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The Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP): Political Incentives, Value Added and Ways Forward

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It is now ten years since African Heads of State made their declaration in support of the continent's agricultural sector in Maputo in July 2003. This paper contributes to a small but growing body of independent critical analysis of CAADP, and to debates on future directions for the programme. The paper draws on studies of CAADP engagement in six countries (Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, Malawi, Rwanda and Tanzania) plus preliminary reflections on two more (Kenya and Mozambique)[1]. Its particular contribution is to examine CAADP's interaction with domestic political incentives for support to smallholder agriculture in African countries. Following Poulton 2012, we differentiate countries according to whether the domestic political incentives to invest in smallholder agriculture are strong or weak. In the former, the key question for CAADP is what value it can add to existing policy and planning frameworks for the agriculture sector. In the latter, which are more numerous, the key question is whether the CAADP process contains any mechanisms or provisions that can significantly change the incentives perceived by the governments in question. Experience to date is reviewed and ways forward for CAADP's second decade are suggested.

CAADP

The history of CAADP is well explained by Kolavalli et al. 2010 and Brüntrup 2011. Agriculture was high on the priority list of the founders of NEPAD (NEPAD / African Union 2001) and hence work on an agricultural development programme for the continent began quickly after the establishment of NEPAD in 2001-02. As pointed out by Brüntrup 2011, the underlying principles of CAADP, which have not changed despite revisions to CAADP's operational strategy, flow from those of NEPAD. These include i) a broad accommodation with the prevailing market-oriented international development paradigm, whilst ii) re-establishing African institutions (and especially governments) firmly at the centre of policy and planning processes, and also iii) a pan-Africanist approach to tackling common development challenges.

The UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), which had an African Director General (and compatriot to one of NEPAD's five initiating presidents), played a central role in the initial development of CAADP. In collaboration with the NEPAD Secretariat, FAO facilitated the production of the CAADP framework document (New Partnership for Africa's Development 2003), which was adopted first by African Ministers of Agriculture meeting in Rome in June 2002. At the second regular summit of the new African Union in Maputo in July 2003 African Heads of State committed to implement CAADP "as a matter of urgency" (Assembly of the African Union 2003).

At this stage the emphasis was primarily on mobilising investment in four main areas (the four CAADP "pillars" that remain today): land and water management, rural infrastructure for market access, increasing food supply (reducing hunger) and agricultural research. New Partnership for Africa's Development 2003 estimated a total investment cost for the four pillars around the continent of US$251 billion over the period 2002-2015, to be sought from both domestic budgets and donor support. As part of the Maputo Declaration, African Heads of State agreed "to adopt sound policies for agricultural and rural development, and commit ourselves to allocating at least 10% of national budgetary resources for their implementation within five years".

Following the Maputo Declaration, FAO were commissioned to identify bankable investment projects around the continent. According to Brüntrup 2011, by 2004 FAO had developed country investment programmes for 49 African countries and "validated" these in national stakeholder workshops. However, the impact of this effort was "negligible" (p84): the programmes were not integrated with countries' national agricultural strategies, so gained neither government nor donor buy-in and as a result were not implemented.

From 2005, therefore, the NEPAD Secretariat began to develop a new strategy for realising CAADP objectives. This placed much greater emphasis on influencing and improving national agricultural policy formulation[2]. It envisaged a process for developing and gaining consensus around an overarching national agricultural policy. This process would be launched at a multi-stakeholder workshop, then enter a technical phase of policy review and modelling, generating outputs for deliberation at a second multi-stakeholder event (known as a Round Table) that would culminate in the signing of a "CAADP Compact" by representatives of government, non-state actors, regional and continental institutions, and donors (NEPAD 2010). The Regional Economic Communities (RECs) of the African Union thus became important players within the CAADP approach, charged with taking "leadership in stimulating, coordinating and facilitating support (financial, expert/technical, information etc.) for country CAADP implementation processes" (NEPAD 2010, p7). During this phase, too, International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) were brought on board to provide technical support to CAADP, including conducting the modelling work to inform country-level processes.

The new strategy was launched in 2006 and it was anticipated that more than 30 countries would have their Compact signed by March 2007 (Brüntrup 2011). In the event, just one country, Rwanda, had pioneered the process by this time. Meanwhile, some countries and donors questioned the value of another policy and planning process that could potentially duplicate or compete with existing national-level processes that they were already committed to.

The event that restored momentum to CAADP was the 2007-08 food price crisis. Within Africa, at least 14 countries experienced food riots (Berazneva and Lee 2013), raising the political importance of paying attention to agriculture. Several of the countries that experienced riots (including Senegal, Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso) were in West Africa. In response, ECOWAS, charged with promoting CAADP within the West Africa region, used its own funds to encourage the organisation of CAADP launches in member countries and also to pay for technical input into the stocktaking and review processes prior to the Round Table meetings. Nine countries within the ECOWAS region signed their CAADP Compacts in the final quarter of 2009[3].

Meanwhile, delegates at the G8 summit at L'Aquila in July 2009 announced US$20 billion in aid to support "sustainable agriculture development" as part of their response to the crisis. In line with principles agreed in Accra in 2008 to enhance aid effectiveness, the L'Aquila Declaration stated that the US$20 billion in aid would be used to "support the implementation of country and regional agricultural strategies and plans through country-led coordination processes" (G8 Heads of State and others 2009, para 10). In Africa this translated into support for strategies and investment plans produced through the CAADP process (para 11). Importantly, US support to agricultural development in Africa – increased as a result of the launch of the Feed the Future programme – was then linked to implementation of CAADP, as was access to funds from the multilateral Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP) that was established following the L'Aquila pledges.

These donor decisions to link aid for agriculture to implementation of CAADP catalysed the CAADP process in many additional African countries. By the end of 2010, 22 countries had signed CAADP Compacts and 14 of these had also concluded a subsequent Business Meeting at which different stakeholders (government, donors, private sector) met to commit funding for the implementation of the country's CAADP investment plan. By February 2013 30 countries had signed CAADP Compacts and 22 of these had also concluded a Business Meeting.

However, the new donor interest also changed the dynamics of CAADP. Governments might now enter the CAADP process primarily in the hope of securing additional donor funds - or, worse, simply to avoid losing access to donor funds – without any renewed or even strong commitment to supporting smallholder agriculture.

For NEPAD the new donor interest meant that guidance on country-level CAADP processes had to be formalised. Positively, it also led to some additional attention to what should happen after the signing of a CAADP Compact (Brüntrup 2011).

Assessing the Effectiveness of CAADP: Conceptual Challenges

Whilst it is now a decade since the Maputo Declaration, the brief review above indicates that most CAADP activity at country level has only occurred during the past 3-4 years. Is it too early to be looking for impact? For its supporters, one of the merits of CAADP is its foundation in the declaration made by African Heads of State at Maputo in 2003, hence its claim both to reflect but also to seek to further enhance **political commitment** to invest in agriculture in Africa. Whilst the commitment to raise the share of national budget dedicated to agriculture was supposed to be worked out through the CAADP planning process (which got off to a false start in 2003-05 and arguably was still not fully worked out until 2010), it is not entirely dependent upon that process. There has thus been a full decade for African governments to invest more in agriculture since Maputo.

Meanwhile, the CAADP process, especially post-2005, seeks to **enhance the quality of national agricultural policy and planning**. (In practice there has been more emphasis to date on overarching policy objectives and associated investment planning than on detailed policy for particular value chains or enhanced service delivery). There has now been one round of CAADP-compliant "planning" in 20-30 countries. It should thus be possible to draw some preliminary conclusions on the impact of the process on agricultural planning. Where it is rather early to see change is in the quality of investment and policy implementation, given how recent many of the Business Meetings have been. Nevertheless, even here some pertinent observations can be made.

