

# AFRICAN PARLIAMENTARY SUPPORT FOR AGRICULTURE

Final Report for the Pilot Programme

2010-2011



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## ABBREVIATIONS

ACT	Agricultural Council of Tanzania
AGRA	Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa
APSA	African Parliamentary Support for Agriculture
ASCU	Agricultural Sector Co-ordination Unit
AWEPA	Association of European Parliamentarians with Africa
CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme
CDF	Constituency Development Fund
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
FASDEP	Food and Agriculture's Development Policy
KARI	Kenya Agricultural Resource Institute
IDA	International Development Association
IPU	Inter-parliamentary Union
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NDP	National Democratic Party
NPP	New Patriotic Party
NRIL	Natural Resources International Limited
PIM	Programme Identification Missions
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PSTA	Strategic Plan for the Transformation of Agriculture
ReSAKSS	Regional Strategic Analysis and Knowledge Support System
RIU	Research Into Use

## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

“The Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) is working to achieve a Green Revolution in Africa: one that puts small holder farmers first while protecting biodiversity, promoting sustainability and advancing equity. AGRA works to achieve a food secure and prosperous Africa through the promotion of rapid, sustainable agricultural growth based on smallholder farmers”<sup>1</sup>.

The outcome of several years work in which AWEPA had shown its commitment to sustainable development, to finding ways of combating the damaging effects of climate change, and reaffirming the crucial importance of Africa agriculture, had much deserved recognition in Cape Town in October 2009. This came when AWEPA signed a Memorandum of Understanding with AGRA. AWEPA was to use its parliamentary strengthening skills to work with agriculture committees in Africa to further the aims of the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa.

This Pilot Programme intended to investigate how parliamentary agriculture committees can be supported to help bridge the governance capacity gap between what is possible and the current effectiveness levels in relation to achieving sustainable agricultural growth, food security and economic empowerment of smallholder farmers. AWEPA therefore had a mandate to identify ways in which these committees can be assisted to develop and implement a strategic approach to support agriculture in their respective countries and constituencies.

This Pilot Programme has succeeded in testing the likely success of a long term parliamentary strengthening work on issues of agriculture and, in generally achieving AGRA and AWEPA's 8 objectives set out at the beginning of Programme Identification Missions (PIMs) in each of the countries. The activities implemented under this Pilot Programme have proved that it is possible to have a common framework for strengthening the work of parliamentary Committees in all the four countries, whilst at the same time recognising the huge differences/contexts between these countries.

We do recognise in this report, that much more work needs to be done to develop the link between MPs and governments' agricultural services such as the extension services at constituency level and that a future programme will need to put more emphasis on strengthening (or in some cases establishing) the links within a parliaments; between parliamentary committees and the executive; between different houses of parliament (two of the four countries have or will have senates as well as assemblies); and between parliamentary committees and other stakeholders such as farmers' organizations and research institutions.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.agra-alliance.org/section/about>

## 2. INTRODUCTION

Following the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between AGRA and Association of European Parliamentarians with Africa (AWEPA) in October 2009, an alliance was formed between the two organisations in which AWEPA sought to use its parliamentary capacity strengthening skills to assist AGRA in achieving the Green Revolution, by working with parliamentary agriculture committees.

In the words of AGRA's Vice President Akin Adesina, AGRA's partnership with AWEPA "is critical because any improvement that occurs in farmers' fields cannot be sustained over the long term without a supportive policy framework. This is the time for political leadership across Africa to develop and implement comprehensive policies of support for African farmers."

Based on this conviction and as a first step to implement the 2009 MoU between AWEPA and AGRA, the latter provided funding to AWEPA to undertake a Pilot Programme: "African Parliamentary Support for Agriculture (APSA)". In March 2010 Research Into Use (RIU), a programme of UK Department for International Development (DFID) joined the party in supporting the APSA Pilot Programme.

It was decided the first four countries with which AWEPA should work would be Kenya, Tanzania, Ghana and Rwanda between February and September 2010; the parties however agreed to extend this period to until March 2011. Once this pilot was completed in the above countries, a similar programme would then be implemented in Mozambique, Malawi, Mali and Nigeria.

Overall, it was gratifying to observe the unanimity which unfolded in the meetings and other activities in all the focus countries. In particular, the AGRA Forum in Accra in September 2010 highlighted the crucial role of parliamentarians both at national and constituency level. In this, the lead role would be played by agriculture committees.

This report gives feedback on the findings of how the Parliamentary Committees carry out their tasks and highlight key agricultural challenges as expressed by different stakeholders at the various stages of the programme implementation in each country. It also analyzes each country situation and highlights key areas that need support to enhance and improve the effectiveness of the contribution of parliamentarians in achieving food security and improving the economic conditions of the majority of their electorate. The report further outlines recommendations for effective approaches of a successful parliamentary support programme targeting agriculture committees.

### 3. PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES

The overall objective was to investigate the possibility of developing a capacity building program for the Parliamentary Agriculture Committees for the purpose of enhancing sustainable agricultural productivity by improving the quality of agricultural governance. Preliminary conclusions of this pilot phase would contribute to the development of a more long term Parliamentary Support programme.

- Strengthen the work of Agricultural Committees on legislative scrutiny and oversight, and representation dimensions of their activities;
- Strengthen the work of MPs in their constituencies on increasing sustainable agricultural production;
- Improve the effective use of agricultural science and technology both at the Committee level and in constituencies;
- Strengthen the monitoring and performance of implementation of CAADP, Maputo and other international agreements;
- Focus on gender issues in agriculture, including support to women parliamentarians, woman's caucuses and women farmers;
- Explore how the Committee Secretariat and other Parliamentary resources can be developed to support the work of the Agriculture Committee;
- Consider wider Parliamentary issues related to effective Committee work including links to Parliament's strategic development plans and Parliamentary budgets; and
- Support AGRA's Policy Programme.

Following the methodology described below, AWEPA was mandated by AGRA and NRI to investigate the context in which the agriculture committees operate in their respective parliaments; how they fulfil their duties; identify the agricultural challenges facing each of the focus countries; explore the existence and quality of linkages between parliaments and key agricultural stakeholders in each country; and recommend how to develop the effectiveness of the committees based on this information. AWEPA and AGRA would then seek to operationalise these recommendations by fundraising for a multi-annual parliamentary support programme.

## 4. METHODOLOGY

### 4.1 Programme Identification Missions

After the Agreement between AWEPA, AGRA and NRI was signed, a programme team was constituted by AWEPA to undertake Programme Identification Missions (PIMs) to each of the countries. This team was headed by Mr. Tony Worthington, former British Member of Parliament and currently AWEPA member and senior advisor. The team included an expert from RIU (for PIMs to Kenya, Tanzania and Rwanda), an independent consultant on issues of agriculture and expert on CAADP (in case of Ghana); and a Project Officer of AWEPA. During these initial visits, the team had meetings with Office bearers of Parliaments including Speakers or their Deputies, Chairs of Parliamentary Committees (main target was Agriculture Committees, but the team also talked to chairs of other relevant Committees such as Land, Environment, Science and Technology, Water, etc). During this phase that lasted for a working week in each of the countries, the team also talked to officials of relevant Ministries; Farmers' Associations; Private Sector Federations; research and academic institutions; representatives of international donor community, and Women's Organizations.

