



Concept Note

ECOWAS Regional Workshop on Mainstreaming Nutrition into NAIPs

Strengthening Capacity to Mainstream Nutrition in National Agriculture and Food Security Investment Plans in Africa

(Improving the commitment and support of Regional Economic Communities)

A. Background

The Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) is Africa's policy framework for agricultural transformation, wealth creation, food security and nutrition, economic growth and prosperity for all. In Maputo, Mozambique in 2003, the African Union (AU) Summit made the first declaration on CAADP as an integral part of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). To date, the number of countries that joined the CAADP process - which led to development of regional and national Agricultural and Food Security Investment Programs and Plans (NAFSIPs) - has tremendously increased to 45. Though the initiative seeks to improve nutrition, a study conducted by NEPAD with support of USAID in 2011 revealed that most NAFSIPs lacked explicit nutrition objectives and concrete actions to improve nutrition. In order to fill this gap, AU and NEPAD, with technical support from FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) and financial support from the German Cooperation, launched the CAADP Nutrition Capacity Development Initiative in 2011. The overall purpose of the initiative was to enhance the contribution of the agricultural sector to multi-sectorial strategies to improve nutrition in Sub-Saharan Africa. The specific goal was to assist countries in integrating nutrition in their CAADP process – from design to

implementation – and ensuring that appropriate nutrition interventions are planned, budgeted and implemented, monitored and evaluated, as a part of their NAFSIPs.

Key strategies of the Initiative focused on (i) capacity development (through 3 sub-regional capacity building workshops for West, East and Central and Southern Africa on nutrition-sensitive agriculture and food systems, targeting actors intervening at regional and country levels in food and nutrition security-related areas). During these workshops organized in the period 2011-2013, countries developed nutrition papers summarizing the national nutrition environment and roadmaps/action plans for integration of nutrition into their National Agricultural and Food Security Investment Plans and (ii) strengthening of collaboration and coordination among regional and national stakeholders, through Letters of Agreement (LOAs) and establishment of a regional task force which comprises key stakeholders and led by NEPAD and FAO. The role of the task force is to coordinate follow-up actions at regional and country levels.

The second phase of the CAADP Nutrition Initiative being implemented by NEPAD and supported by FAO, managed to include key nutrition indicators in the CAADP Result Framework and is supporting countries as part of their commitment to the Malabo Declaration and the ICN-2 Rome Declaration with their implementation strategies and framework for action to mainstream nutrition into National Agriculture and Food Security Investment Plans (NAFSIPs), policies and programs. Countries are receiving support to reinforce their nutrition information systems with prioritized indicators for accountability. A pilot knowledge sharing and information platform project, in support of phase II, started in 2014 in SADC sub-region and ECOWAS has been assisted to prioritize nutrition in the new agriculture policy ECOWAP@10.

Mainstreaming nutrition into the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development (CAADP) and particularly into the CAADP-informed National Agricultural Investment Plans (NAIPs) has gained momentum since 2010. The focus of the commemoration of the 1st Africa Day for Food and Nutrition Security, which took place in Lilongwe Malawi on 31st October 2010, was on intensifying discussions and dialogue with the aim of ensuring that agriculture planning processes become nutrition-sensitive. It is in this light that the stakeholders and partners for nutrition started to work together from the beginning of 2011 to dialog and plan for a platform for deepening understanding of linkages between nutrition and agriculture and how to translate the knowledge and commitments into firm actions in member states. The idea of organizing regional workshops that bring multi-sectorial country teams to learning, experience sharing and planning platform was widely accepted. In November 2011, the first of the regional workshops was successfully organized in Dakar, Senegal, which was participated by country teams comprising of delegates from government departments that have bearing on nutrition (agriculture, health, education, economic planning and humanitarian affairs). Two similar workshops with similar purpose and target audience for the East and Central Africa region and the Southern Africa regions, followed in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, and Gaborone, Botswana, in March and September 2013, respectively. A main outcome from these regional nutrition workshops, country teams prepared their roadmaps leading to review of their respective National Agricultural Investment Plans (NAIPs) to integrate nutrition into them.

Earlier that year, in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, the Secretary-General of the United Nation's Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO), Dr. José Graziano da Silva and the former President of Brazil and Instituto Lula, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, initiated the "new

unified approaches to end hunger in Africa” and decided that the three organizations co-organize a High-Level meeting under this banner. Preceded by an expert session, the three leaders led a High-Level Meeting under the theme “Towards Africa’s Renaissance: Renewed Partnership for a unified approach to end hunger in Africa within the CAADP Framework”, which culminated in the bold Declaration on “Ending Hunger in Africa by 2025”. This Declaration was endorsed by the Executive Council of the African Union in the 22nd AU Summit of Heads of State and Government in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

In July 2013 the 21st AU Summit declared 2014 as the “*Africa Year of Agriculture and Food Security*”. The African Union Commission (AUC), the NEPAD Agency and Partners, seized the opportunity to embark on intensifying consultations and planning for identifying issues and priorities for heightening policy and commitments to food and nutrition security in the ensuing high level discussions in 2014. A series of activities were lined up under the “Work Stream on Food and Nutrition Security”, which included the 10th CAADP Partnership in Durban, South Africa, the Conference of Ministers of Agriculture at the AU Headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and the Summit of African Heads of State and Government.

In June 2014 the African Union Assembly of Heads of State and Government adopted the Malabo “Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods”. The Malabo Declaration reinforced Africa’s political leadership and shared commitment to transforming agricultural growth and development on the continent between 2015 and 2025. The Malabo Declaration clearly articulated seven key commitments for sustaining the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development (CAADP) implementation momentum in the next decade. Among these commitments is the commitment to “end hunger by 2025, which pledged to reduce child malnutrition by lowering the rate of stunting and underweight in children to less than five years to 10 and 5 percent, respectively, by 2025.