A second major issue when seeking to assess the effectiveness of CAADP is the problem of attribution: to say what difference CAADP has made, we need to form a judgement as to what would have happened without CAADP. This almost inevitably involves an element of subjectivity. However, one of the contributions of this paper is to differentiate between countries where the domestic political incentives to support smallholder agricultural policy might be described as strong from those where they are weak. In the former case, but not in the latter, one could reasonably have expected concerted policy actions and investment in agriculture even without CAADP.

The strength of political incentives to support smallholder agricultural policy was investigated during the first phase of Future Agricultures' PEAPA work. From a political economy perspective, incentives may be assessed as strong where a government perceives that it has to prioritise investment in smallholder agriculture in order to remain in power (Drazen 2008) or to maintain medium-long term political stability. Given the large share of the population in many African countries that lives in rural areas, democratisation might be expected to increase the incentives to invest in smallholder agriculture in order to maintain power. However, Poulton 2012 finds that African governments have a variety of ways of maintaining support – including appeals to ethnic allegiance, control over land access and focusing attention on local development issues – such that rural voters can only rarely be said to exchange their votes for better agricultural policy and/or enhanced investment.

Instead, incentives are seen to be strong where governments recognise they could be vulnerable to (eventual) overthrow if they do not generate broad-based benefits for rural populations, i.e. the poor majority. In our sample these dynamics are observed in Rwanda and Ethiopia where the current government 1) originally came to power by force, 2) had its roots in a movement to defend or champion a particular minority group, but 3) needs much broader support to remain in power, and meanwhile 4) faces multiple threats to its continuation in power. These countries have also been characterised by strong political leadership, which in turn has contributed to effective agricultural policy. However, the circumstances that create strong incentives for investment in smallholder agriculture may also be conducive to the emergence of strong leaders - "When the going gets tough, the tough get going!" – and encourage other elite members to follow them. In such contexts, the *outcomes* that flow from agricultural policy implementation are all-important and governments tend to display an eagerness to learn what works and what doesn't. If the possible threat to regime survival is medium-term, rather than immediate[4], such governments may well see the logic of investing in classic agricultural public goods, that exhibit the greatest returns to growth and poverty reduction (Mogues et al. 2012) but which do not necessarily yield these returns within a single electoral cycle. This is in contrast to governments in many African countries which came to power through the ballot box, and whose primary concern is now short-term survival at the next election.

The next section presents very simple narratives of the CAADP experience in the eight countries covered in the study, relating this to the observed strength of the domestic political incentives to invest in agriculture within these countries. After this the paper examines drivers of CAADP adoption across countries and considers what difference, if any, CAADP has made at country level. Here it considers political commitment to supporting smallholder agriculture, the quality of agricultural planning, donor alignment and the implementation of agricultural strategies across the eight countries. It is observed that domestic political incentives determine how and why countries engage with the CAADP process and that CAADP has so far achieved little real "traction" in countries where domestic political incentives to invest in smallholder agriculture are weak. Thus, the key questions for CAADP are:

- In countries where domestic political incentives to invest in smallholder agriculture are strong, what value it can add to existing policy and planning frameworks for the agriculture sector?

- In countries where they are weak, does the CAADP process contain any "levers" (mechanisms or provisions) that can significantly change the incentives perceived by the governments in question? How can the levers that do exist be strengthened?

The final section considers ways forward for CAADP, seeking to answer these two questions.

CAADP Storylines

Considering the same eight countries that feature in the current study, Poulton 2012 highlights the strong domestic political incentives to invest in smallholder agriculture in Rwanda and Ethiopia. In both cases a combination of history plus current internal and external opposition (including an armed component) means that the government knows it has to deliver broad-based benefits to the population, and perhaps especially the rural population, in order to justify its hold on power. Attention to smallholder agriculture is the most obvious way to do this. In Ethiopia the EPRDF administration has a long track record of prioritising agricultural investment (Berhanu 2012). By contrast, in Rwanda the conversion to pro-agricultural policy in practice is rather more recent (Booth and Golooba-Mutebi 2012). Rwanda has already been singled out as the pioneer of the CAADP process in Africa. Following poor harvests and disappointing poverty reduction figures in the mid-2000s, President Kagame and others within RPF, convinced of the need to raise the priority of agricultural investment, used CAADP to make their case both to others within government and to donors, who had previously placed greater emphasis on social sector spending (Golooba-Mutebi forthcoming).

Ethiopia was also a relatively early adopter of CAADP (fifth country to sign its Compact). It looked to CAADP to mobilise additional donor funds for its agricultural investment ambitions during a period of delicate relationships with donors, due to its clampdown on domestic opposition groups, but also when key donors such as the US were "indebted" to it for its role in combating Islamic extremism in neighbouring Somalia (Berhanu 2013).

Within our sample, a further three countries may be classed as having intermediate domestic political incentives to invest in smallholder agriculture. Burkina Faso is a landlocked country where mineral revenues only recently came on stream. Here, agriculture plays a critical role in the (political) economy[5], as a source of livelihoods for a majority of the population, of foreign exchange and of rents for the elite (Loada 2012). There is thus some alignment of elite interests with those of the majority of the population, as all need agriculture to succeed. Burkina was one of the countries to suffer urban food riots in 2008 and where ECOWAS sought to catalyse the CAADP process in response. However, it was also one of the countries where the introduction of CAADP met with initial resistance both within government and from several donors, as it was introduced in such a way as to cut across existing agricultural policy and planning processes. This mistake was later rectified and a recast process has led to productive discussions about strategic priorities for the sector (Loada forthcoming).

In Malawi the farm inputs subsidy programme has attained considerable political prominence in another landlocked, agriculture-dependent economy - one where maize has a central place in livelihoods in almost all parts of the country (Chinsinga 2012). In the past decade a key "problem" for agricultural policy, from a technical perspective, has been that the subsidy programme has come to dominate government spending and absorb personnel resources to the detriment of other agricultural interventions, even though complementary services, such as extension, would enhance the subsidy programme's impact on growth and poverty reduction. Meanwhile, following the 2009 election, disastrous high-level decision making sent the Malawian economy into a downward spiral, exacerbated by the resulting strained relationships with donors. The government realised that participation in CAADP could become a precondition for accessing desperately needed agricultural funding, whilst donors hoped that the CAADP process would facilitate a dialogue on diversifying agricultural investment beyond the subsidy programme. Unfortunately, in an atmosphere of some mutual mistrust, no progress was achieved on this latter score (Chinsinga forthcoming).

In Ghana political incentives to invest in agriculture are focused firstly on cocoa (Whitfield 2011), due to its contribution to wider economic growth, which voters value highly (Lindberg 2011). Beyond cocoa, there is a remarkably strong neoliberal consensus amongst technocrats, donors and even politicians, who seem willing to let technocrats and donors largely determine what is funded. Here an exemplary CAADP process was observed, but it is nevertheless hard to ascribe any significant change to it, for reasons that will be explained below (Kolavalli et al. 2010).