The objective of these wide consultations was to introduce the idea of APSA to all these stakeholders, to gauge the level of support but also discuss how best this programme could achieve its objectives. Meetings with Parliaments also intended to investigate the internal capacity needs of agriculture committees and their support staff and how parliament officials and parliamentarians felt these needs can be addressed.

The programme and the team received an overwhelming support. No parliamentary committee, senior officials of parliaments or any other stakeholder had a doubt that this was a great programme and that it was timely. This support was expressed throughout all pilot activities in all countries. Please refer to Annex 2, 5 and 6 for detailed reports on the Programme Identification Missions per country.

### 4.2 Public Hearings and National Multi-stakeholder workshops

Once the initial consultations were over, Constituency Public Hearings and Multi-stakeholder national workshops were planned and implemented in all focus countries except Rwanda, due to financial constraints.

Public Hearings aimed at taking parliaments to the farmers, to have a direct dialogue on challenges faced by the farmers and to identify first-hand, the governance issues involved in the agricultural sector. Parliamentarians and other stakeholders spent 2 to 3 days in the field, interacting with the farmers. Numbers of farmers consulted range 200 in Tanzania to approximately 400-450 in Kenya and Ghana. Groups were therefore formed, based on an agricultural activity one was involved in most. So for instance in Ghana and Kenya farmers grouped themselves based on sectors such as Rice, Maize, Fisheries, Horticulture, Livestock, etc. Parliamentarians then distributed themselves among these groups and facilitated discussions. Other stakeholders present also joined, but as observers, unless they were asked by parliamentarians to answer or explain any issues raised by the farmers that are of technical nature. At this phase of programme implementation, AGRA officials were also present in all countries.

During the PIMs, AWEPA had extensively consulted with the Chairpersons and Members of the agriculture committees in each country; about which Constituency or Constituencies that would bring out a better picture of the concerned country's main agricultural challenges and opportunities. As much as AWEPA advised in certain instances, the choice of Constituencies was primarily the committee's.

After the Public Hearings, a multi-stakeholder national workshop followed. This was an opportunity for parliamentarians to engage with officials of ministries, farmers' associations, local leaders, the private sector and agricultural experts about the issues raised by farmers in the field. These workshops culminated into national action plans for agriculture committees. This report will outline recommendations for a future programme, based on these action plans that were adopted by all stakeholders in each country.



Mr. Tony Worthington, AWEPA Political Coordinator in discussion with Members of the Select Committee on Agriculture, Food and Cocoa Affairs during the National Workshop on Agriculture and Climate Change, 1 October 2010, Dodowa, Ghana.



## 5. ANALYSIS OF POLITICAL AND AGRICULTURAL CONTEXTS

### 5.1 Kenya

About 75% of the Kenyan labour force is involved in agriculture; therefore it is no doubt that it is vitally important to Kenya. According to the Agriculture Secretary there is no constituency in Kenya that has less than 40% of the population dependent on agriculture, yet the agricultural challenges that Kenya faces are immense partly due to the historical neglect of this dominant industry. At a time when the African Union committed each African country to spend at least 10% of its resources on agriculture, Kenya only reached 4.8%. The environmental challenges that Kenya faces are immense due to such factors as the degradation of water supplies, soil erosion and desertification. There is growing evidence of the heavy impact of climate change witnessed by increased temperature and changing rainfall patterns. The year 2009 was the third successive year with inadequate rainfall which negatively impacted the crucial maize harvest. In particular, the impact was felt upon pastoralists and their animals. About 80% of Kenya is arid or semi-arid. 33% of the land is classified as agricultural, however only 17% is classified as high potential. There is not much scope for easily expanding the amount of cultivable land. At 3%, forest cover is one of the very lowest in Africa.

Furthermore, the costs of inputs such as energy costs, heavy and multiple internal taxes, low rates of fertiliser usage linked with high costs, poor quality and little indigenous supply are daunting but must be confronted. Overall, the picture is of tiny farmsteads and heavy dependency on subsistence farming. For example, over 60% of Kenya's esteemed tea crop is produced by 560,000 farmers on plots of about half an acre. Poor technology transfer and inadequate access to credit further aggravate the situation. In common with the rest of sub-Saharan Africa, there was a low usage of up-to-date seeds compared with the rest of the world.

Poor infrastructure, particularly roads, limits access to markets and wastes crops and income dispiritingly. The outcome is that Kenya has a huge deficiency in terms of the difference between actual and required growth. According to a recent Regional Strategic Analysis and Knowledge Support System (ReSAKSS) study<sup>2</sup>, Kenya required a 10% annual growth rate in agriculture in 2008 to get back on track to meet the MDG poverty goal. On the contrary, Nduati Kariuki, Chair of the Kenya National Federation of Agricultural Producers informed the programme team that 2009 saw a rise from the normal 2 million people permanently under the food relief programme to 10 million who became highly food insecure. In summary, the Ministry of Agriculture Strategic Plan 2008-12 highlighted the following concerns as key and most relevant for the current period:

- Inadequate legal and policy frameworks
- Ineffective extension services
- Low application of modern technology
- Poor governance in agricultural institutions
- Inadequate quality control systems
- Multiplicity of taxes

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.resakss.org>

- Low availability of capital and access to affordable credit
- Inadequate markets and marketing structure
- High cost, adulteration and low application of key inputs
- Pests and diseases
- Frequent droughts and floods
- Lack of storage and processing
- Poor infrastructure
- Incidence of HIV/Aids, malaria and waterborne diseases.

In addition to the above factors, Kenya's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) and Kenya's Vision 2030 document highlights additional challenges affecting the agriculture sector:

- Climate change – particularly during the period leading up to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change in Copenhagen in December 2009, environmental issues have become dominated by concerns about climate change and how developing countries can respond to the challenges which will fall upon them. Agriculture is the sector of Kenyan life that is most affected by climate change, therefore, Kenya must produce its own national policies; moreover, constituencies must also find the most effective adaptation and mitigation responses.
- Land Policies –need to formulate a national land policy to address land use and administration, land tenure and land delivery systems.
- CAADP - commitment to embrace the CAADP that recognises agriculture's contribution to accelerated economic growth in African countries.
- Gender – smallholder farmers are predominantly women who make-up 75% of the labour for small scale agriculture. Women are however constrained in their access to land, credit, information and markets. The government is reviewing the laws of succession and inheritance rights, which greatly affect gender land imbalances. It is also necessary to identify mechanisms to increase women's access to credit, information, and input and output markets.
- Trade policy – as a major component of trading both within Africa and further afield, Kenya agricultural interests need to be effectively promoted and defended by the government and parliament.
- Private/Commercial sector involvement – there has been a major swing in policy away from excessive public involvement through parastatals to an increased desirability to work through expanding private involvements. Also. There has been considerable change in export led development in the horticultural sector, in addition to traditional sectors such as tea and coffee.
- Fisheries sector – fresh water and marine fisheries have significant growth potential in improving the livelihood of communities of Western and Coastal Regions of Kenya.

The above list of factors amply illustrates why the focus of AWEPA, AGRA and NRI on strengthening parliamentary agriculture committee in Kenya is relevant and timely. There is hardly an item above which does not have a very substantial public policy component. This is business that should be a central concern to parliaments.

We need in the AGRA-AWEPA partnership to identify those areas where the Kenyan National Assembly and particularly its Agriculture Committee can be most effective.

