

Do regional initiatives integrate land reform and rural development? A case of New Partnership for Africa Development (NEPAD), Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) and the East African Community (EAC)

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Policy Brief 60

April 2009

Published by the Centre for Policy Studies, an independent research institution, incorporated as an association not for gain under Section 21 of the Companies Act.

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Supported by Royal Danish Embassy, Pretoria



Introduction

Traditionally, the conception and practice of rural development was anchored on Agricultural development.

The World Development Report (2008) states that three out of four poor people in developing countries lived in rural areas in 2002, majority of whom depend on agriculture for their livelihoods, directly or indirectly. By implication a more dynamic and inclusive agriculture could dramatically reduce rural poverty, helping to meet the Millennium Development Goal on poverty and hunger.¹ For instance China's rapid growth in agriculture has been largely responsible for the decline in rural poverty from 53% per cent in 1981 to 8% in 2001. However parallel to these successes are numerous failures in getting agriculture moving in Africa. Food security remains challenging for most countries in Africa, given low agricultural growth, rapid population growth, weak foreign exchange earnings, and high transaction costs in linking domestic and international markets². Simultaneously with the advent of economic adversity occasioned through economic liberation policies (e.g. structural adjustment programmes) livelihoods have subsequently changed in many places towards greater diversification - with many rural households increasingly reliant on income from urban areas as well as a range of off-farm activities in rural areas³. However with the contraction of urban economies, increasing unemployment, the rural-urban linkages as sources of livelihood strategies have come under an increasing strain.

Traditionally, the conception and practice of rural development was anchored on agricultural development. Agriculture has been the longest rural development strategy employed by most countries⁴ and related to this process of rural development land and agrarian reform was a primary component of the strategy for rural development especially after the fall of colonial governments. This approach, influenced by the initial modernisation paradigm of development come under increasing attack for its failure to rescue Africa's ailing rural and national economies, and in its place, the approach towards rural development increasingly adopted an "endogamous" character, one that articulates a territorial and a multi-actor approach to development. The main features of this approach are a concern with territorial based development initiatives that seek to maximize the retention of benefits within the local territory by valorising and exploiting local resources in a manner that takes into cognizance the needs, capacities and perspectives of local people⁵. This shift was presented in

¹ World Development Report (WDR) 2008.

² *Ibid.*

³ Mthieu, P and Cotula, L. 2008. Legal Empowerment in Practice. Using Legal Tools to Secure Land Rights in Africa" Highlights from the International workshop "Legal Empowerment for Securing Land Rights" Accra, 13th – 14th March 2008.

⁴ Shepherd, A. 1998. "Towards a New Paradigm", in *Sustainable Rural Development*. London: Macmillan Press Ltd.

⁵ Nemes, G. 2005. Integrated Rural Development. The Concept and Its Operation. Institute of Economics. Hungarian Academy of Sciences.

opposition to its modernist notions of “development”, incorporating the multi-sector, and multi-layered approach to rural development.

The first seed of regional integration in Africa came out of the Lagos Plan of Action finding expression later on in the formation of the African Union.

The centrality of rural development and its multiplier effects on national economies are premised on its catalytic role it plays in poverty reduction, widely shared growth, food security attainment and its potential role in enhancing sustainable natural resource management. However, despite its potential role, no adequate/meaningful measures/strategies have so far been adopted either at continental or state level to formulate and implement a viable and sustainable rural development policy⁶. This is despite the fact that in the wake of decreasing food security, ailing rural and national economies, the urgency to prioritize small-holder agricultural sector has increasingly gained momentum as a dominant sector of growth in the economy.⁷ In addition, the failure to secure communal land rights, and accord the necessary farmer support has undermined agricultural growth in most of the African countries. At a national level, concerns around rural development and the urgency for land reform have consistently received a low political will further ensuring a continuity of skewed property relations in the post-independent epoch in the Eastern and Southern region of Africa. The extent to which these issues have received due recognition within Africa’s regional bodies forms a central plank of analysis in this paper.