Three countries in the study stand out for their apparently weak political incentives to invest in smallholder agriculture. In Tanzania the ruling party CCM has retained reasonably strong rural support despite delivering little in the way of rural economic growth or poverty reduction. Whilst the 2010 election perhaps provided a warning as to the dangers of this, the government's ability to respond seems constrained by the ineffectiveness of the state machinery (Therkildsen 2011)[6]. Multiple state and donor programmes and initiatives make little difference on the ground (Cooksey 2012). The first consequence of CAADP in Tanzania, therefore, was to add another acronym (TAFSIP) to the existing list of agricultural programmes, but with little prospect of improving implementation of any of them. Meanwhile, the government is wondering whether large-scale private sector-led agricultural development could succeed where state-led initiatives have failed. Professed alignment with CAADP provides legitimacy for such endeavours, which are being focused on the Southern Agricultural Growth Corridor of Tanzania (SAGCOT), even though the outcomes for smallholders from such development are unclear (Cooksey, 2014).

In Mozambique rapid economic growth is now driven by minerals extraction, whilst dispersed smallholders - in a country with low population density and where the more productive agricultural land is over 1000km from the capital – exert little pressure on policy makers. Mozambique was a relatively late starter in CAADP terms. Its engagement was stimulated by a break-down in previous government-donor relations in the agriculture sector, hence the need to revive donor support. However, top politicians remain unsure what role smallholder agriculture should play in Mozambique's increasingly mineral-based and urbanising economy, so the prospects for strong and coherent policy to support smallholders are slim. This is compounded by the generous tax breaks given to minerals investors, which undermines the revenues that the government has at its disposal for investment in support of smallholder production (C. Castel-Branco, *pers.comm.*).

Finally, in Kenya regional interests do exert pressure for state support to selective commodity sub-sectors, for example maize in the Rift Valley. However, larger farmers and their needs dominate the dialogue. Policy thus contributes to the reproduction of inequality, which is high (World Bank 2008). By contrast, the 2004 Strategy for Revitalising Agriculture prioritised parastatal reform and public goods provision, which should benefit a wider spectrum of producers, but almost no progress was made on this agenda by 2012 (Poulton and Kanyinga 2013). Kenya is another country where CAADP met initial resistance, on the grounds that it duplicated existing policy initiatives. Whilst the process has now formally proceeded on the basis that existing policy is broadly CAADP compliant, the key question is where the drive to implement policy on behalf of the majority of smallholders will come from.

Drivers of CAADP Adoption

One of the central claims about CAADP is that it is an African-owned initiative, as exemplified by the 2003 Maputo Declaration. Similarly, national CAADP processes are said to be country-led. However, as noted above, Rwanda was the only country in our sample to sign a CAADP Compact before major donors moved to align their agricultural support to CAADP processes, thereby fundamentally altering the incentives for participating in CAADP.

The very notion of country ownership is anyway somewhat problematic where countries depend heavily on donor support for their national budgets, so have to anticipate what donors might be willing to fund. The following summary shows limited country ownership of CAADP processes to date. This is consistent with the generally low domestic political incentives to invest in smallholder agriculture, although it is also in part a reflection on how CAADP has been presented and even conceived to date.

As already noted, two of the countries in our sample (Rwanda and Ethiopia) exhibit a strong domestic drive to develop smallholder agriculture. Both used the CAADP process as a way of seeking greater donor support for their efforts at critical junctures. The Rwanda government was initially disappointed in the donor response, although they found an increasing receptivity after the 2008 food price crisis (Brüntrup 2011). Being the CAADP pioneer also gave the Rwanda government a chance to make a good impression on its African peers. Meanwhile, the Ethiopian government looked to CAADP, with its legitimacy as a continent-wide programme, to mobilise additional donor funds for its agricultural development plans during a period of delicate relationships with donors. It is as yet unclear whether or not it was successful in this.

In the remaining six countries, adoption of CAADP was pushed to a greater or lesser degree by NEPAD officials or the relevant REC. In Burkina, as a result of ECOWAS' prompting, the CAADP process started before the major agricultural donors moved to align their support to CAADP. However, as noted above, it was introduced in such a way as to cut across existing agricultural policy and planning processes. This problem had to be resolved before Burkina could proceed to the signing of the country Compact (Loada forthcoming). ECOWAS was similarly active in Ghana. However, in part due to a coincidence of timing, in Ghana the CAADP process was readily dovetailed with the revision of the main national agricultural strategy, FASDEP II.

In Kenya, COMESA made repeated overtures, from 2006, to encourage the government to sign up to the CAADP process. However, these met with opposition from senior government figures within the agricultural arena, who argued that Kenya had its own agricultural strategy and that engagement with CAADP would entail unnecessary duplication of effort. In the end, the Kenya government signed a CAADP Compact once it became clear that its own national agricultural strategy could be the basis for this – and primarily to satisfy certain donors that were urging it to do so (K.Kanyinga, *pers. comm*). It thus combined the launch of a new national strategy, ASDS, with the signing of its CAADP Compact in July 2010.

Similarly, in the remaining three countries, NEPAD officials formally sought to encourage the CAADP process. However, the government decision to engage owed as much to the signals that it was receiving from donors. In Malawi and Tanzania, the decision of the US government to channel USAID funding for agriculture and nutrition in support of country-led processes (interpreted as CAADP) was an important factor. In Mozambique the belated government decision to sign up to CAADP reflected a need to mend fences with agriculture sector donors, who were drifting away in frustration at the government's lack of commitment to the sector. It is unclear whether it also signalled any genuine new commitment to agriculture, following food riots in several of the country's urban areas in 2010.

What Difference Has CAADP Made at Country Level?

In this section we draw cross-cutting lessons regarding the impact of CAADP at country level.

Political Commitment to Supporting Smallholder Agriculture

The share of the national budget devoted to the agricultural sector is a highly imperfect indicator of the extent to which policy supports smallholder agricultural producers (see below). However, as highlighted by the Maputo Declaration, it is a somewhat stronger indicator of the degree of political commitment to supporting the agricultural sector.

Fan et al. 2009 report that few African countries had reached the Maputo target of devoting 10% of their national budget to the agricultural sector by 2008 (the deadline set in the Maputo Declaration). Moreover, some of the countries that did so (for example, Burkina Faso and Ethiopia) already devoted more than 10% of their national budget to the agricultural sector in 2003. More recent assessments confirm that it is still only a small minority of countries that have reached the Maputo 10% target (ActionAid 2013; Benin and Yu 2013; ONE 2013). Whilst agricultural expenditures have increased rapidly over the past decade, so have overall budgets, such that on average the share of national budgets devoted to agricultural and rural development has actually fallen slightly (Benin and Yu 2013).

In regard to the budget share target, we can distinguish three different dynamics across the eight countries in the PEAPA sample.

In Ethiopia and Burkina, the share of the national budget devoted to the agricultural sector exceeded 10% in 2008, but had done so throughout the period since 2003. In Malawi a large increase in agricultural budget share occurred as a result of the introduction of the farm input subsidy programme starting in 2005-06. This was driven by short-term political considerations (Chinsinga 2012), rather than any commitment to CAADP. In all three countries the efficiency of agricultural expenditure is a big issue. In Ethiopia, the government has made unparalleled investments in agricultural extension (Davis et al. 2010), with some beneficial impacts on growth and poverty reduction (Dercon et al. 2008). However, according to Berhanu 2012, this investment has been driven by twin objectives of growth and political control, and there is a trade-off between the two: the imperative of political control sits uneasily with a facilitating, participatory approach to extension and has also meant that the government has been resistant to advice to liberalise key input markets even though greater choice for farmers could enhance the returns to extension investment. In Burkina there is an apparent disconnect between recent investment levels and observed agricultural sector performance[7]. In Malawi the budgetary and administrative priority given to the subsidy programme has led to neglect of complementary interventions that could raise the returns to subsidy expenditure.