## 5.2 Tanzania

The 2006 Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) highlighted agriculture as the lead sector in the Tanzania's economy, accounting for 45% of the GDP and responsible for about 60% of export earnings in the preceding 3 years. Moreover, the agricultural sector provides a livelihood for 82% of the population. Tanzania is currently not on track to achieving the first MDG target of halving the proportion of its poor by 2015.

Agriculture is the most important sector for employment, economic growth and export income. In the early 2000s, real GDP growth averaged 6.8% and reached 7.5% in 2008. The last recorded national poverty rate was 35.7% in 2000, although the estimated rate for 2008 was 33.4%. As far as the Maputo Agreement is concerned, Tanzania spends about 7% of its income on agriculture compared with the 10% target. As far as the CAADP programme is concerned, Tanzania has been very slow; the roundtable process had not yet been launched at the time of our consultations.

Tanzania is seen as a country with much agriculture potential. In fact, it is one of the four countries in Portfolio One of AGRA which "concentrates on catalysing Green Revolution in four change ready countries with high potential breadbasket areas: areas with large concentrations of smallholder farmers, relatively good soil and basic infrastructure. The four initial countries are Ghana, Mali, Mozambique and Tanzania". AGRA allocated about 40% of its resources to this portfolio during 2009 and will monitor this approach until 2012, at which time it will be evaluated for possible scale up.

The information above would seem to indicate how important it is to improve the quality of governance from the AWEPA viewpoint and the quality and influence of policy infrastructure from the AGRA viewpoint. This point-of-view is reinforced by the 2006 Agricultural Sector Review by the Tanzanian Government which recommended the following strategic options:

1. Improved producer incentives;
2. Developing new sources of agricultural growth;
3. Increasing farm productivity;
4. Improving agribusiness and processing;
5. Enhancing participation of the rural poor in agricultural growth;
6. Improving agricultural sector investment climate; and
7. Improving public expenditure.

The PRSP identified the main constraints for Tanzanian agriculture as being:

- Low productivity of land, labour and production inputs;
- Underdeveloped irrigation potential;
- Limited capital and access to financial services;
- Inadequate technical support services;
- Poor rural infrastructure hindering effective rural – urban linkages;
- Infestations and outbreaks of crop, animal pests and diseases; erosion of natural resource base and environmental degradation; and
- Weak linkages between higher education, science and technology, research and development organisations and local communities role in agriculture, trade and social development has been weak and needs to be strengthened.

In addition, Tanzania scores poorly on the World Bank Doing Business indicators which have slipped down from 126<sup>th</sup> to 131<sup>st</sup> in the world between 2009 and 2010. This is on a basket of measures looking at the number of procedures a Tanzanian entrepreneur must go through to purchase land, obtain credit, and trade across borders. For example in Tanzania, it takes 328 days to fulfil the 22 procedures to build a warehouse. In contrast there are only six procedures in Denmark and it only takes 25 days in Singapore.

This theme of underachievement and lack of dynamism was picked up in meetings with the Agricultural Council of Tanzania (ACT), which is the agricultural private sector apex organisation of Tanzania. ACT seeks a Green Revolution but believes it is dependent on a complete change of mindset that would give agriculture the pre-eminence it deserves in Tanzanian life and a major improvement in the business environment. Certainly, behind all these indications of underachievement, questions must be asked about the quality of governance and the role of parliament in general and the agriculture committee in particular in terms of oversight, scrutiny, appropriate legislation and the responsiveness of parliament to agriculture's needs.



Members of Parliament at the Public Hearing in Msolwa Constituency, Kilombelo District in Tanzania; April 2010.

### 5.3 Ghana

There has been a swing in Ghana towards more concern about agricultural matters in recent years. While the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy 1 (GPRS1) was focussed on poverty reduction programmes and projects, Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy 2 (GPRS2) was focussed on growth inducing policies and programmes which had the potential to support wealth creation.

It was increasingly recognised that growth led by the agricultural sector would be more effective than other means in reducing poverty both at the national level and in the poor regions because of strong income and consumption linkages.

There could not be overall growth in Ghana without the largest economic sector growing. This is especially so because of steep population growth. The population in West Africa is expected to double in the period 2010-2050, and it is thought that the urban population will triple and the majority of Ghana's poor are directly dependent on agriculture. Increased productivity in the agricultural sector will ensure food security and contribute considerably to wealth; in addition, modernised technology would provide a bridge between agriculture and industry. The agricultural sector in Ghana also needs to diversify its export to European markets. Furthermore, the decline in Ghana's fisheries, which still produces a major part of the national protein intake, must be reversed by increasing investment in aquaculture as well as other developments.

GPRS2 stated that, after decades of development effort, some of the most basic advances in production technology had eluded Ghana. It has not yet achieved basic food security in its traditional diet. GPRS2 concluded that the today's peasant woman who feeds the country is still using the same basic technology of cutlass and hoe which her grandmother used to feed a population one fifth the size of today's population.

Major analysis from the GPRS2, the Ministry of Food and Agriculture's Development Policy (FASDEP2), the ECOWAS/CAADP Compact and the 2010 IDA Grant to Ghana point out the following:

- A need to reform land acquisition and property rights which presently show a competition between traditional and modern systems which leads to insecurity, poor investment record, high costs of production and increase of poverty because of rent seeking landlords. Growing needs for land to meet urban demands;
- A massively inadequate development of irrigation – the use of irrigation technology is not widespread but is considered of great importance in view of the seasonal and incidental occurrence of drought;
- Inadequate crop development;
- Inadequate and high cost credit systems – FASDEP2 says “The internal factors limiting credit access are lack of collateral due to lack of or poor quality of farm assets; lack of ownership of assets for women farmers; poor financial management; the risky nature of farming and inability of clients to create viable project proposals”;
- Poor infrastructure inputs such as roads and storage, costly and inadequate inputs such as fertiliser, and high post-harvest losses;

- A failure to build skills – gross shortage of agricultural scientists and due to the withdrawal of donors from agriculture research an ageing of skills and lack of replacements;
- Gross inequality of treatment for women farmers – the majority of women in agriculture have limited access to land, labour and capital due to cultural and institutional factors;
- Increased access needed to pluralist extension services – particular need for bottom up participatory services and much enhanced farmer based organisations;
- A modernised food and agriculture systems in which productivity and production improvements are based on science and technology;
- Some severely degraded environments;
- Lack of adequate large scale private sector for export or value added activity;
- Fisheries problems include overfishing by European competitors and the need for investment in aquaculture; and
- Neglect of livestock development policy and skilled personnel.

Ghana has a considerable variation in its ecosystems; a further test of governance will show how well it can cope with these different challenges. For example, poverty remains high in areas where the production of food staples dominates – especially Northern Ghana. Poverty rates in the Northern Region, Upper East and Upper West Regions are 52%, 70% and 88% respectively. It is likely that these ecological variations will be matched by social variations posing challenges to national agricultural policies such as through the influence of traditional leaders and their relationship with elected representatives. Further work will be needed on this as ASPA develops.

In recent times, a new challenge has emerged with the discovery of oil and gas in Ghana's territorial water. Theoretically, this huge increase in Ghana's resources should be very good news; however, the poor have not benefitted in oil rich countries elsewhere- such as Nigeria, Angola and Equatorial Guinea.

