



Eastern and Southern Africa
Small Scale Farmers' Forum
ESAFF - UGANDA

UGANDA

The Small-scale Farmers' Perspective

2014 Malabo Commitments: Is government living the promise?

BACKGROUND

The agricultural sector is dominant in Uganda's economy. According to the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) statistical abstract 2015, the agricultural sector contributes 24.8% of Uganda's GDP and employs 66% of the working population, of which over 80% are women who contribute about 75% of agricultural production. This demonstrates the importance of the sector to the rural poor, especially women who derive their livelihood from agriculture. The sector is largely private sector led, with low Government spending on research, providing avenues of access to finance, seed breeding and certification, extension services, disease control and policy regulation among others.

The agriculture sector presents immense opportunities for growth in other sectors like manufacturing especially agro-processing. Agriculture can be an important engine of growth and poverty reduction. The sector is however underperforming because women, who are often a crucial resource in agriculture and the rural economy, face constraints that reduce their productivity. Also youth engagement in agriculture is declining amidst rising unemployment, the services and industrial sectors despite growing at considerably faster rates have not created enough jobs for the burgeoning

youthful labour force. This has implications on national food security and development. If given priority, agriculture has significant potential to provide medium-term solutions to the current problems of youth unemployment in Uganda.

In 2003, Uganda was part of the African countries that launched the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), an agriculture-led integrated framework for development that aims at reducing poverty and increasing food security through pursuing an average 6% annual agricultural growth rate. The government of Uganda in the then Maputo Declaration committed to invest 10% of total government expenditures in the agriculture sector to stimulate the necessary acceleration in agricultural growth. In 2014, while in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, the government of Uganda together with other African countries made a declaration on accelerated agricultural growth and transformation for shared prosperity and improved livelihoods; termed as the Malabo declaration 2014. Under this declaration, the government of Uganda promised to increase agriculture allocation to 10% of the national budget to agriculture and rural development. The Malabo Declaration notices progress toward the goals set within the Maputo Declaration. However, it stresses concerns over Africa's growing dependence on foreign markets for food security, arguably due to changes in consumption patterns such as population demand and climate changes hence government investment in agricultural capital is believed to be the prosperous answer.

Commitments and Goals

By African Heads of States and Government in
2014 Malabo - Equatorial Guinea:

1

Recommitment to the principles and values of the CAADP process

2

Recommitment to enhance investment finance in agriculture

- (a) Uphold 10% public spending target
- (b) Operationalize the African Investment Bank

3

Commitment to ending hunger by 2025

- (a) At least double productivity (focusing on Inputs, irrigation and mechanization)
- (b) Reduce PHL at least by half
- (c) Nutrition: reduce and underweight to 5 % and stunting to 10%

4

Commitment to halving poverty, by 2025, through inclusive agricultural growth and transformation.

- (a) Sustain annual sector growth in Agricultural GDP at least 6%
- (b) Establish and/or strengthen inclusive public private partnerships for at least Five (5) priority agricultural commodity value chains with strong linkage to smallholder agriculture
- (c) Create job opportunities for at least 30% of the youth in agricultural value chains
- (d) Preferential entry and participation by women and youth in gainful and attractive agribusiness.

5

Commitment to boosting intra-African trade in agricultural commodities and services

- (a) Triple intra-Africa trade in agricultural commodities and services
- (b) Fast track continental free trade area and transition to a continental Common External tariff scheme.

6

Commitment to enhancing resilience in livelihoods and production systems to climate variability and other shocks.

- (a) Ensure that by 2025, at least 30% of farm/pastoral households are resilient to shocks
- (b) Enhance investments for resilience building initiatives, including social security for rural workers and other vulnerable social groups, as well as for vulnerable ecosystems
- (c) Mainstream resilience and risk management in policies, strategies and investment plans.

7

Commitment to mutual accountability to actions and results

- (a) Through the CAADP Result Framework—conduct a biennial Agricultural Review Process.

