

CAADP and national investments in the seed sector

ALQ - How can the African Union Commission's Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) and its Africa Seed and Biotechnology Programme (ASBP) initiatives contribute to the development of a vibrant and pluralistic seed sector in Africa?

The question assumes that improved integration of seed sector development in the CAADP agenda and alignment with the National Agriculture and Food Security Investment Plans (NAFSIPs) will contribute to more coordinated and strategic interventions at national level. It also assumes that this can contribute to improving farmers' access to quality seed – a key priority for the ASBP.

Bearing in mind the CAADP Implementation Plan, Results Framework and Programme of Work and in light of the ASBP Framework and the ISSD Principles, we have posed a number of sub-questions to explore these issues:

1. What mechanisms can be used to support the design and implementation of pluralistic seed sector development and implementation through the National Agriculture and Food Security Investment Plans (and Regional Plans)?
- 2a. Where can we find examples of 'success stories' of effective seed sector development and implementation linked to CAADP NAFSIP processes?
- 2b. How can this evidence be used to inform and influence national policy processes related to (re)-formulation and implementation of NAFSIPs?

Key activities & outputs

Our Action Learning Research examined how the agriculture-related programmes and priorities related to African Union's CAADP programme, the ASBP and seed sector development are being translated into country-level agriculture and food security plans in Ethiopia, Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire.

We focused on 3 main activity areas:

A review of some of the *key mechanisms* that exist or are now being put in place to support the design and implementation of a more pluralistic and integrated seed sector development and implementation and their connection to the National Agriculture and Food Security Investment Plan (NAFSIP) in each country:

- Ethiopia - Agricultural Sector Policy and Investment Framework (PIF) and Accelerated Growth and Transformation Plans (GTP I & II)
- Ghana – Medium Term Agriculture Sector Investment Plan (METASIP I & II)
- Cote d'Ivoire – National Agricultural Investment Plan (PNIA)

An assessment of a set of 'success stories' of effective seed sector development and implementation that were linked to those processes based on clear selection criteria

Identification of *key lessons and evidence* for national policy processes related to seed sector development within the Agriculture and Public Investment Framework

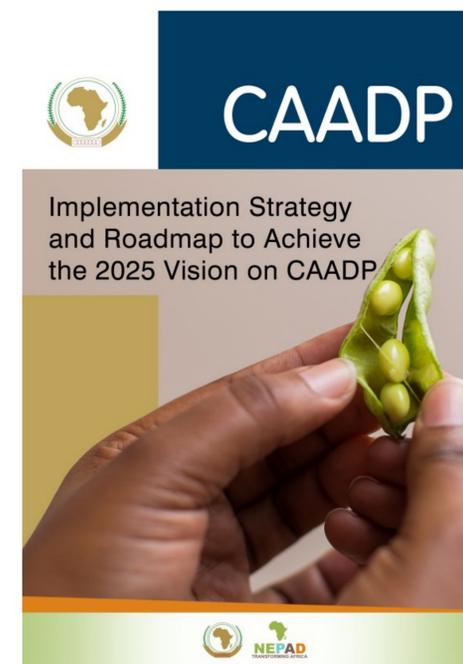
CAADP Implementation Status

- 42 countries have signed CAADP Compacts – 10% of national budgets to agriculture
- 32 countries have adopted National Agriculture and Food Security Investment Plans development activities



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Key events

- **Programme launch:** Launch of the programme in Nairobi in September 2014 and the development of key research questions in thematic working groups with resource persons, validated by large audience in breakout working groups.
- **Action planning:** Identification of action learning activities and creation of action plans for Ghana, Cote d'Ivoire and Ethiopia with the thematic working group in Kampala February 2015.
- **ASBP & ISSD Approach Workshop, Cote d'Ivoire:** To enable a better understanding of the ASBP and inform and promote the concept of ISSD. Abidjan, February 12, 2016. (28 participants).
Output: Workshop Report - ASBP & ISSD in Cote d'Ivoire
- **National seminars:** Workshops in which the research question was discussed in Ghana (21 participants), Ethiopia (25 participants) with a wide array of national seed sector stakeholders.
Output: National workshop reports for Ethiopia and Ghana
- **Expert Consultation Meeting (upcoming):** Developing high-level indicators to assess seed sector progress. Led by AfricaSeeds, planned for October 2016 in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire.



Main findings

Mind the Gap: Lack of Close Alignment Between CAADP and Seed Sector Development Activities

Despite growing interest in creating more vibrant and pluralistic seed sectors, there is a lack of coordinated action to ensure that planned seed sector development activities align with the stated commitments and strategic action areas set out in the CAADP Implementation Plan and Road Map and the CAADP Results Framework.

To some degree, actors appear to be operating in 'parallel universes' with very little direct connection between them due to a lack of coordination or joined-up programming.

