	Market Linkages Programme	USAID/East Africa	
Pillar 3. Food Security	Guiding Investments in Agricultural Markets in Africa (GISAMA)	BMGF	COMESA Secretariat, MSU
	2.1 African Agricultural Markets Programme (AAMP)	DFID/WB	ACTESA
	2.3 Agricultural Markets Programme and Regional Integration (AMPRIP)		COMESA Secretariat

Annex 2

Eastern Africa – Donor Matrix

Regional Operations – Donors' Areas of Focus (source: COMESA website)

World Bank	Several projects running into an investment value of \$1 billion are currently under implementation in Eastern Africa under the World Bank Regional Integration Strategy for Sub-Saharan Africa (RIAS). They include: East Africa Trade and Transport Facilitation Project (\$300 million); Regional Communications Infrastructure Project (\$300 million); Geo-Thermal Energy Project, financed with Global Environmental Facility (\$70 million); EAC Regional Financial Integration Project (\$40 million); Lake Victoria Environmental Management Project (\$120 million); East Africa Agricultural Productivity Program (\$120 million); and East Africa Public Health Laboratory Networking Project (\$60 million). The World Bank is also a key partner in the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) and its support has served as a catalyst for broad-based development of the region, running into more than \$1 billion in the first round of investments.
DFID	In addition, DFID has two major regional operations in Eastern Africa, namely, the Regional East Africa Program (focusing on Capacity Development Action Plan and Support for the CES Tripartite Process) and the East Africa Transit Improvement Program (focusing on trade facilitation). It leads the coordination of the CES Investment Program and it is also involved in the Nile Basin Initiative. Co-financed the Diagnostic Study on the Horn of Africa corridors with JICA and USAID
European Commission (EC)	The EC regional operations in Eastern Africa are in three main areas: (i) Regional Economic Integration (80% of budget); (ii) Regional political cooperation (15%); and (iii) Other programs (5% of budget). The EC also leads the Horn of Africa Initiative, in which other partners, notably the World Bank and the AfDB, are also involved. The Initiative covers projects in the transport, energy and water sectors along the major corridors in the Horn of Africa. A major conference on the IGAD Infrastructure and the Tripartite (part of EC Hoorn of Africa Initiative) was held <where?> on 28-29 October 2010 and a follow up Fund Raising Conference is also planned for 2011.
JICA	JICA's support to Eastern Africa is in the area of regional trade facilitation. They are: Corridor Studies (Audit of 8 borders – Namanga, taveta-Holili, Lunga Lunga-Horo Horo, Mutukula, Rusumo, Kigoma, Tunduma, Nemba-Gasenyi) and missing links on central corridor to Burundi/Rwanda; Support for the implementation of trade facilitation instruments in EAC and COMESA (Axle load study); Automation and its systems (RTMS) and Cargo control system for OSBP implementation; OSBPs and integrated border management; Customs (master trainers program); Road infrastructure project design and development; and capacity building of private sector trade associations in corridor facilitation activities. JICA also co-financed the Diagnostic Study on the Horn of Africa corridors with DFID and USAID
UNDP	UNDP's goal in Eastern Africa, and indeed in the whole of Africa, is to develop the region's capacity to promote pro-poor growth and accountability to accelerate its progress towards achieving the MDGs. In collaboration with its Regional Bureau for Africa, UNDP is conducting a study of the benefits of regional integration on human development and also assisting to set up a South-South Cooperation Unit.
AfDB	The AfDB's support to Eastern Africa focuses on transport corridors, Energy, ICT, cooperation on shared water resources (for food security, water and sanitation and environmental management), trade facilitation, and climate change adaptation. The Bank is also participating in the EC Horn of Africa Initiative. AfDB's ongoing projects in the region includes East African Trade and Facilitation Project, Arusha Namanga Athi River Road Development Project, Arusha-Holili and Malindi-Lunga Multinational Roads Project, Mombasa-Nairobi-Addis Ababa Road corridor 1&2, Ethiopia-Djibouti Power Interconnection Project, and Regional Power System Master Plan and Grid Code. The Bank is also in the process of preparing the Lake Victoria Water and Sanitation Project.
Norway	Norway's ongoing projects in Eastern Africa include the EAC Climate Change Initiative, the Regional Strategy on Scaling Up Access to Modern Energy Services, and the EAC Regional Integrated Multi-Sectoral Strategic Plan for HIV/AIDS.
USAID	Re-engaged COMESA through USAID Grant Agreement for management of river basins and protection of biodiversity. USAID is implementing a 5-year program called Feed the Future

	tied to CADEP and also co-financed the Diagnostic Study on the Horn of Africa corridors with DFID and JICA.
Holland	Holland is in the process of making a contribution to the TMEA program for the region.
Denmark	Denmark is in the process of formulating a new program (about \$30 million) to support the Partnership Fund in Arusha, TMEA, and possible TA.
German	The German Government channels its support to the region through two major German organizations, namely the GTZ and KfW. Projects focus on peace and security, as well as water and sanitation.
TMEA	Trade Facilitation (OSBPs, Border Post Infrastructure, procedures audit, procedure mapping trade capacity building and EAC Customs Training Program), Corridor Diagnostic Studies, Corridors Observatories, and EAC Capacity Building Project.