As stated in the 2010 International Development Agency (IDA) Grants document to Ghana: "Ghana is at a critical juncture in its development path because of price shocks but there is a great danger that the discovery of oil will lead to Ghana losing competitive advantage if the proceeds of oil are not steered to productive investment particularly in agriculture. Competitiveness will decline with real exchange rate appreciation resulting from the impact of an oil economy. Unless there is good management there will be lower per capita incomes. Sound fiscal management would provide additional resources for public investment of \$458 million per year which could be used in the agricultural sector." But will this happen?

## 5.4 Rwanda

It is very striking that Rwanda is a very determined player in embracing the international development community by seeking to meet international standards such as the MDGs; in signing up to the requirements of the Maputo agreement to spend at least 10% of government income on agriculture; furthermore, Rwanda was the first country to have completed the CAADP roundtable process. Rwanda's presence on this APSA programme at the suggestion of AGRA is a powerful assertion of the huge progress that has been made by Rwanda.

The Rwandan government has made agriculture one of the main priority areas in its quest to achieve the MDGs and its Vision 2020 goal of achieving middle income status by 2020. The Strategic Plan for the Transformation of Agriculture in Rwanda - Phase 11(PSTA11) is but one illustration of the high quality of analysis that has been done. The Government has given priority to developing agriculture at an accelerated rate.

There is recognition by the government that rapid overall economic growth cannot be attained without transforming the agricultural sector.

Agriculture employs about 88% of the economically active population (although much of this is seasonal.) It supplies up to 80% of exports. Those who previously thought that the way to prosperity meant leaving agriculture behind forgot that a modernising agriculture creates many kinds of skilled employment, including in engineering, agronomy, marketing, accounting, soil sciences, crop research, specialised advisory services, financial services, and veterinary services, among others.

An impressive initiative of the government is that, having necessarily established a powerful unified identity to governance in Rwanda to bind the wounds from the genocide; it has now promoted powerful decentralisation to give local ownership of development. This decentralisation is expected to offer citizens, including the poor, the possibility of increased participation in local decision-making. Innovative initiatives such as One Family, One Cow recognise how empowering this can be to families. Consolidation of land and cooperative policies are essential to growth and food security. More than 1100 registered cooperatives now exist in rural areas. The decentralisation move is having its impact on Ministry of Agriculture Agencies such as RADA (Rwanda Agricultural Development Association), RARDA (Rwanda Animal Resources Development Authority), RHODA (Rwanda Horticulture Development Authority) and ISAR (Rwanda Agricultural Research Institute) which are being obliged to change by reforms that see them as facilitators to local action rather than providers of rigid top down services.

They are also being restructured into a single organisation – for example, it was expressed to us that it was highly unsatisfactory that there was no link between scientists and extensionists. Unification is intended to end such silo working.

It will be necessary for the Agriculture, Livestock Development and Environment Committee and others to consider how they will revise the way in which they carry out their duty to exercise oversight over a decentralised system so that the Committee knows what is happening in the provinces rather than simply considering centrally declared policy. The Rwandan Government's 8 guiding principles for development of the agriculture strategy are:

- Reducing poverty;
- Increasing productivity and competitiveness;
- Market driven;
- Environmental sustainability;
- Participation in and local ownership of activities;
- Institutional sustainability;
- The strategy should be flexible and dynamic; and
- The strategy should be sensitive to the issues of gender, youth and aids.

It is well that the quality of analysis of problems is so high in Rwandan agriculture because the challenges are so high as well. PSTA11's section on land availability, farm sizes and soil erosion is but one illustration. Rwandan landscape poses thorny problems of availability of arable land but because of the high population density is exploited to the very limits of agricultural possibilities and often beyond, and the small size of the country does not offer any alternative of increasing arable land.

Landholdings are very small with more than 60% of households cultivating less than 0.7ha; 50% cultivating less than 0.5ha and more than 25% cultivating less than 0.2ha. About 40% of Rwanda's land is classified as having a very high erosion risk; Rwanda is losing 1.4 million tons of soil per year, this is equivalent to a decline in the country's capacity to feed 40,000 people per year. Poor use of farmyard manure and the fact that agroforestry is not well developed leads to a trend of greatest concern; that for most crops the yields do not show a discernable upward trend since the 1990s. In this context it is easily understood that the poverty reduction strategy in Rwanda must assign first priority to rural development and especially the transformation and modernisation of the agricultural sector.

The above material illustrates the severity of the challenge facing Rwanda in the areas of land availability, farm sizes, soil erosion and productivity. The challenges are equally severe in all other aspects of agriculture such as poor communications and in being a landlocked country. There is great strength in the quality of the documentation.

Elsewhere in PSTA11, there are repeated references to the importance of institution building so as to maximize investment, productivity and the highest quality of framework for agriculture. Among the institutions that certainly need to be built up are the Parliamentary committees concerned with agriculture.

The Committees responsible for agriculture in the Rwandan parliament in both Senate and Chamber of Deputies could make a considerable enhanced contribution to reducing poverty and enhancing productivity. The overall objective of PSTA11 is to strengthen the institutional framework through which the public sector supports agricultural development. As stated in PSTA11, "This involves actions in a number of areas, including capacity building: redefining the role of some institutions and personnel; improving management information systems and coordination mechanisms within the sector, including between the Centre and the Districts; strengthening the policy and regulatory framework; providing a better statistical and informational bases for public policy decisions; making better use of information and communication technologies; and instituting procedures to ensure that the decentralisation programme functions well so that local level actors are full participants in decision-making and programme implementation."



## 6. PARLIAMENTARY POLITICAL CONTEXT FOR AN APSA PROGRAMME

### 6.1 Kenya

Like in other parliaments, the key figure at the helm of Kenya National Assembly is the Speaker. The current Speaker is highly reputable and has been very supportive of the work of AWEPA - particularly when he asked AWEPA to run several workshops to stimulate the work of the Agriculture Committee. He is strengthened by the existence of an Independent Parliamentary Services Commission which has 450 staff committed to the provision of effective services to the institution of Parliament and its members. Previously, the National Assembly was institutionally like a government department.

At the beginning of 2008, AWEPA's involvement with the Speakers Induction Conference for new members, which involved 70% of the entire assembly, clearly showed that many members had been severely shaken by the political disturbances in 2007/2008 and that they sensed that the very integrity of Kenya was at stake.

In AWEPA's involvement with the Agriculture Committee since then, we have been impressed by the ability within the committee and their commitment to tackle major agricultural issues.

The Chairman, Hon. John Mututho stated that through engagement with AWEPA over the years, the committee has increasingly felt "empowered". As a result, the committee has become more visible and very active, mounting several investigations in the agriculture sector in Kenya. The National Assembly Standing Orders make provision for an Agriculture, Livestock and Co-operative Development Committee whose responsibility resides over agriculture livestock, fisheries development, cooperative development, production and marketing. When AWEPA first became involved with this committee it also had powers relating to environmental matters; however, today the committee is split, resulting in the Land and National Resources Committee whose responsibility are matters relating to climate change.

In the activities under this programme, provision was made for this committee to also be represented since Land is crucial when discussing agriculture.

The membership of the Select Committee (11) is decided upon by the House Business Committee in consultation with the political parties. The nominations are put to the House for approval. It is the task of the House Business Committee to ensure that membership of the committee reflects strength in the House as well as geographical, ethnic, economic and diversity issues, meanwhile, giving due regard to gender representation. The Committee is required to meet at least monthly and members can be removed for non attendance. The Committee elects its own Chair and Vice Chair.