Ghana and Rwanda are perhaps the most interesting cases. As in Malawi, the share of public expenditure devoted to the agricultural sector has risen significantly since 2003. In Ghana there was a steady increase in the share of actual expenditure devoted to agriculture over the decade 2001-11, from an average of 6.4% during 2001-03 to 9% during 2004-07, then reaching or exceeding 10% during 2008-11 (World Bank 2013)[8]. Moreover, the share of agricultural expenditure accounted for by cocoa fell over time, though it remains disproportionate to its contribution to sector GDP. The government of President Kufuor apparently took its Maputo commitment seriously, with reference to the 10% target appearing in the FASDEP II (2007) agricultural strategy[9]. On the other hand, the share of agricultural expenditure accounted for by donors also increased from 2005, which may partly account for the shifting composition of expenditure towards food staples as well as the increasing share of actual expenditure. Ghana has also made great strides in reducing the incidence of extreme poverty, which has focused attention on the fact that remaining poverty is increasingly concentrated in the agricultural (especially food crop) regions of the north of the country. However, the introduction of a fertiliser subsidy in 2008 (Banful 2011), subsequently expanded in 2009 under an NDC government, is a rare example of a major agricultural programme to particularly direct expenditure towards the north of the country.

In Rwanda the increase in budget allocation to the agricultural sector was more dramatic and coincided with the signing of the CAADP compact. However, the driving force behind these changes was the realisation by senior politicians, following publication of new national poverty figures in 2006, that the government had to give greater priority to agriculture if it was to realise its objective of broad-based growth and poverty reduction (Golooba-Mutebi forthcoming). At this point, President Kagame, a strong supporter of NEPAD, looked to CAADP as a vehicle for making his case to others within government and the donor community. The modelling support provided by IFPRI was very helpful in this. Subsequently the government has dramatically increased the share of its budget devoted to agriculture and, with effective delivery of interventions, has seen benefits in terms of both agricultural production and greatly accelerated poverty reduction. It is now committed to expanding the agriculture share beyond 10% of the national budget in the next few years.

A common feature in Ghana and Rwanda has been the 2003 leaders' (i.e. Presidents Kufuor and Kagame) commitment to the broader NEPAD pan-African vision. This appears to have translated into a commitment to the basic Maputo budget commitment (Ghana) and a sympathetic attitude towards the CAADP process (Rwanda).

Meanwhile, in Tanzania, Kenya and Mozambique – the countries that we characterise as having low political incentives for support to smallholder agriculture - the share of the budget devoted to agriculture has fluctuated around the 5% level over the past decade, with no discernible trend or CAADP effect.

Quality of Agricultural Planning

All countries had a process for agricultural planning prior to CAADP. In theory, CAADP could aspire to improve the quality of this process, where this is/was deficient, or it could focus primarily on increasing the resources invested in the agricultural sector, subject to "due diligence" checks that the planning framework to guide the use of these resources is/was adequate. In practice, the balance across these two objectives could vary from country to country.

There are two main ways in which the CAADP process, as currently conceived, may improve the quality of the agricultural planning process: by encouraging greater participation by civil society and commercial private sector actors in priority setting and by making available additional technical expertise to inform the process. These are considered below. Before this, though, it is worth noting that an early critique was that CAADP was simply duplicating existing agricultural planning processes (Zimmerman et al. 2009). Mindful of this, CAADP processes have increasingly adopted existing strategies and plans, with limited checks or amendments to ensure that these are "CAADP-compliant". Within our sample countries, this has been true for Ghana, Kenya, Malawi and Tanzania. This, however, means that to date CAADP can have had little impact on the quality of the agricultural planning process in these countries[10]. Instead, the de facto approach was to perform "due diligence" checks to ensure that the planning framework was adequate to guide the use of the anticipated additional resources directed at agriculture.

Participation by civil society and commercial private sector actors in the CAADP process should be assessed in relation to the degree of participation in existing agricultural planning processes. It should also be seen in the context of broader state-civil society relationships. These are evolving with democratisation, but there are still elements of mutual mistrust in most countries. On the one hand, an active civil society may be seen as a potential political threat by government. On the other hand, both civil society and commercial private sector actors may be sceptical (often justifiably?) about the real commitment on the part of government to partnership with non-state actors.

Within our sample of countries, there are perhaps only two where government actions demonstrate some sort of conviction that civil society contribution to policy dialogue will really enhance outcomes. Even these are qualified cases. As noted above, in Rwanda agricultural outcomes matter. Thus, the government is interested in hearing from anyone whom it believes is committed to improving outcomes. In practice, this leads to contrasting treatment of civil society groups. Those who are perceived to be committed to constructive engagement with government on policy matters are consulted pro-actively by the government, whilst those perceived as interested mainly in criticising the government (i.e. they resist encouragement to opt for constructive engagement instead) are excluded. In Rwanda the Agricultural Sector Working Group brings together government, donor, private sector and civil society actors in regular monthly meetings to track progress with policy and implementation. For civil society groups that have opted to engage the government constructively, access to policy making processes is perhaps unrivalled within the study countries (Golooba-Mutebi forthcoming). Meanwhile, in Ghana participatory decision making is a principle enshrined in the 1992 constitution and one that the National Development Planning Commission has tried to operationalize for sector strategy development (Kolavalli et al. 2010). The NPP government of President Kufuor also professed a particular commitment to private sector-led development and established a CAADP Private Sector Liaison Office (S.Asuming-Brempong, *pers.comm*).

These observations notwithstanding, in accordance with the international consensus on good practice for aid effectiveness that emerged during the 2000s, non-state actors have been given (limited) space to participate in agricultural policy and strategy development in several of the study countries in recent years. Thus, for example, in Ghana, Kenya, Malawi and Tanzania existing national agricultural strategies and plans were subject to quite broad (if perhaps superficial) consultation with private sector and civil society representatives. Participation in CAADP processes was, therefore, not novel and indeed – given the basic adoption of existing “CAADP-compliant” national strategies within these countries - was sometimes more limited than for the original development of the national strategy (Kolavalli et al. 2010; JM&Co 2011).

Ethiopia stands in some contrast to the other countries in the study, as increasing political control over non-governmental organisations and measures to restrict their engagement in effective policy advocacy were introduced via the CSO Proclamation (621/2009) around the same time as the CAADP Compact was signed in late 2009. In this environment, including non-state actors as signatories to the CAADP Compact represented a small success and one that suggests CAADP’s significance for the government as a way of accessing donor funding to support its ambitious agricultural goals (Berhanu 2013). However, one can question the lasting consequences of this – beyond this token act, the domestic imperatives for political control have prevailed.

Indeed, in most cases – but perhaps particularly in countries where political incentives to support smallholder agriculture are perceived as weak - the inclusion of non-state actors in CAADP processes has been something of a formality. It is hard to find examples of changes to strategies or plans as a result[11]. In all countries, including Ghana and Rwanda (Golooba-Mutebi forthcoming, S.Asuming-Brempong *pers.comm*), government respondents are sceptical of civil society capacity to contribute to policy dialogues. There are few strong umbrella organisations for civil society groups interested in agriculture, and individual organisations often lack understanding of policy processes or the constraints, including financial, that governments operate under.

The one country in the sample where civil society participation is said to have made a difference to the content of CAADP documents is Burkina Faso. Here, consultation with civil society actors was undertaken primarily at donor insistence. However, once embarked upon, it did add some value, with recognition of land issues being included in the Compact at the insistence of civil society groups (Loada forthcoming).