The Malabo Declaration also committed to a mutual accountability process with Member States expected to biennially review progress against achievement of the defined targets. In other words, this process is aimed at translating the commitments into concrete results and impact. In response to this expectation, the AUC and the NEPAD Agency produced the Implementation Strategy and Roadmap (IS&RM) and Program of Work. Also developed launched was the CAADP Results Framework 2015-2025 as a key tool for translating Africa's agricultural development vision and goals into tangible outcomes and for tracking, monitoring and reporting on progress as well as for facilitating mutual learning and accountability.

Since five years have passed since the first of the Regional CAADP Nutrition Capacity Development workshops for the ECOWAS Region was concluded in Dakar, Senegal, it is reasonable to assess whether any impact has been achieved by individual Member States in that region in terms of integration of nutrition into the NAIPs. It is also timely to assess any factors or drivers of success or lack of progress, where the case may be. Lessons learnt from this workshop about countries experiences in integrating or not integrating nutrition into NAIPs will then be used to inform the nutrition working group and the “Ending Hunger in Africa” work stream of the forthcoming 12th CAADP Partnership Platform coming in May 2-4, 2016 in Accra, Ghana.

B. Rationale

The experience of NEPAD and its partners since 2013 to date shows that post-workshop follow-up requires a significant investment in time and capacity, more especially financial and human resources. Indeed, sustained and coordinated engagement and technical support at country level is necessary to ensure sensitization and training for effective commitment and action on the ground. Among key stakeholders that could support countries in the follow-up activities, and which should also be accountable for eliminating all forms of malnutrition are the African Regional Economic Communities (RECs). They play a vital role, by providing both financial and technical assistance and strengthening alignment and coordination among actors and sectors, as leading organizations. Yet, follow-up actions and assessments of the workshops carried out since 2013 revealed that they have not been fully engaged and committed in supporting countries. In addition some regional food and nutrition security strategic documents do not adequately address the contribution of agriculture to nutrition outcomes at sub-regional level.

Since 2013, there have been new developments in term of commitments at international, regional and sub-regional levels to fight malnutrition, such as 2014 AU Malabo Declaration and its Implementation Strategy and Roadmap, Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2) Rome Declaration and its Framework for Actions, the Sustainable Development Goals, African Regional Nutrition Strategy and ECOWAS Zero Hunger Initiative¹. These engagements highlight the importance of agriculture and food systems to improved nutrition and should be translated into concrete actions at sub-regional and country levels. RECs should be better informed about these engagements and capacitated to ensure a structured accountability mechanism from country to sub-regional and continental level.

Following the creation of the regional task force to coordinate follow-up actions, it has been agreed to establish sub-regional task forces, to facilitate follow-up at sub-regional level, under the leadership of the RECs. To date, these task forces have not been yet been created and formalized.

This workshop therefore constitute a space for sensitization, dialogue and sharing of experiences among RECs on how to better integrate the linkages between agriculture and food systems and nutrition into their regional food and nutrition security investment strategies and support coherent support to countries for accountability on their commitment to nutrition under the CAADP process, as well as ICN-2 and Malabo Declarations.

C. Objectives of the workshop:

1. Update the RECs on the nutrition situation in their respective sub-regions;
2. Dialogue on how RECs can support countries on their commitments to improving nutrition outcomes of their population through efficient nutrition sensitive food and agriculture systems under the CAADP process;

¹ Though the Initiative was adopted in 2012, actions to translate this engagement into concrete have started in 2014 through the implementation of the ECOWAS Zero Hunger Initiative support project implemented by FAO in collaboration with ECOWAS with financial

3. To take stock of lessons learned from the RECs on their efforts to integrate nutrition in their regional agricultural strategies and to support countries in mainstreaming nutrition into NAFSIPs and discuss challenges and opportunities;
4. To deliberate on how Regional institutions including AU, NEPAD, FAO, IFPRI, IFAD and others could support RECs' to effectively support countries to deliver results;
5. Discuss modalities of establishment of sub regional task forces for follow-up actions

D. Expected outcomes

1. RECs are updated on the nutrition situation in their sub-regions and existing commitments that constitute an opportunity to mainstream nutrition into agriculture sector and food systems Experiences are shared among RECs on actions undertaken to mainstream nutrition into agriculture and challenges and opportunities;
2. A Declaration is adopted by the RECs on their support to mainstream nutrition into agriculture in general and CAADP process in particular, which includes key areas of support;
3. Strategy is developed to support RECs to follow up on harmonized sub-regional policies and strategies that facilitates follow up of countries to deliver on their commitment to the Malabo and ICN-2 declaration and implementation of the Africa Regional Nutrition Strategy;
4. Arrangements for establishment of sub regional task forces of multi-stakeholders are validated to technically support countries to report on their commitment to nutrition under the CAADP process.

E. Target Participants

The three days' workshop will target Regional Economic Communities (ECOWAS, IGAD, SADC, ECCAS, COMESA, etc.) representatives from development partners, UN sub-regional offices working in Nutrition and Food Security, Donor Group, NGO, Private sectors among others.

F. Meeting Venue and Dates

14-15 March 2015 in Accra, Ghana.

G. Workshop preparation and proceedings

A planning committee led by NEPAD/AU will include IFPRI, RECs and UN partners to jointly organize the workshop within the timeline. The will hold regular e-meetings to update members on the preparation process and provide technical and IFPRI to provide financial support for the successful implementation of the workshop.