Select Committee meetings are open to the public unless decided inappropriate, proceedings may also be broadcasted. When a committee produces a report, the Minister responsible has sixty days in which to respond. The business of a Committee is, in theory decided by the House through what is referred to it but, in practice, the movement has been towards more autonomy for the committee.

All the above illustrate significant and positive change in the way which parliamentary democracy is operating in Kenya. There is, however, another important factor in Kenya. A new Constitution was adopted in June 2010, and this will have significant impact on how committees will operate in future.

Under the new Constitution, the parliament will be (after 2012) radically changed because the previous unicameral system of parliament is to become bicameral with the National Assembly joined by a Senate. The Senate will represent the counties and serves to protect the interests of the counties and their governments. Clearly, the new Senators will wish to organise themselves into committees such as agriculture to consider legislation and other matters.

Overall, there will be many more politicians. At present, there are 222 members in the National Representative Assembly – overwhelmingly from single member constituencies. In addition, there will be 68 seats in the Senate, 47 of these will represent one of the Counties, 16 reserved for women and two each for the youth and disabled. Committee sizes are likely to be considerably increased.

A further issue, which will be touched upon later, is that the new constitution greatly enhances the rights of women. This is a major issue in agriculture since a considerable majority of farmers are women and poverty amongst farmers is further concentrated among women. It will be necessary for the laws on gender to be advanced considerably to put them in line with the constitution. There is a strong case for the committee to use the opportunity, in partnership with the women's caucus and gender focussed groups, to ensure that the new laws and practices will be of the highest quality. This, together with how Constituency Development Fund (CDF) will operate in the context of new Constituency boundaries for Parliamentarians and Senators will need to be explored more after 2012.

## **6.2 Ghana**

The Parliament is unicameral with 230 single member constituencies elected on a first-past-the-post basis. Women are severely underrepresented with only 8.26% of the members. There are two evenly matched parties, the outgoing New Patriotic Party (NPP) and the National Democratic Party (NDP). Unusually, the Speaker is constitutionally an outsider – not an elected MP. In this case, a former Supreme Court judge (and a woman) was elected on a secret ballot. The system is heavily influenced by the Westminster background, although there is an elected President and other major differences. Ministers however come from Parliament. Elections are on a fixed term basis and the next election is in December 2012.

There is some independence of Parliament from the government. A Parliamentary Services Board exists to regulate parliament but it is reputed that very strong patronage is exercised by the executive. For example, senior civil servants were said to extensively change with a change of government.

There is no doubt that the key committee for ASPA is the Food, Agriculture and Cocoa Affairs Committee. But there are other Committees that are very relevant such as the Committee on Lands and Forestry, the Committee on Gender and Children, the Committee of Trade, Industry and Tourism and the Committee on Environment, Science and Technology.

It is very interesting that there is considerable overlapping membership of committees so that the Agriculture Committee also has on it the Chair of Land and Forestry and the Chair of Trade. It also has the Chair of Gender and Children– unusually a man. There is also a cross cutting Committee on Poverty Reduction – with a particular focus on the MDGs – whose chair is also on the Food, Agriculture and Cocoa Affairs Committee. The particular significance of this overlapping membership is that the potential for collaborative activity is increased and the number of parliamentarians with whom APSA can interact is considerably increased.

From the APSA viewpoint, it is perhaps disappointing that Science and Technology is the responsibility of the Environment, Science and Technology Committee when it is so crucial to the likelihood of success from AGRA and APSA. But such difficulties can be overcome with the presence of the Chair of Environment, Science and Technology on the Agriculture Committee – to the mutual benefit of both committees. This will also be helpful for consideration of issues related to climate change.

These committees are large – about 21 members – and therefore collaborative activity could be financially expensive for the programme but such collaboration is important on issues such as climate change, land tenure, poverty reduction, gender and environmental issues. As an illustration, FASDEP 2, the Ministry of Agriculture’s policy document acknowledges that “most farmers in Ghana are not aware of the linkage between inappropriate tillage and water management practices on the one hand and environmental degradation on the other.” The farmers’ need for knowledge does not mirror parliament’s division of responsibilities and is an obstacle to be overcome.

Concerning the division of responsibilities, the Chair of Agriculture commented on the presence of “Cocoa Affairs” in the title of his committee. This has happened because of the very large economic importance of cocoa in the economy of Ghana and no doubt because of political links, the major contact between the cocoa industry and parliament is with the Minister of Finance and not the Agriculture Committee. It is interesting that the Cocoa Board is also responsible for two other important areas– coffee and shea nuts. The Agriculture Committee is currently undertaking some investigative work with the Coffee industry. Encouragingly, the Committee mounted this inquiry, prior to the start of APSA Pilot Programme, but the Chair thinks it is quite likely that there will need to be a funded follow through where AWEPA and AGRA’s involvement would be helpful.

There is little doubt that the Ghanaian Parliament has made much progress, but there are doubts about the range of its powers in committees. However, the Chair of Lands – who is also government chief whip, said that underperformance of committees is often due to the self-restraint of committees rather than constitutional limitations. It is also a parliament that seems to be very frugally funded with regard to the capacity of committees to be active outside the parliament building and inadequately resourced at the committee level. The view of the Lands Chair was confirmed by the First Deputy Speaker. On paper, Committees had to be authorised to investigate but, in reality, they chose what to do – they had powers to act on their own initiative.

Committees do not have their own budgets to carry out their own work however, and that is the real restraint. There is little genuine scrutiny or oversight work, and outreach to civil society is limited. According to FRIDE, a European think tank based in Spain however, Ghana has made great strides in the last 17 years of the present constitution.

Parliament has more credibility now. There has been a substantial expansion in civil rights; a robust civil society and vibrant media; significant democratisation of civil-military operations; progressively more free and fair elections.

After two very interesting discussions with Hon. Dr Alhassan A Yakubu, the Chair of the Food, Agriculture and Cocoa Affairs Committee, he made a valuable contribution to the Green Revolution Forum Parallel Session on Mobilising Parliamentarians. He said "What is missing is the need for Agriculture Committees to be part of the policy development that results in legislation. Early engagement is very important so that ownership of government policy is complete....Agricultural committees should be an important human resource that can be relied upon for policy development, legislation and evaluation of on-going policies at implementation ....What has to improve is the recognition that oversight is needed... to enhance quality of work and ensure value for money".

One of the many ways in which the Committee should act in order to exercise its scrutiny for development role is to act as a progress chaser where Ghana has been chosen for special initiatives. For example, just prior to our visit, an announcement was made of a Breadbasket strategy by AGRA in Ghana's Northern Region which would aim to increase the income of 250,000 smallholder farmers and realise the region's potential to produce a large share of Ghana's staple food requirements. It would be appropriate, once this proposal has got under way, for the Agriculture Committee to monitor its progress and make appropriate recommendations.

The Agriculture Committee should be fully involved in AGRA'S work on Policy Hubs and nodes which AGRA rightly sees as crucial if the "green revolution" is to build up momentum. Similarly, the US Government has chosen Ghana as one of its focus countries as a result of its very welcome new policy document "Feed the Future" The Agriculture Committee should seek to be informed and involved at the very least because this would be part of the process whereby agriculture moves up the political agenda. In many cases, it is the implementation stage that has been the weakest point. APSA is very fortunate to have two very active and professionally qualified chairs of the Agriculture and Poverty Reduction Committees. An APSA programme would also allow us to bring in international organisations such as the FAO (affiliated to AGRA), the UNDP (with overall responsibility for MDGs), UNICEF, and gender focussed organisations to identify effective action in Ghana jointly with the committees.