The first seed of regional integration in Africa came out of the Lagos Plan of Action finding expression later on in the formation of the African Union. Other African regional groupings have come out of the realisation that cooperation and integration among African countries in the economic, social and cultural fields are indispensable to the accelerated transformation and sustained development of the African continent. National, regional and sub-regional institutions have thus been formulated with the goal of leading to a dynamic and interdependent African economy. This paper will briefly discuss the origins and objectives of SADC and EAC, and more specifically, their approach towards land and agrarian reform and rural development. The analysis will centre on whether or not these regional groupings incorporate land and agrarian policies, and if so, the impact this has had on member countries. An overview of NEPAD’s position on land and agrarian policies will also be articulated.

“The African Union and the Challenge of Rural Development” At: [ferences/dpmf/gemandze.pdf](https://www.africadialogue.com/ressources/dpmf/gemandze.pdf) Retrieval date: 7/03/2009
ess/docs/2008/ecosoc6355.doc.htm

The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)

The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) is an African programme for African development that came into being as the result of the joining together of the Millennium Partnership for the African Recovery Programme (MAP) and the OMEGA Plan at the request of the Organization of African Unity. The New African Initiative, which is now officially referred to as NEPAD, was approved by the Lusaka summit on 11 July 2001. The Partnership is a commitment by African leaders to get rid of poverty and to place the African continent on a path of lasting growth and development. It is founded on African states practicing good governance, democracy and human rights, while working to prevent and resolve situations of conflict and instability on the continent⁸. NEPAD is a strategic framework for the revival of Africa. It is a framework borne out of an Organisation of African Union initiative to develop an integrated socio-economic development framework for Africa. NEPAD is a product of the need to address the growing problems of Africa characterised by growing poverty, HIV/AIDS, the colonial legacy, food insecurity, decaying infrastructure, poor governance, and the continued marginalisation of Africa as reflected in unfavourable trade regimes⁹.

The Partnership is a commitment by African leaders to get rid of poverty and to place the African continent on a path of lasting growth and development.

The over-arching objectives of NEPAD are to re-position the African continent on a path of sustainable growth and development and thus halt the marginalisation of Africa in the globalisation process¹⁰. NEPAD's stated aim is to achieve the overall 7 per cent annual growth necessary for Africa to meet one of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs): halving poverty by 2015.¹¹ The initiative is founded on principles of good governance in African countries, especially the adoption of sound macroeconomic policy frameworks and improved economic and corporate governance¹². NEPAD's introduction highlights some of the aspects of Africa's current situation which are viewed as undesirable by NEPAD's architects, giving special attention to the problems of poverty, 'backwardness' or 'underdevelopment', marginalisation, and a lack of African control over Africa's destiny.¹³

Within the overall vision of NEPAD, there is the vision for agriculture, which seeks to maximize the contribution of Africa's largest economic sector to achieving the ambition of a self-reliant and productive Africa that can participate fully in the world economy, with the objective of eliminating

⁸ Chabal, P. 2002. The Quest for Good Government and Development in Africa: Is NEPAD the Answer? *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944 -)*, Vol. 78, No. 3. (Jul., 2002), pp. 447-462.

⁹ NEPAD, 2001, *The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)*. (October), Abuja.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ De Vaal, 2002. What's New in the 'New Partnership for Africa's Development'? in *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-)*, Vol. 78, No. 3. (Jul., 2002), pp. 463-475.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ Mathews, S. 2004. Investigating NEPAD's Development Assumptions. *Review of African Political Economy*, Vol. 31, No. 101, An African Scramble?. (Sep., 2004), pp. 497-511.

hunger, reducing poverty and food insecurity and opening the way for an expansion for exports¹⁴. CAADP is not a set of supranational programs to be implemented by individual countries. It is rather a common framework reflected in a set of key principles and targets in order to guide country strategies and investment programs and facilitate greater alignment and harmonization of development efforts. CAADP marks to key intermediate targets, namely the pursuit of a 6% average annual agricultural sector growth rate at the national level and allocation of 10% of national budgets to the agricultural sector¹⁵.

One of NEPADs' key priority action areas equally acknowledges the need to facilitate implementation of the food security and agricultural development program in all the sub-regions.