Turning to the second main way in which CAADP may have improved the quality of the agricultural planning process, the provision of expertise, we note that the main type of expertise on offer has been modelling expertise from IFPRI. The use of such modelling to encourage political commitment to agricultural investment in Rwanda has already been noted. However, whilst recognising the value of modelling exercises for such purposes, Kolavalli et al. 2010 also note their limitations: suitably disaggregated, modelling exercises might also assist with prioritisation *within* agricultural expenditure, but they are of limited use for detailed planning. This highlights the need for a broader spectrum of expertise to be made available to governments that are interested. Unfortunately, the weakness of CAADP’s pillar institutions has been relevant here (Brüntrup 2011).

We also highlight the phrase “governments that are interested”. Provision of expertise is an area that CAADP could strengthen. However, the benefit of this will depend on the will to use better information. In other words, is the constraint primarily on the demand or the supply side?

Before closing this section, we also briefly consider the notion of CAADP performing “due diligence” checks to ensure that national agricultural planning frameworks are adequate to guide the use of anticipated additional resources directed at the sector. The combination of weak domestic political incentives to deliver improved agricultural performance and heavy donor involvement in national expenditure means that, in many of the study countries, agricultural strategies and even investment plans are "catch all" lists, comprising both the "wish lists" of the government and the various initiatives that particular donors would like to fund[12]. Lack of prioritisation is a significant weakness in planning processes (Tavakoli et al. 2013). However, this is not something that CAADP processes to date have sought to address. Rather, CAADP compliance has been assessed in terms of whether or not strategies reflect all four of the CAADP pillars. As the CAADP pillars are fairly generic, most national strategies could be presented as CAADP-compliant (Kolavalli et al. 2010). Sometimes (for example, in Ethiopia, Ghana and Malawi) the CAADP investment plan has been an existing strategy repackaged to show conformity to the pillars, but with no real change in content. In Tanzania the stocktaking taskforce noted a number of gaps in the existing strategy, ASDP, so "ended by proposing a list of 32 'areas of improvement', that would distinguish the CAADP investment plan from ASDP" (Cooksey 2014). In other words, achieving CAADP compliance potentially made the lack of prioritisation worse, not better. The degree of "due diligence" is thus pretty low.

Donor Alignment

By focusing attention on a single national plan for the agricultural sector, CAADP also hopes to encourage greater donor alignment with national policy priorities and greater coordination of support for the agricultural sector across donors. However, CAADP is not the only force for change in this area. The 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, reinforced by the 2008 Accra Agenda for Action, commit donors to aligning their support behind "partner countries' national development strategies and associated operational frameworks" (OECD undated, p1). In the agricultural sector, CAADP has provided a vehicle for operationalizing these principles, particularly for donors that had not been strong on harmonisation prior to 2008.

Within our sample, Rwanda stands out as a country that has pro-actively sought to manage its relationships with donors and to shape the terms on which they engage. Rwanda gradates donors' access to information and policy making according to the nature of their support to the national budget. It also encourages each donor to work in no more than three sectors, so as to facilitate coordination. At sector level, dialogue and coordination is focused on the Sector Working Group, which is co-chaired by the Permanent Secretary of the lead ministry and the representative of the lead donor. This has been the practice in the agricultural sector since the CAADP round table and it works well, but "nothing specifically different has happened in the sector since the roundtable to distinguish it from other sectors in terms of donor-government relations" (Golooba-Mutebi forthcoming, p11).

Like Rwanda, Ethiopia takes a robust approach to donor relations, which, as already noted, became strained on more than one occasion during 2005-10. However, whilst seeking to maintain control of the discourse with donors (and pro-actively seeking other sources of investment in the economy to buttress its ability to do this), it has exhibited an increased openness in discussion with donors on agricultural policy over the past five years or so. One vehicle for this has been the Rural Economic Development and Food Security (RED&FS) Sector Working Group, which emerged out of dialogue between government and donors during 2007-08, i.e. prior to the official launch of the CAADP process in Ethiopia in September 2008. The RED & FS Sector Working Group has since become "the major body that oversees progress in the implementation of CAADP" (Berhanu 2013, p16). A steering committee comprising key representatives of the RED & FS Sector Working Group oversaw preparation of the national Policy and Investment Framework (PIF) for 2010-20. At the country's CAADP Business Meeting in December 2010, donors committed to "Use the RED&FS SWG as the principal mechanism for dealing with issues related to (1) harmonization and alignment with the PIF; (2) executing elements of the Roadmap; (3) resolving technical, policy and operational constraints; and (4) identifying financial resources to support implementation" (Government of Ethiopia 2010).

Elsewhere, the CAADP process has also served a useful role in bringing donors together. This is well illustrated by the case of Malawi, where the Agriculture Sector Wide Approach (ASWAp), that formed the basis of the CAADP Compact, brought more donors to the same table than previous attempts to define an overarching strategy for the sector had done. The resulting Donor Committee on Agriculture and Food Security "meets on a monthly basis and provides donors with a common framework for engaging with government on strategic issues in the sector". The result, according to one key informant, is that "donors do not come up with their own interests but are responding to the investment priorities outlined in the ASWAp" (Chinsinga forthcoming, p26).

There is, however, one danger in the trend towards "alignment" with national CAADP processes and this is that CAADP gets invoked to legitimise activity that is fundamentally not aligned with its core values. This concern is most salient in the case of initiatives to promote large-scale commercial investment in African agriculture, for example the Southern Agricultural Growth Corridor of Tanzania (SAGCOT) or aspects of the New Alliance agenda more broadly (Cooksey forthcoming)[13]. These initiatives promise to support implementation of CAADP investment plans and to bring "tangible benefits to smallholder farmers" (G8 2012). However, whether assisting the commercialisation of smallholder producers turns out to be a major emphasis of the envisaged private sector investments, let alone the major emphasis, remains to be seen.

Strategy Implementation

One of the more serious critiques of the CAADP enterprise to date is that it has focused heavily on sector strategies and investment plans, whilst in African agriculture formal strategies and plans are often not implemented effectively and sometimes hardly implemented at all (see, for example, Cooksey 2012 and Poulton and Kanyinga 2013). This also means that, even if non-state actors do get to influence the formal strategy, they may still not affect policy in practice.

Poor implementation of sector strategies and investment plans can be attributed to a number of factors. The first is weaknesses at the planning stage – in particular, a lack of prioritisation, as discussed above. This is likely to mean that financial or human resources (or both) are insufficient to implement all the proposed activities effectively, with a result either that a non-transparent selection process determines which ones do and do not go ahead[14] or that most activities are undertaken in such a way as to achieve little impact. Some CAADP investment plans go significantly under-funded (Benin et al. 2011), which illustrates this problem.

A second factor is low state capacity for programme implementation. This is impossible to fully separate from weaknesses at the planning stage, as planners should plan according to the capacity to implement. However, there are some particular challenges to implementation that deserve to be highlighted. As well as lack of funds or qualified personnel, programme implementation may be impeded by collective action problems within the political elite, as seen in Kenya (Poulton and Kanyinga 2013), or by problems in centre-local relations, as detected in Tanzania (Therkildsen 2011).

Incentive problems are compounded by the limited attention paid to monitoring and evaluation. Whilst donors are increasingly required to demonstrate the effectiveness of their investments, this can lead to problems in implementation being downplayed when programmes are reviewed, as is suggested in the case of Tanzania (Cooksey 2012).