### **6.3 Rwanda**

All political considerations in Rwanda are dominated by the appalling circumstance of the genocide in 1994 and the need to transform the country so that this never happens again. In the words of the Parliament Strategic Plan of 2006-10: "The genocide of 1994 in Rwanda destroyed almost all economic, legal and social infrastructures and led the country into a quasi-total ruin". This tragic past and the sensitivities around it are also reflected in the Constitution right from the Preamble to the end.

Such has been the determination of the people of Rwanda to overcome their collective horror at what happened that there have been very significant advances made that are envied elsewhere. For example, the percentage of parliamentarians who are women and who are in the government leads the world and Rwanda signs up and delivers on international agreements such as the agricultural Maputo agreement, CAADP and Millennium Development Goals.

There can be no doubt that Rwanda's "consensual democracy" in its drive to prevent "divisionism" can be oppressive and greatly favour the ruling political party. This paper seeks to build on positives such as the commitment to the goals of the UN development community and to building the capacity of the Parliament to meet those goals.

It is inevitable that the working of parliament will be affected by the above political context. The mechanisms for scrutiny and holding the government to account exist in the Constitution but do not seem to be used. Parliamentary Questions do not seem to exist in the systematic ways available elsewhere. An IPU study shows that the Senate has procedures that allow for highly topical questioning but they are used infrequently by Senators.

The Ad Hoc Chamber of Deputies committee in the IPU study came to a similar conclusion suggesting that Members are not properly trained in using the mechanisms of parliamentary oversight. The mechanism to allow parliamentarians to introduce their own legislation exists in legislation but is not used. Ministers however, are readily available to answer for government policy in both Houses. It was interesting that when we met the Minister of Agriculture, she said that she regarded the members of the agriculture committee as "missionaries for her work".

She would go to see the Committee members and explain to them government policy and this gave them the information they needed to put forward her case. It is valid for her to seek this but not the customary perspective of the role of a Parliamentary committee.

This consensus seeking even extends into gender issues. When the Mission met the constitutionally recognised Forum for Women Parliamentarians, they did not, as in neighbouring Kenya, campaign antagonistically to men but sought to go forward together with them. There is no doubt that a considerable amount of effort at all levels is put into consensus seeking and avoiding conflict. This reflects the deliberate and praiseworthy attempt to build a unified nation following the genocide and has had commendable success. But it does mean in terms of parliamentary strengthening that there is a very different political culture in Rwanda in which APSA needs to work. But the goals of that culture are very supportive of the development community in being anti-poverty and seeking food security. As was often said, almost as a mantra, food security is security.

Rwanda is governed by a two-chamber system, each having a committee with responsibilities for agriculture and so our parliamentary strengthening programme must reflect this. It is striking that at the Presidential, Senate and Chamber of Deputies levels, the holders of the office have terms of office that by international standards are lengthy. This can however be interpreted as aiding stability and long term planning.

Though it has been established that both the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies have committees that have responsibilities for agriculture, there is work remaining to be done to establish how fully they have undertaken these duties. The Parliament Strategic Plan 2006-10 (not yet updated) bemoans the lack of parliamentary legislative initiatives.

The 26 member Senate has established 4 overarching, cross cutting Standing Committees. The one which includes agriculture is the Economic Development and Finance Select Committee. Its responsibilities are for:

1. Economy and Trade;
2. Finance and Economic Planning;
3. Agriculture, Livestock, and Forestry;
4. Energy, Water and Natural Resources;
5. Public works, transport and communication;
6. Land, Housing, and Environmental Protection;
7. Drafting the budget of the Senate;
8. Providing opinions on the bill of the state budget before it is adopted; and
9. Authentic interpretation of laws in connection with the attribution of the Commission.

As can be seen, this committee has immense crosscutting responsibilities but will have a membership of 6-7 members only. All the issues such as land, water, environment, trade and roads which touch onto and influence agriculture are dealt with by this committee. There are important roles that could be developed by the Senate Committee on behalf of agriculture but do they have the resources in the secretariat or elsewhere to do what was envisaged in the drawing up of the constitution?

One way of using the Senate Committee effectively would be for the Chamber of Deputies committees to refer cross cutting issues to them. But again it was not drawn to our attention that the Chamber of Deputies submitted matters to the Economic Development and Finance Development Select Committee in order to influence the overall agenda. This access to areas such as finance, water, trade and communications in the Senate could be helpful in obtaining agricultural objectives, but the Agriculture, Livestock Development and Environment Committee would have to build up its skills in writing papers on policy development. This is but one example of how this committee could be supported.

In the Chamber of Deputies, the 80 membership is divided into 11 Parliamentary Committees of which one is the Agriculture, Livestock Development and Environment Committee. It is responsible for issues related to:

- Agriculture, forestry, and environment ;
- Land , habitat and general development; and
- Research and technology and livestock development.

The committee has seven members; three are women. The small size of committees in Rwanda is one of its distinctive features that is likely to affect the whole style of operations and offer opportunities. One other interesting point about structures is that both Houses hold three ordinary parliamentary sessions of two months each when their House is in action. At other times, the committees could be carrying out enquiries or other parliament related activities but the formal sessions are restricted in this way.

The Deputies who are elected directly by the citizens of Rwanda do not represent a constituency but are elected for the whole population. This seems to have been in order to diminish divisions and build Rwanda as a whole.

This makes Rwanda distinctive from other democracies where the expectation would be that one was expected to have a proprietorial responsibility to represent a particular constituency and other legislators would respect those boundaries. The only legislators linked with particular localities are firstly, in the Senate, twelve members representing each Province and the City of Kigali who are elected through secret ballot by members of the Executive Committees of Sectors and District, Municipality, Town or City Councils of each Province and the City of Kigali.

Secondly, in the Chamber of Deputies, there are 24 Deputies, who must be women, and two come from each Province and the City of Kigali. They are elected by a joint assembly composed of members of the respective District, Municipality, Town or Kigali City councils and members of the Executive Committees of women's organisations at the Province, Kigali City, District, Municipalities, Towns and Sector levels.

## 7. COMMITTEES' RELATIONSHIPS WITH STAKEHOLDERS

### 7.1 Kenya

There is no doubt that the Committee has become much more outgoing in recent times partly because of the busyness of its investigative work; at the same time, relationships could be more systematic. For example, the resources of the Kenya Agricultural Resource Institute (KARI) and other agricultural science resources are not used by the Committee in any planned way. It is very important that not just the Committee but all those involved in Kenyan agriculture are kept abreast of developments and not blocked by a separate silos structure and mentality which sees stakeholders from different professions working on the same subject matter but distant from each other.