Consequently, issues remain in all three study countries about how to overcome this gap and translate high-level policy interest into practical programmes and projects that align the ISSD, ASBP and CAADP Malabo agendas to support greater seed sector integration to widen the basket of options available to farmers.

Growing Policy Commitment: Fostering More Pluralistic Seed Systems

Engagement with decision-makers revealed increasing policy interest and commitment at national level to developing a more pluralistic seed sector, particularly in Ethiopia and Ghana, although most policy support and investment is still directed at the formal system.

- In Ethiopia, ISSD principles have informed the development of the new National Seed Sector Development Strategy.
- In Ghana, ISSD principles and approach formed one of the basic pillars underlying the new National Seed Plan, which has included specific budget commitments to strengthening the informal seed system.
- In Cote d'Ivoire, early signs suggest growing interest in ISSD principles and approaches and willingness to learn lessons from other countries to inform seed sector investments and programming.

Seeing is Believing: Learning from 'Success Stories'

The country action research teams found that it was possible to develop and apply criteria for identifying innovative programmes and projects that appeared to embrace and apply ISSD principles and methods that operated (often implicitly) in accordance with CAADP and ASBP principles.

Successful cases were selected on the basis of their contribution to: increasing supply of and access to quality seed through formal, intermediate and informal channels; increasing inclusiveness of the seed programmes; increasing the range of crop varieties for seed production and distribution; increasing coverage of crop production systems in diverse agro-ecologies; and informing and influencing policy and programming to support production and distribution of quality seed (related to national seed sector development and CAADP processes).

Using these criteria, ISSD Africa researchers analysed 15 'success' cases: 4 in Ethiopia; 8 in Ghana and 3 in Cote d'Ivoire. Some of these were led supported by ISSD national programmes, some by NGOs or CSOs and still others by government or regional / international agencies.

All showed positive signs of addressing the immediate challenge faced; working towards a systemic solution; and creating a way a forward for the scaling up of the approaches deployed.

The exposure of national decision-makers to lessons from these successful cases opened up a constructive dialogue about how to create a more vibrant and pluralistic seed system in the countries.

Lessons learned

Putting Integrated Seed Sector Development at the Heart of the CAADP Malabo Process

The latest versions of the National Agricultural and Food Security Investment Plans and associated policies and plans have begun to address specific Strategic Action Areas (SAAs) identified through the CAADP Malabo process, including statements related to the seed sector.

But these have not been explicitly elaborated nor have they fully embraced the ISSD principles and approach. As other NAFSIPs are in the process of being developed or revised across the region, there is a clear opportunity to draw lessons from early efforts in Ethiopia, Ghana and other ISSD-associated countries and initiatives to support closer integration and alignment between these complementary agendas.

Documenting Success in Seed Sector Performance

Documenting and sharing 'success stories' of 'what works, under what conditions and for whom?' can strengthen high-level policy interest in aligning the ISSD and CAADP Malabo agendas to support greater seed sector integrate.

However, to do this effectively will require greater investment in developing a systematic approach to tracking seed sector performance, not just in formal systems, but also intermediate and informal ones, and identifying opportunities for greater integration.

The ISSD Africa programme has begun this process on a modest scale, but more work is needed in this area (see the TWG 4 Poster on Tracking Seed Sector Performance for more on this issue).

Establishing National Seed Sector Platforms to Improve Seed Sector Coordination

Many countries in the region appear to have a multiplicity of new or ongoing initiatives to improve different aspects of the seed sector, which are led by a variety of public, private and civil society organisations.

What is often missing is a coherent body responsible for monitoring these efforts, sharing results and policy-relevant lessons, and ensuring alignment with strategic planning processes and objectives related to CAADP agenda. There is a clear opportunity for establishing and/or strengthening national seed sector platforms for this purpose.

Strengthening the ISSD Africa Regional Network

The assessment of key strategies, programmes and case studies reveals that there is promising trend in the development of a pluralistic seed sector in the focal countries.

An ISSD Africa regional network, linked to national ISSD programmes and focal points and allied with the National Seed Sector Platforms, could help reinforce and deepen that learning across the region by supporting the processes outlined above.

Next steps

A final Synthesis Report combining insights from Ethiopia, Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire will be completed following the conference.

A policy brief summarising policy relevant lessons and opportunities will be translated into English and French and will for part of a briefing of the African Union Commission and NEPAD Planning and Commissioning Agency, as well as the relevant government authorities in the study countries.

A Regional Expert Consultation Meeting on Tracking Seed Sector Performance will be organised by AfricaSeeds in October 2016 bringing together CAADP and seed sector specialists to explore ways to improve alignment between CAADP and seed sector monitoring processes (see separate TWG 4 Poster on this topic).

With many thanks to our partners

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