Source: Compiled from various sources including European Community, 2008. Regional Strategy Paper and Regional Indicative Programme 2008-2013.

Annex 3

COMESA - International Cooperating Partners, 2010

DONOR	Project/Activities	Amount Committed
European Union	Capacity building for regional integration at RECs and national level	€ 118.0 mil
	Capacity building for conflict prevention and peace building	€ 1.47 mil
	Support to programs on food security and risk management	€ 30.96 mil
	Support for development of ICT infrastructure	€ 21.0 mil
	Promotion of Trade and Business Forum	€ 0.096 mil
	Regional political integration and human support program	€ 1.6 mil
DFID	Capacity building for regional integration for establishment of free trade area	£12.6 mil
	Strengthen agricultural markets and inputs	\$ 2.25 mil
USAID	Support for corridor development projects on regional trade	\$10.71 mil
	Support for regional customs Transit Guarantee/bond scheme	\$1.0 mil
	Support for agricultural production and commodity trade	\$9.38 mil
	Promotion for Trade, institutional strengthening and Business Forum	\$7.6 mil
	Support to COMESA North Corridor Transit Facilities	\$0.65 mil
	Enhanced Livelihoods in Pastoralist Areas (Kenya, Ethiopia, Djibouti and Somalia)	\$14.8 mil
AfDB	Support for agricultural marketing and regional integration	UA 3.736 mil
	Enhance procurement reforms and capacity building	UA 5.658 mil
World Bank	Capacity building for public procurement reform in COMESA	\$0.472 mil
	Contribution to North-South Corridor Trade Facilitation Facility	\$40.0 mil
	Support to COMESA to monitor Implementation of is MTSP 2011 -2015	\$0.869 mil
WTO	Competitiveness and Trade Expansion (COMPETE)	\$ 6-10 mil per year for 4 years
CIDA	Support for regional Trade Development	\$4.3 mil
Norway	Support for initiatives on adaptation and mitigation to climate change	\$2.46 mil
Rockefeller Foundation and WWF	Support for initiatives on adaptation and mitigation to climate change	\$1.0 mil
Others	Support for agriculture, ICT, postal reform, and HIV/AIDS by COMESA countries	\$1.22mil

Source: COMESA Secretariat.

Annex 4

Transport Corridors Serving Eastern Africa Region

(source: African Development Bank, 2010)

Country	Transport Corridors	Country	Transport Corridors
Burundi	1. Central Corridor (starting from Dar es salaam: Isaka-Kigali-Bujumbura) 2. Northern Corridor (starting from Mombasa)	Uganda	1. Northern Corridor (starting from Mombasa) ending at borders with Rwanda and DRC 2. Kampala-Gulu-Juba 3. Possible to benefit from the undeveloped Tanga-Arusha-Musoma transport corridor
Kenya	1. Northern Corridor (starting from Mombasa) 2. Nanyuki-Lokichogio-Juba 3. North-South Corridor (Cape Town to Cairo) 4. Moyale-Negale-Addis	Rwanda	1. Northern Corridor (starting from Mombasa) 2. Central: Isaka-Kigali-Bujumbura 3. Possible to benefit from the undeveloped Tanga-Arusha-Musoma transport corridor
Tanzania	1. North-South Corridor (Cape Town to Cairo) 2. Dar es salaam or Tazara Corridor 3. Central Corridor 4. Potential: Mtwara Corridor 5. Potential: Tanga-Arusha-Musoma transport corridor	Djibouti	Djibouti-Addis Ababa corridor
		Eritrea	Transport corridors linking Asmara with Ethiopia and Somaliland
		Sudan	1. Southern-Sudan: Juba to Northern Uganda-Gulu 2. Southern Sudan: Juba to Northern Kenya: Lokichogio-Lodwar-Marallel-Nanyuki
Ethiopia	1. Addis Ababa-Djibouti 2. Addis Ababa-Wendo-Negale-Moyale	Seychelles and Comoros	Sea and Air links with continental Eastern African cities

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ECDPM was established in 1986 as an independent foundation to improve European cooperation with the group of African, Caribbean and Pacific countries (ACP). Its main goal today is to broker effective partnerships between the European Union and the developing world, especially Africa. ECDPM promotes inclusive forms of development and cooperates with public and private sector organisations to better manage international relations. It also supports the reform of policies and institutions in both Europe and the developing world. One of ECDPM's key strengths is its extensive network of relations in developing countries, including emerging economies. Among its partners are multilateral institutions, international centres of excellence and a broad range of state and non-state organisations.

Thematic priorities

ECDPM organises its work around four themes:

- Reconciling values and interests in the external action of the EU and other international players
- Promoting economic governance and trade for inclusive and sustainable growth
- Supporting societal dynamics of change related to democracy and governance in developing countries, particularly Africa
- Addressing food security as a global public good through information and support to regional integration, markets and agriculture

Approach

ECDPM is a "think and do tank". It links policies and practice using a mix of roles and methods. ECDPM organises and facilitates policy dialogues, provides tailor-made analysis and advice, participates in South-North networks and does policy-oriented research with partners from the South.

ECDPM also assists with the implementation of policies and has a strong track record in evaluating policy impact. ECDPM's activities are largely designed to support institutions in the developing world to define their own agendas. ECDPM brings a frank and independent perspective to its activities, entering partnerships with an open mind and a clear focus on results.

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