For instance, a number of very successful meetings took place with senior administrators in the Agriculture Departments, as well with the Secretariat of the Agriculture Committee, which resulted in an agreement about the vigorous and constructive method in which the Agriculture Committee was carrying out its duties. One of the issues which came to light is of the co-ordination among the ten Ministries which exist within the Agriculture Sector, and only three of which (Agriculture, Livestock Development, and the Ministry for Co-operative Development and Marketing) report to the Agriculture Committee. . Other ministries such as the Fisheries Development, Water and Irrigation, Lands, Regional Development Authorities, Environment and Mineral Resources, Forestry and Wildlife and the Ministry for Northern Kenya and Arid Lands do not. To cope with this challenge in coordination, the Executive created the Agricultural Sector Co-ordination Unit (ASCU) for "fast tracking reforms in the agricultural sector" to produce policy in these sectors. The ASCU formed six thematic Working Groups (i.e.: Food and Nutrition Security Policy and Research and Extension) which are chaired by the private sector and convened by the public sector. This is an opportunity for parliamentarians to think about the ways in which they can firstly, be seen as a resource for all those in the sector and secondly, how they can also act across boundaries.

On another occasion, AWEPA met with representative organisations of both the tea and coffee industries. Kenya exports 95% of its tea production, making it an important industry. In these meetings with the tea and coffee industries, it was evident that more effort was needed in creating good linkages.

For example, the Kenya Tea Development Agency (KTDA) represents 560,000 smallholder farmers growing tea on half an acre of land which supplies 62% of Kenya's tea production. It can be assumed that KTDA represents 3,000,000 poor Kenyans; therefore, it is imperative that committees have high awareness of the problems of the tea and coffee industry, as well as actively improving the competitive situation for these industries. Currently AGRA is thinking about how its links with Agriculture Committees can be strengthened. In the context of Kenya, this process should be relatively easier than other countries as the AGRA headquarters is located in Nairobi.

For example, one policy in mind is the development of a strong policy support system in Africa, resulting in effective oversight for policy implementation systems to prevent failure.

What is original about the AGRA/AWEPA initiative is that it seeks to directly latch into what could be a major source of oversight for AGRA policy through working directly with the Agriculture Committee in a way that has not been attempted before. The AGRA Policy Program states, "One of the main reasons why supportive policies, institutions and regulatory frameworks are not developed, nor existing ones implemented has to do with very poor linkages between policy analysts and the parliamentary groups that are in charge of review of policies, institutions and regulations that guide the agricultural sector."

One of the major reasons why Agricultural Committees are underpowered is due to their overwhelmingly dependency on information from the very body over which they are exercising oversight – that is, in this case, the Agriculture Ministry of the Kenyan Government. In addition, as the AGRA policy program forcefully points out, there is a general weakness due to the historical neglect of agriculture in the alternative sources of policy analysis.

Alternatively, sources of expertise such as KARI in Kenya can play a central role as a "policy hub", which may be inhibited from an independent stance by its government funded status. This weakness is exacerbated at the local level because of the inadequacies of the extension services and the tendency to "elite capture" of any improvement with disadvantaged areas falling further behind. Rightly, AGRA is seeking to strengthen "policy action nodes" and "policy hubs".

Consideration should be given to this AWEPA proposal that the Committee secretariats of the countries involved in the AWEPA/AGRA initiative be seconded/nominated "progress chasers" who would have the following remit: Firstly, they would be part of the AGRA Policy Program proposal to develop a strong policy support system in Africa. Their specific objective would be to report to the relevant committee on the progress being made on AGRA's Priority Policy Action Areas. These are:

- Seed sector policies and regulations to speed up adoption of crop varieties;
- Soil health policies to improve soil and crop productivity;
- Markets and trade policies to stimulate expanded markets for staple crops;
- Land and property rights policies to stimulate equitable agricultural growth for the poor; and
- Environmental and climate change resilience policies.



In meetings with both the Ministry and the Committee Secretariat, there was agreement about the need to tackle the legislative backlog which is seen as a priority by the Chair of the Agriculture Committee. All these issues are part of the development of the representational role of the Agricultural Committee in becoming an effective forum and clearing house for the issues of concern to these stakeholders. Particularly important are the links with the farmers themselves both nationally and in the constituencies. There is a shared agreement that this need to be built up and our recommendations must take account of this. There is much work to be done here.

## **7.2 Tanzania**

The underachievement of Tanzania's parliament has been referred to as a separate, distinctive, self governing part of the executive – legislative – judicial triumvirate of governance. The parliament has a very limited legislative and oversight role compared with many other parliaments and the consequences of that is to stunt the development of the representational role of the Bunge.

In the investigative work in Tanzania, it was striking that there was little sense of the Committee's connection with the country and major stakeholders. In any case this would be difficult given the size of the country and the split of functions between Dodoma and Dar es Salaam.

This point can be best expressed through the warmth of the reception at the Public Hearings and National Stakeholder workshop in Kilombero District, Morongo region of Central Tanzania.

Farmers and other stakeholders who participated did not seem to be adequately connected to the Agriculture committee. This therefore calls for support to committee to undertake oversight and scrutiny work, increase visibility and efficiency in legislation that would make the Agriculture Committee become more relevant and, a magnet to agricultural stakeholders in Tanzania.

With this information, it is suggested that the committee conducts a country-wide investigation about the significance of extension services. It is vital to this large and sparsely populated country that farmers are provided with assistance, including the use of modern technology. As raised earlier, Tanzania is seen by AGRA and others as a country of great agricultural potential and stability. Moreover, Tanzania is a country which is good on paper, in terms of good policies or aspirations; however, many reports discuss its underachievement. It has been discussed that Tanzania is a country that should have a hard link from the Agriculture Committee to AGRA's actions to establish "Policy Action Nodes" and "Policy Hubs".

It is seen as having high intrinsic agricultural potential and positive governmental aspects. But its underperformance is concerning. Implementation is the key issue and recommendations later in this report focus on the reasons that appear to be causative to that underperformance. There would be much to recommend collective action by AGRA, AWEPA and the Agriculture, Livestock and Water Committee.

### 7.3 Ghana

All the parliamentarians' contacts confirmed the impressions given by outsiders which agreed that the Ghanaian Parliament was weak upon the representation function of parliamentary committees. It was agreed that there should be a focus for national debate, the monitoring of actions and the development of policy. What has emerged very strongly from the meetings and from the Green Revolution Forum is that the parliament and its committees function at some distance from others working in the same field.

Each works in its own silo, and this was clear after meeting two senior representatives of an advocacy NGO in the agriculture arena who had never visited the Parliament two miles down road.

Particularly important to APSA as a whole was the meeting with the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) which has its headquarters in Accra. Dr. Monty Jones, the Chief Executive of FARA, and his colleagues, were extremely encouraging about the programme and the work. FARA is particularly important to APSA because its remit is Africa wide. During the meeting, Dr. Jones stressed the importance of parliamentarians in order to establish a critical mass of leadership; he also stressed the importance of advocacy and building capacities for parliamentary leadership on agricultural issues. It was agreed that this meant a great deal of focus on extension services and building awareness and applicable knowledge among the people of Ghana, and particularly the MPs, about the agenda of Agriculture. It was also agreed that issues such as climate change needed to be domesticated– put in terms that were practical action oriented for farmers, as well as find ways to effectively communicate the knowledge that remains among scientists. Overall, it was noted that parliamentarians are critical to this progress.

It was also encouraging that FARA expressed their interest in strengthening the capacity of the Agriculture Committee and building the necessary links between the Committee and organisations. According to the officials of the Agricultural Science department at the University of Ghana who we also met during the consultations, their institution was not aware of what the parliamentary committees and the reverse it also true. They however informed us that the present chair of the Agriculture Committee is more outgoing and therefore is starting to build-up links. Several NGOs we met also praised the Chair of Poverty Reduction Committee for regularly involving them and other groups in his activities. A future programme would have to concentrate on initiating far stronger interfaces between parliament and for example, farmers' organisations. It is not possible at this point to define the shape of these links, but this is certainly a priority. The onus is on the Agriculture Committee to take the initiative.