State capacity for planning and implementation is largely given in the short run, but is endogenous to political will in the medium-long run. Perhaps predictably, the countries in our sample that show what can be done in the area of state capacity building for agricultural policy and programme implementation are Rwanda and Ethiopia. Rwanda has sought to introduce outcome-based management at all levels of the state, through mechanisms such as annual leadership retreats, the annual national dialogue and the *imihigo* system of performance contracting (Booth and Golooba-Mutebi 2012). As well as investing heavily in its agricultural extension system, Ethiopia has recently established an Agricultural Transformation Agency to "address systemic bottlenecks in the agriculture sector" through problem solving, supporting implementation of solutions to critical problems and enhancing coordination among agricultural stakeholders (www.ata.gov.et/about/our-mandate, Berhanu 2013).

In addition to political will, a second factor that facilitates state capacity building in Rwanda and Ethiopia is the time horizon of politicians. Results are required in a hurry because of the extent of the transformation that is sought, yet the degree of political dominance and/or control means that the government does not expect to be ousted at the next election. Hence, it can invest in public goods (including state capacity) that will yield high returns in terms of growth over the medium term. By contrast, elections in Malawi, Kenya and Ghana (and perhaps increasingly Tanzania) are fiercely contested and "impact" has to be achieved quickly, making transfer payments an attractive mechanism for wooing voters.

To date CAADP processes have paid little attention to the implementation of agricultural strategies. This is a significant omission. It can be partly explained by the fact that the plans developed through CAADP processes have only been finalised fairly recently. However, an alternative approach would have been to start by trying to improve delivery on existing strategies (see Tavakoli et al. 2013 for a more general expression of this argument). Irrespective of past choices, implementation issues are now receiving greater attention through the mechanism of agricultural joint sector reviews. This is to be welcomed, although "the devil will be in the detail" when it comes to the effectiveness of such reviews in enhancing performance[15].

Increasing Political Incentives for Investment in Smallholder Agriculture

This review has found that the achievements of CAADP to date have been modest. For most countries the commitments made by the Head of State in Maputo in 2003 did not translate into practical action to support smallholder farmers, nor even to clear ownership of the national CAADP process. There is little evidence that CAADP processes have enhanced the quality of national agricultural planning, whilst focus on the (non-) implementation of strategies and plans is a very recent phenomenon.

Based on previous FAC PEAPA work, we have distinguished between countries with strong domestic political incentives to invest in smallholder agriculture (in our sample, most obviously Rwanda and Ethiopia) and those where such incentives are weaker. The former have used CAADP, rather as intended, as a way of making the case for greater investment in agriculture and to seek increased donor funding for national agricultural strategies and plans. (We are not sure how successful they have been in gaining extra funding, however). The latter have gone through the CAADP process more as a formality, hence gaining little from it. This emphasises the importance of domestic political incentives in influencing agricultural policy and planning and hence influencing outcomes.

As CAADP goes forward, therefore, a major question is: what can it do to strengthen political incentives to invest in smallholder agriculture in the (majority of) countries where these incentives are still quite weak?

Before answering this, however, we should answer a prior question: Why should CAADP go forward, in light of the assessment above? Despite its limited impact "on the ground" to date, CAADP is uniquely placed to encourage governments to respond to important opportunities for African agriculture. The 2007-08 and 2011 international food price spikes showed the costs of relying on food imports whilst neglecting domestic agricultural production. Real food prices are expected to remain above early 2000s levels for some years to come. This is a political threat, but an opportunity for African agriculture. Another opportunity lies in Africa's huge untapped agricultural potential (World Bank 2009), as global populations continue to rise but rates of production growth slow down in other regions. Some African governments have clearly spotted the implied potential for agricultural growth, including exports. Neither of these opportunities necessarily inclines governments towards investment in *smallholder* agriculture. However, increasing inequality (especially in Africa's mineral-rich economies) and the limited translation of overall economic growth into poverty reduction under such circumstances make a compelling case for promoting smallholder-led growth in agriculture.

Meanwhile, CAADP is now established on the African agricultural policy scene, at continental, regional and (unevenly) at national level. It is uniquely placed as an African Union programme that can access Heads of State, Ministers of Agriculture and Finance and can tap into any developing sense of African renaissance[16]. The AU's designation of 2014 as the Year of Agriculture and Food Security shows both the renewed political interest in agriculture and the opportunity that CAADP has to reinforce this. CAADP should build on this renewed interest in agriculture, including interest in the New Alliance agenda for increased commercial investment in the sector[17], but use its engagement to argue the case for investing in support of smallholders.

CAADP has always faced the tension between reflecting and enhancing political interest in agriculture. As it looks forward, it has to seek to harness the commitment of leaders and countries where domestic political incentives for investment in agriculture are high, so as to provide peer encouragement for others. It also has to be open to new "hooks", such as the New Alliance, that draw additional countries into meaningful engagement with CAADP. For countries where domestic political incentives are weak, but there is at least formal recognition of the need to invest in agriculture, CAADP can offer ideas for ways forward – facilitating sharing of good practice – but also use collective high-level political commitments to embed particular practices within national processes. Its objective in all countries should be to add value to country processes, rather than to prescribe them, as the experience summarised here shows that pursuing a prescribed process as a formality achieves little. This implies a further evolution of thinking beyond that which occurred during 2006-10.

Finally, one of the reasons why political incentives for investing in smallholder agriculture are weak in many African countries is the weakness of rural-oriented civil society groups. Championing the participation of such groups in policy processes will thus on its own achieve little. However, experience from elsewhere (for example, Latin America or India) shows that a combination of pressure from outside government plus advocacy within the policy process can be effective. It is beyond the scope and capability of CAADP to build the capacity of rural-oriented civil society groups in Africa. However, it can seek to enhance the information flows that they need to become more effective advocates for pro-smallholder agricultural policy.

The following paragraphs develop these ideas further, drawing on the insights from the analysis in the earlier parts of the paper. They are structured around discussion of five possible levers for increasing political commitment to supporting smallholder agriculture.

Heads of State

One of the disappointments of the decade since the Maputo declaration is that the commitment by Heads of State has translated into so little real action or investment. Few countries that were devoting less than 10% of their budget to agriculture in 2003 are now devoting more than 10% to it. Equally, few countries seized the CAADP process as an opportunity to effectively make the case for increased support to agriculture, rather than going through it formally at the suggestion of others.

There are various possible explanations for this. The "false start" of bankable investment projects during 2003-05, leading to redefinition of the approach by 2006-07, did not help, especially as Heads of State get replaced periodically. The low level of institutionalisation in many African political systems means that commitment by one leader is viewed more as a personal commitment than as a national one by his/her successor, especially if the successor comes from a different political party.

In political systems characterised by generally low accountability, it is, of course, fairly easy to sign up to a commitment such as the Maputo declaration (to gain peer approval). This does not necessarily convey full political commitment when there are urgent competing priorities or where there are collective action problems within national political leaderships. (Involving Ministers of Finance and Agriculture as well may help here, but may still only partially address the problem). Some internal disputes and obstacles may be unforeseen at the time of the commitment, as was probably the case for Kenya (Poulton and Kanyinga 2013), where President Kibaki might otherwise have been expected to be a strong champion for a NEPAD programme.

By contrast, for some Heads of State who did share the NEPAD pan-African vision, the Maputo declaration does seem to have spurred subsequent action. The cases of Rwanda and Ghana were noted above. This suggests the value of framing a new Heads of State commitment for the second decade of CAADP (as is indeed going to happen in 2014), so that the current generation of political leaders can own their own commitment to agriculture, which for some of them will be a personal spur to champion the cause.