Quick Facts about Malabo Declaration:

1. It reinforces the Maputo declaration, it doesn't replace it.
2. It upholds CAADP and its principles.
3. It was passed in 2014 the 10th anniversary of CAADP, which was adopted in 2004 after the passing of the Maputo declaration in 2003.
4. Encourages women, youths and other disadvantaged groups in society to directly participate and benefit from agricultural investments and development opportunities.
5. It urges all development initiatives local and foreign to all align and support the realisation of National Agricultural and Food Security Investment Plans. In Uganda, it is called the Agriculture Sector Strategy and Investment Plan (ASSP).
6. Malabo declaration encourages inter-sectoral coordination across sectors such as agriculture, infrastructure, land, energy, forestry, trade, industry, health, technology, education and environment among others.
7. Malabo declaration encourages all stakeholders - public, private, civil societies, farmers, farmers' organisations, pastoralists, fisheries, aquaculture, donors, development partners - to work together to realise their roles and responsibilities towards the agriculture transformation agenda.
8. The Malabo Declaration places emphasis on implementation, results and impact, and holds all actors mutually accountable for their actions.

CHALLENGES IN IMPLEMENTING THE MALABO COMMITMENTS

The challenges that are affecting the achievement of the 2014 Malabo Commitments include;

- 1. Inadequate political will to inspire the prioritization of agriculture in the national budget; this has led to the low domestication of the 2014 Malabo Declaration. Government has devoted more emphasis on infrastructure and manufacturing rather than agriculture.***
- 2. Lack of sanctions on Uganda incase the government fails to meet the commitments made in the 2014 Malabo Declaration; hence the government isn't on pressure to fulfill any of the commitments.***
- 3. The Malabo Commitments are beyond the agriculture sector under Ministry of Agriculture, Animal, Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF); the commitments cross to Ministry of Water and Environment, Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives, Ministry of Heath among others yet the operations of these ministries aren't linked at all.***
- 4. Mismatch in designing agriculture policies as well as the lack of/inadequate funds for implementation of agricultural sector policy strategies; government has developed agriculture policies, which don't have direct implementation funds hence poor, or no implementation.***
- 5. The presence of other national emergencies that constrain government expenditures, such as refugee problem, boarder security, natural disasters among others hence leading to diversion of government resources meant for the Agricultural sector.***
- 6. A large percentage of the population in Uganda, mostly rural communities, which are dependent on agriculture isn't knowledgeable about the commitments that government made in 2014 in Malabo hence citizens can't express their right of holding government accountable on its commitments.***
- 7. The discovery of oil in Uganda and other natural resources has made government prioritize mining sector rather than agriculture sector since it's believed that oil would generate more revenue for the country than financing agriculture.***

KEY CHALLENGES FACED BY SMALL SCALE FARMERS IN UGANDA

The current challenges that small scale farmers are facing are mostly related to limited investment and mutual accountability in the agriculture sector. With the achievement of the 2014 Malabo Commitments, most of the challenges would be addressed by government.

Small scale farmers are facing very many challenges in the agriculture sector that affect their livelihood. Some of those challenges include;

1. Limited markets, market access and other marketing infrastructure; this has led to poor earnings and high levels of post harvest loss.
2. High cost and limited access to improved farm inputs and production technology; this has affected the yields from the gardens.
3. Lack of access to farmer-friendly agricultural credit facilities; this has limited small scale farmers' ability to do farming as a business. Lack of financial support systems affects farmers' ability to grow, expand, and maintain their yields.
4. Limited access to information regarding government plans and programs for the agriculture sector; hence limited accountability. Most small scale farmers miss out on new and improved methods of farming as a result of lack of information.
5. Inadequate Agricultural extension services; this has an impact on the amount and quality of yields from the garden as well as agriculture knowledge gap of small scale farmers. This also leads to limited skills of farmers in practicing agriculture.
6. Lack of gender analysis to inform policy formulation, planning and budgeting; hence the development of policies and programs that don't address gender issues in communities.
7. Impact of climate change; this has led to change in seasons hence affecting the quality of production and productivity.
8. Decline in the agriculture sector growth; hence affecting the economic growth of majority of the population since its dependant on agriculture sector.
9. Lack of ownership and control of land in case of women; which has an effect on productivity.