There is a great lack of clarity about the role of Agriculture Committees and the valuable role that they can play in national agricultural life and thus to achieve the ambition of the current agriculture Committee Chair, that "Agriculture Committees be part of the policy development that results in legislation."

APSA's work with the Agriculture Committee would also act as a proxy for the entire parliament in identifying what needs to be done at constituency level in order to make the local MP a greater contributor to the ending of poverty and the achievement of food security.

## 7.4 Rwanda

The Mission visited a very extensive list of stakeholders. This section does not attempt to write a minute of what was discussed but seeks to identify important themes that can be picked up and developed as important to enhancing the roles of the committees concerned with agriculture. We thank them all for their enthusiastic helpfulness.

One of the groups with whom we established a close link was IMBARAGA – the Rwanda Farmers Federation. Not only did the Mission have a lengthy meeting with their senior representatives but IMBARAGA were kind enough to organise a field trip to the Musanze District in the north of the country.

This allowed us to see the services and training being given by IMBARAGA and in particular the challenges in promoting land consolidation programmes. They have programmes which ensure that one crop only such as Maize or Irish potatoes or beans would be grown on the consolidated land for each harvest and proper rotation of crops and application of fertiliser developed. But a major contribution that IMBARAGA made to mission thinking was in a list that it put forward of the major problems being faced by the farmers. These include:

- A big number of citizens without land or too little land;
- Expropriation related problems for common interests in some areas at grassroots level;
- Persistence of land related conflicts;
- Increased land damage;
- Difficult access on the better seeds, other agricultural inputs and lack of sufficient harvest storage;
- Difficult access to agricultural loans due to the lack of agricultural insurance Visa- a- Vis natural calamity;
- Lack of veterinary pharmacies in rural areas; and
- Lack of funds for farmers' production purchase to be sold on at interesting prices.

IMBARAGA discussed these issues with us and when asked which one of the problems they would rate highly, they fairly easily agreed that it was the difficulty of access to agricultural loans and insurance. When we discussed this, with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Agriculture Committee in the Chamber they agreed on the importance of the issue. It is particularly valuable that our partner, AGRA has been making an impact with its agricultural finance packages. In our view, this would be an admirable leading role for them for the Rwanda APSA Project. The relatively small size of the country; the quality of government institutions, the parliamentary base for the initiative and the AGRA input would all be valuable.

It would also be very useful to use both the Chamber of Deputies and Senate Committees to push this issue forward not just in agricultural Fora but where Finance and other powerful ministries would be involved. The Committees know from IMBARAGA and others that this is the most difficult but soluble problem facing Rwanda's smallholder farmers.

It would be a very important demonstration of the Parliamentary Committees' productivity if they were to initiate such action and use committee investigations, involving farmers, women's groups and civil society to explore all dimensions of this issue whilst AGRA sought to deliver its extremely valuable initiative in this Rwanda context. Tanzania, Kenya, and Ghana are among countries that are already benefitting.

The team met several times with members of the Agriculture, Livestock Development and Environment Committee. We need more time to undertake a full assessment of how they work and with what effect. One problem is however apparent for both committees: the staffing of the Clerks department. The Clerk to the Agriculture, Livestock Development and Environment Committee appears to be responsible for several committees and has no research back up.

If the APSA programme is to have the impact in terms of scrutiny and oversight that we intend it is essential that the committee has extra specialist resources both to build up the continuing skills of the committee and also to call in outside research help on short term assignments/inquiries.

AGRA, in its policy document, talks about "policy hubs" that bring together those stakeholders in agriculture who need each other in order to drive through the vital initiative to secure total food security and agriculture's huge potential contribution to national prosperity. Agriculture related parliamentary committees should be at the heart of such efforts. AGRA itself should be regularly asked to make contributions at committee meetings and make proposals for policy and presentational development in Rwanda. This should be part of an initiative by the committees to have a plan for raising their public profiles to become central to debate in Rwanda. This would involve particularly consideration of the use of modern technology.

Another illustration of the role that can be played by the Agriculture, Livestock Development and Environment Committee follows on from the very successful One Cow per Family Programme initiated by the government. It is intended that 350,000 vulnerable families will each receive a pregnant cow by 2017. Overall, this is a very important initiative that continues the rebuilding of Rwanda's livestock following their decimation during the genocide. Clearly, the receipt of a cow makes a huge contribution to poor families in terms of milk, meat and manure and is a contribution that is not just sustainable but can grow through reproduction. The issue is then however – what is next? What other livestock can be part of the initiative? What veterinary care is needed and can it be provided by vet technicians rather than veterinary surgeons? What value added processing can take place? What food safety and trade laws need to be in place? The Mission discussed these issues with the Director of the Rwanda Animal Resources Development Authority and found that he was, of course, very alert to these issues and said nearby Kenya had much to teach Rwanda in terms of these issues.

The Agriculture, Livestock Development and Environment Committee could play a very valuable role in these matters. It could hold an enquiry with contributions from all stakeholders on the way ahead and pay a study visit to Kenya to learn from its experience.

## 8. KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A FUTURE APSA PROGRAMME

For detailed justification and country specific recommendations, please refer to Annex 1, which is a detailed narrative report of individual country outcomes and recommendations. This report only highlights areas of great value for committees that were identified in all focus countries. These include:

- Induction conferences/workshops for members of agriculture committees (In Rwanda after September 2011 and Kenya after 2012 elections, these need to be organized back to back with joint meetings of both Houses to consider joint activities and relationships in the delivering their mandates of oversight, legislation and representation on agricultural issues);
- Strengthen the work of MPs in constituencies to increase sustainable agricultural production;
- Support AGRA's policy programme by working closely with AGRA country offices and parliamentary Committees on agriculture be part of AGRA's policy hubs and nodes;
- Support committees to improve the effective use of agricultural science and technology both at national and in constituency levels;
- Strengthen the monitoring and performance on the implementation of CAADP, Maputo Declaration and other international agreements in relation to agricultural development and food security;
- Support committees' work in relation to gender issues in agriculture, including support to women parliamentarians, women caucuses and women farmers; and
- Capacity Building for Committees' support staff and parliamentary researchers.

## 9. A NOTE ON FINANCES

A detailed financial report is attached to this narrative. It is however important to mention here that whereas Public Hearings and Multi-stake holder workshops were originally planned to take place separately, we saw it more strategic and practical to implement them back-to-back in all countries. This slightly reduced the activities costs; for instance costs on travel per participant reduced since they travelled once for both activities. This arrangement however also meant that more AWEPA staff had to be involved in these activities, given the fact that they now required more logistical and organizational man-power. As a result, the small excess on activity budgets was booked on internal costs of AWEPA. Please refer to a detailed attached financial report for actual expenses.

## 10. LIST OF ANNEXES

1. APSA Kenya, Ghana and Tanzania Synthesis report
2. Report on Project Identification Mission in Rwanda
3. Key Activity Documents APSA Public Hearings and National Workshop in Ghana
4. Schedule of Meetings Project Identification Mission Ghana
5. Report on Project Identification Mission in Kenya
6. Report on Project Identification Mission in Tanzania
7. Report on Public Hearings and Workshop in Kenya