Information Sharing

This should be a major theme for CAADP, but it has at least two distinct components. The first is the sharing of good practice and understanding. Under CAADP to date, provision of knowledge and expertise has focused on:

- Technical knowledge related to the four investment "pillars", which has been the responsibility of the selected pillar institutions. These have functioned unevenly (Brüntrup 2011; JM&Co 2011).

- Modelling support, provided by IFPRI, for the stocktaking exercises. The strengths (advocacy for agricultural investment) and weaknesses (limited ability to contribute to detailed planning) of this were noted earlier.

In addition, good practice in policy design has been incorporated into the guidelines for implementing the CAADP country process (NEPAD 2010). By contrast, little attention has been paid to what constitutes good agricultural policy or on institutional models that have proven effective in delivering such policy. These deserve greater attention.

This paper argues that CAADP should seek to add value to existing national agricultural planning (and evaluation) processes, rather than to prescribe them. This suggests:

- an emphasis on principles, rather than guidelines – combined with independent assessment of how national processes perform against these principles (see below)

- an information brokering role, to facilitate access to good practice and understanding. Where good practice is concerned, the CAADP secretariat may actually come to possess plenty of this knowledge itself, especially if it manages independent assessments of on-going national processes. It can then advise governments that wish to improve their performance (and ratings!). In the case of understanding, CAADP should develop relationships with major research institutions and networks that study African agricultural policy and processes, and seek to expose policy makers to their most interesting findings.

The second component to information sharing relates more to accountability. At present, comparative assessment of agricultural investment and performance is undertaken by ReSAKSS and by occasional independent studies. Eventually, the resulting information becomes freely available on the internet. However, there are major problems with both indicators and data that limit its value for accountability purposes. Perhaps the most striking example concerns the 10% budget share target:

- Firstly, although CAADP has a preferred definition of "agriculture" (the COFOG definition plus expenditure on agricultural research), in practice the definition used varies across countries (see World Bank 2013 and endnote 8 below, as an example)[18]. This makes cross-country comparison difficult.

- Secondly, data on budgets, but even more so on actual expenditures, are hard to obtain - especially at the disaggregated level necessary to compile a total "agriculture" figure. Hence, available comparative country data can be quite dated. For example, the oft-cited Fan et al. 2009 study uses data from 2004-08 depending on the country.

Particularly if civil society is to become more engaged in debates on agricultural public expenditure in Africa (how much? what is it spent on? how well is it spent?), data need to be much more readily available. Ideally, data on agricultural expenditure, according to standardised definitions and classifications[19] for ready comparison, should be available on an annual basis. The 2014 declaration by African Heads of State presents an opportunity to gain cross-country commitments to provide CAADP with this data, which can then be publicly disseminated via the CAADP website. This opportunity should be seized[20].

A second type of information that could usefully be disseminated for accountability purposes is the results of independent assessment of country processes for agricultural planning and evaluation of implementation. Here is how such assessments could work. Instead of prescribing a standard "CAADP process" that all countries should follow, CAADP could:

1. set out principles for both national planning and evaluation processes. These principles would encapsulate good practice in planning and evaluation.

2. develop criteria, related to these principles, for assessing actual practice. The criteria might be expected, for example, to include a number of indicators relating to: the breadth, depth and effectiveness of civil society participation in planning and evaluation processes[21]; prioritisation

in planning; the quality of evidence underlying planning decisions and evaluation processes.

3. organise teams to conduct regular assessments in each country. Assessments of national planning processes should occur at least once every five years, preferably when a new agricultural strategy is developed. Assessments of implementation processes should occur every two-three years. Each country could nominate a small number of national assessors. A review team could then consist of: the national CAADP focal point, one national assessor from the host nation, two assessors (selected by CAADP) from the pool of assessors nominated by other countries, and a team leader (selected by CAADP, from either the AU's own staff or from the relevant REC).

4. present the findings at an in-country workshop.

5. publish the results on its website.

Participation of Non-State Actors in Agricultural Policy Processes

Our review found that formal inclusion of non-state actors in CAADP processes has rarely increased the level of participation in agricultural planning beyond existing norms. Perhaps even more importantly, these existing norms of participation are not yet perceived to have made much difference to policy on the continent. This is in part due to the weakness of existing rural-oriented civil society groups and/or their representative organisations and often to a continuing mutual mistrust between states and non-state actors. It should also be noted that state agencies have bureaucratic vested interests (for example, to protect their budgets and not to have to work too hard in exchange for them) and will only concede real power if forced to. Championing the participation of non-state actors in policy processes – even if this is extended to cover joint sector reviews (evaluation of implementation) and not just planning – is, therefore, not a "silver bullet" for better policy.

On the other hand, the lack of effective rural voice contributes to weak political incentives for investing in smallholder agriculture in many African countries. Few states are incentivised to promote broad-based growth in the way that Rwanda and Ethiopia are, so enabling rural-oriented civil society groups to play a more effective role in agricultural policy making has to be a long-term objective. There is only so much that CAADP can do here. However, this includes:

- Encouraging real participation in policy processes, through the principles for good agricultural policy making and the assessment of performance according to those principles (see above)
- Using its political influence through the African Union to procure better public information about agricultural policy processes and investment (as above), for civil society groups to use in advocacy work
- Developing a network of major rural-oriented civil society organisations, at continental or perhaps regional level, and encouraging and equipping them to use the information thereby made available.

Role of RECS

The various Regional Economic Communities (RECs) are the implementing agencies of AU at regional level. They have had a role in CAADP implementation at least since 2005 and are charged with taking "leadership in stimulating, coordinating and facilitating support (financial, expert/technical, information etc.) for country CAADP implementation processes" (NEPAD 2010, p7). In practice, their engagement in CAADP has varied. ECOWAS has been the most active, catalysing national CAADP processes in a number of West African states in 2008-09 and in the process contributing to the resurgence in interest in CAADP from the international community. More recently, COMESA has also sought to encourage national CAADP processes in its region.

As with most African institutions (including the NEPAD Secretariat and the AU Commission), RECs are not well funded. ECOWAS is a partial exception here, as its institutions receive core funding from a community levy raised via the ECOWAS area common external tariff. Nevertheless, even with limited funding, RECs could play a useful role in future CAADP processes in their region, for example by:

- Promoting the exchange of information, amongst governments (regarding good practice in agricultural policy, institutional development for agricultural policy and/or policy design and evaluation processes) and civil society organisations (assisting them to access and evaluate information on agricultural public expenditure by governments in their region and the findings of independent assessments of country processes for agricultural planning and evaluation).
- Participating in the independent assessment exercises, for example by supplying team leaders for evaluation teams and contributing to the dissemination of findings.

RECs also have a regional trade promotion role, which is relevant to the agricultural sector. They can seek to promote freer trade in agricultural products within regions and champion other initiatives where there is a clear advantage to acting regionally, for example promoting regional harmonisation of seed certification procedures and greater regional cooperation in agricultural research. So far, however, their voice has been muted where policy issues are concerned, even when these fall squarely within their remit. The case of agricultural export bans in eastern and southern Africa is a case in point.