KEY POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

For Uganda to achieve the 2014 Malabo Commitments, the government needs to implement the following recommendations;

- 1. The government should re-prioritize agriculture development as the number one engine to national economic growth and align all national development agendas around agriculture. This is because agriculture is the sector where Uganda has competitive advantage over other nations.***
- 2. The government should ensure adherence to the 2014 Malabo Commitments through the domestication of strategies, guidelines and frameworks including the CAADP Results Framework, Malabo Declaration Implementation Strategy and Roadmap, and NEPAD Biennial Review Guidelines. This will bring national ownership of the processes hence supporting accountability.***
- 3. The government should promote more inter-sectoral cooperation and coordination between different ministries like Ministry of Agriculture, Animal, Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF), Ministry of Water and Environment, Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives, Ministry of Health among others through suitable and effective coordination mechanisms as well as strengthen institutional and systemic capacity.***
- 4. The National Agriculture Investment Plan (NAIP) is a key vehicle towards achieving the Malabo Declaration targets; the government should ensure that the NAIP is aligned to the overall national development goals and also put more emphasis on implementation of the entire plan so as to increase results and impact. Failure to fully implement the NAIP will affect the achievement of 2014 Malabo Commitments.***
- 5. The government should build structures that would ensure mutual accountability to actions and results under the Malabo Commitments both at local and national levels. This would ensure clear information access and experience sharing between government and Non State Actors as well as citizens.***
- 6. Government should acknowledge the role of other players, especially farmers and Non State Actors and therefore should be celebrated and promoted since they are the biggest investors in the sector. There should be a mechanism to fully involve them in setting the policy and funding agenda.***

CONCLUSION

In light of the 2014 Malabo declaration on accelerated agricultural growth and transformation for shared prosperity and improved livelihoods, the government of Uganda needs to follow up on the commitments and targets set so as to ensure that small scale farmers have a better chance at reaping the benefit of paying taxes. Agriculture still remains the backbone of Uganda's economy and will be critical to the achievement of the National Development Plan II goal of propelling the country towards middle-income status and the Uganda's Vision of a transformed Ugandan society from a peasant to a modern and prosperous country within 30 years. The 2014 Malabo Commitments are essential in the development of the agriculture sector as well as other sectors of the economy. The Malabo Declaration must become more than a signed piece of paper. The declaration has the potential to transform agriculture and contribute to wealth creation and employment.

ABOUT ESAFF UGANDA

The formation of Eastern and Southern Africa Small-scale Farmers Forum (ESAFF) in 2002 was a direct response to the need to create a forum where Small Scale Farmers (SSFs) are able to facilitate processes through which farmers' development concerns. The forum was established to bring together small scale farmers into a social movement to build common aspirations, learning and linkages. ESAFF Uganda is a small scale farmer (SSF) initiated and farmer-led advocacy movement which works to enhance the SSFs ability to make informed decisions and participate meaningfully in development processes at local, national, regional and global levels. The vision of ESAFF Uganda is an empowered self-reliant small scale farmer which will be achieved through nurturing the participation of small scale farmers in sustainable development processes for self-reliance through advocacy, capacity building and institutional development.

ESAFF Uganda is a membership organization with members in 30 districts including Soroti, Serere, Amuria, Ngora, Bukedea, Kumi, Kabale, Kisoro, Masaka, Mubende, Mityana, Mukono, Nebbi, Zombo, Kamuli, Jinja, Mbale, Mayuge, Bugiri, Gulu, Amuru, Nwoya, Pader, Adjumani, Manafwa, Iganga, Arua, Apac, Kasese and Kanungu. ESAFF Uganda is part of a larger movement of small scale farmers in other African countries including Rwanda, Burundi, Kenya, Tanzania, Swaziland, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi, South Africa, Lesotho, Democratic Republic of Congo, Madagascar, Seychelles and Mozambique.



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