This raises the question of the circumstances under which RECs might be expected to act as independent agents with the power and inclination to influence domestic agricultural policy in countries in their region. Given that the RECs' ultimate authority is derived from these states, they can only exert effective pressure for better agricultural policy where nation states have conceded a degree of sovereignty to their REC and this has been consolidated through institutionalisation. (The European Union provides an example of this sort of process). Concession of sovereignty is only likely to occur in pursuit of objectives beyond agricultural growth, for example, the establishment of a regional trade zone or security force or the introduction of a common regional currency. Agricultural policy could then benefit, however. Only ECOWAS has taken steps in this direction. It has a parliament and commission that can in theory act as independent sources of policy pressure. In general we should not expect RECs to do much beyond promoting the exchange of information on agricultural policy and participating in independent assessment exercises during the second decade of CAADP.

Donor pressure

Donors have been major supporters of CAADP since 2009. CAADP's attraction, in an era of evolving good practice for aid effectiveness, is that it can claim to be African owned and led. However, in practice, domestic political incentives to support smallholder agriculture remain weak in many African countries and, as a result, national ownership of the CAADP process has often also been weak. In these contexts, donors have found themselves not so much supporting a national process as pushing it, with the result that the dynamics of the process have been changed[22].

The proposals outlined in previous sections assume (and, therefore, require) that African institutions at continental and regional level will run the process. Critically, they also assume that national governments will both allow them to do this and cooperate in important ways (providing annual budget information, contributing to and welcoming assessment teams). If these proposals are implemented, donors should be beneficiaries of the changes. They will still be able to engage in national agricultural planning and policy processes. Moreover, if the greater accountability of governments to peers and civil society, plus exchange of information on good practice, results in more efficient and effective processes, the policy environment into which they invest their financial support should improve, enhancing impact (a major concern for donor agencies under political pressure back home). For donors looking to scale up their assistance to agriculture, the independent assessment of policy processes across countries should provide some indication of where incremental investment could be productively allocated.

To what extent should donors support the envisaged process itself? Such support could be channelled to AU/NEPAD or to RECs, perhaps via trust funds dedicated to facilitating CAADP processes (much as with the current multi-donor trust fund). This money could be used, for example, to pay for the work of assessment teams or to support information dissemination activities. It may be that the proposals envisaged above are only workable with donor support. The dilemma, however, is that heavy dependence on donor funding both reflects and projects lack of national (or broader African) ownership, which would not bode well for the process. Greater funding of pan-African institutions by African governments is desirable.

Finally, donors can continue to support African civil society organisations engaged in advocacy on agricultural policy issues. There would be synergies between capacity building investment in such organisations on the one hand and greater access for them to information and to agricultural policy processes through CAADP on the other. Again, though, donor investment in such organisations carries its own dangers. Thus, donors may consider delivering such support at "arm's length" through credible intermediary organisations (Booth 2012).

END NOTES

1. The paper is an output of the Political Economy of Agricultural Policy in Africa workstream within the DFID-funded Future Agricultures Consortium (www.future-agricultures.org/peapa). All the authors contribute to this workstream. All except Colin Poulton have produced country case studies that underpin the findings in this paper.
2. The second CAADP target – to achieve 6% per annum growth in the agricultural sector – emerged during this period. According to NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency 2010 (p1), 6% is "the rate which modelling suggests is required in order to impact poverty and hunger".
3. www.nepad-caadp.net/pdf/Table%201%20Countries%20with%20Investment%20Plans%20ver19.pdf provides a summary of progress with the CAADP process around Africa.
4. See Kitschelt and Wilkinson 2007 (p37) for a discussion of the particular incentives that flow from threats of "intermediate intensity and urgency".
5. Even Collier 2007 (p62) grudgingly accepts that smallholder agriculture might have a role to play in a growth and poverty reduction strategy under such circumstances!
6. There is thus some room for debate as to whether observed lack of progress with agricultural policy implementation reflects weak political incentives

or collective action problems that hinder delivery in response to them.

7 Nevertheless, one of outcomes of the CAADP process was the conclusion that Burkina should aim to spend at least 16% of its national budget on agriculture (Loada forthcoming).

8 Unconventionally, Ghana includes both feeder road investment and an element of debt relief in its calculation of agricultural expenditure. Note also that the share of actual expenditure rose despite agriculture's ex ante share of the budget fluctuating between 6-8% throughout the period (World Bank 2013).

9 The Government of Ghana began promoting CAADP within the country even before the official commitment by Heads of State at Maputo in July 2003.

10 Indeed, in Malawi, the donors' hope that the CAADP process would create greater space to discuss investments other than the input subsidy programme were dashed. Over 70% of the funding envisaged by the investment plan is for the input subsidy programme and the so-called Green Belt Initiative that was championed by ex-President Mutharika (Chinsinga forthcoming).

11 Similar critiques of non-state actor participation are found in the literature on PRSPs (see, for example, Whitfield 2010 on Ghana).

12 Rwanda and Ethiopia are exceptions to these statements. In these countries, as agricultural outcomes matter to political survival and/or stability, formal strategies and plans are serious documents of intent (see, for example, Booth and Golooba-Mutebi 2012 for Rwanda).

13 Tanzania also provides a case where CAADP has done little for donor alignment. Instead of providing a dominant national policy to which donors could align, TAFSIP has simply added another layer to pre-existing agricultural 'policies,' without resolving any of the underlying tensions between them (Cooksey forthcoming). Meanwhile, with the new emphasis on public-private partnerships in initiatives such as SAGCOT and the New Alliance, some fear that (some) bilateral donors will realign their agricultural support to 'their' corporate interests, not to national policy.

14 Kolavalli et al. 2010 observe that "cabinet members in Ghana are often taken to retreats to discuss budgets" (p20). Their point is that the CAADP process is poorly integrated with critical political decision-making processes. However, these are also non-transparent.

15 Sceptically, governments may be expected to resist thorough-going reviews and donors may wish to maintain an appearance of reasonable effectiveness in the use of their funds, whilst non-state actors may not be powerful enough to insist on more critical findings even if these are justified. Indeed, if not selected and backed by strong representative groupings, the non-state actor "representatives" may have their own reasons for being cooperative and going along with positive reviews. On the other hand, for example, where rent-seeking by decentralised administrative tiers is seen to undermine policy implementation, a central government could find such reviews a useful, "detached" (if political risky) way of strengthening accountability and incentivising better delivery.

16 This can cut both ways. NEPAD was the vision of a broadly like-minded group of African leaders who were convinced that, if Africa wanted to thrive in the globalised world of the twenty-first century and not risk marginalisation, then its countries and leaders had to act together (Rukato 2010). A growing sense of optimism on the continent could mean that leaders no longer feel the need for pan-African efforts to tackle common problems: they can go it alone.

17 http//:www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/06/18/fact-sheet-new-alliance- food

18 Given CAADP's emphasis on market access, there is a good case for expenditure on rural feeder roads to be included.

19 Differentiating between salaries, operational expenditures and capital investments is an obvious distinction. However, given the valuable role that CAADP can play in establishing "norms" for public goods investment, it would also be valuable to compare expenditure on key public goods – for example, agricultural research, extension, rural roads, irrigation– both across countries and with transfer expenditures within the same country. Some of these have salary, operational and capital components. Benin and Yu 2013 explore these issues in greater depth.

20 ONE 2013 (p11) calls for "citizen's budgets that disaggregate the entire [agriculture] sector's budget by programme" to be made available online, to enable "citizens to follow the money and monitor that services and results are delivered". Our proposal would make such budgets comparable across countries.

21 Africa Lead is producing a number of policy capacity assessments that pilot a similar approach.

22 This characterisation applies even in Malawi, where political commitment to the farm input subsidy programme is unwavering, but the incentives to support smallholder agriculture more generally are much weaker (Chinsinga forthcoming).

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