In this regard, one of NEPAD's core priorities is policy reforms and increased investment in the sector of agriculture. This is made on the basis of NEPAD's own understanding of the challenges bedeviling Africa's agriculture. NEPAD's framework document acknowledges that majority of Africa's people live in rural areas edging out a livelihood out of weak and unproductive agrarian systems. For the region as a whole, the agricultural sector accounts for about 60 percent of the total labour force, 20 percent of total merchandise exports and 17 percent of GDP¹⁶. Coupled with external setbacks such as climatic uncertainty, biases in economic policy and instability in world commodity prices, these systems have held back agricultural supply and incomes in the rural areas, leading to poverty¹⁷. Hence the urgent need to achieve food security in African countries requires that the problem of inadequate agricultural systems be addressed, so that food production can be increased and nutritional standards raised. One of the ways this can be achieved is through the improvement of Agricultural infrastructure (e.g. irrigation, roads, rural electrification) in all the sub-regions. In sum, development of Africa's Agricultural system is seen as a key prerequisite to Africa's development¹⁸. The promotion and diversification of production and exports, particularly with respect to agro-industries, improving access to markets of developed countries and the protection of Africa's environment is in addition core priority areas associated with NEPADs' interest in advancing Africa's Agricultural development initiatives. One of NEPADs' key priority action areas equally acknowledges the need to facilitate implementation of the food security and agricultural development program in all the sub-regions.

NEPAD acknowledges the central role of Africa's enormous land and natural resources, especially with regard to poverty alleviation. Agriculture is identified

¹⁴ Zaney, G.D. Is NEPAD a Viable Development Agenda? The Ghanaian Times, Tuesday, 08 August 2006.

<http://www.newtimesonline.com/content/view/4243/55/> Retrieval date: 4 December 2008

¹⁵ Diallo, A.A., 2007. Agricultural Water Development in CAADP/NEPAD at: http://www.afdb.org/pls/portal/docs/PAGE/ADB_ADMIN_PG/DOCUMENTS/NEWS/PARAL-4-1-AMADOU-NEPAD.PPT#7 Retrieval date: 4 December 2008

¹⁶ Food and Agriculture organization (FAO). 2005. Initiative to Support NEPAD-CAADP Implementation. http://www.fao.org/tc/Tca/nepad/caadp_en.asp Retrieval date: 3 December 2008

¹⁷ The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) October 2001 <http://www.nepad.org/2005/files/documents/inbrief.pdf> Retrieval date: 2 December 2008

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

in the policy as a critical area of intervention¹⁹. Programmes are required to improve rural infrastructure, support agricultural research and empower grassroots communities, as well as to increase material support for community-based natural resource management and agriculture. The NEPAD agriculture, trade and market access initiative seeks to improve agricultural productivity; ensure food security for all people; increase poor people's access to adequate food and nutrition; promote measures against natural resource degradation; and integrate the rural poor into the market economy by providing them with better access to export markets²⁰.

According to the NEPAD strategy, the initiative on agriculture, trade and market access seeks to improve agricultural productivity, ensure food security; increase poor people's access to adequate food and nutrition; promote measures against resource degradation and integrating the poor into the market economy by facilitating their access to export markets.

Improvements in roads, storage, markets, packaging and handling systems, and input supply networks, are vital to raising the competitiveness of local production vis-à-vis imports and in export markets.

Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP)

As currently formulated, the proposed initiatives under the NEPAD Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) focuses on four critical pillars which broadly reflect the structural constraints that encumbers Africa's agricultural growth:²¹

- **Extending the area under sustainable land management and reliable water control systems.** Reliance on irregular and unreliable rainfall for agricultural production is a major constraint on crop productivity and rain-fed agriculture is also often unable to permit high-yield varieties of crops to achieve their full production potential.
- **Improving rural infrastructure and trade-related capacities for market access.** Improvements in roads, storage, markets, packaging and handling systems, and input supply networks, are vital to raising the competitiveness of local production vis-à-vis imports and in export markets. Investment in these areas will stimulate the volume of production and trade, thereby assisting to generate an appropriate rate of return on needed investments in ports and airport facilities.

¹⁹ Saruchera, M. 2004. The context of land and resource rights struggles in Africa. Policy Brief: Debating land Reform and Rural Development. No 9 Pan Africa Programme on Land and Resource Rights. Programme for Land and Agrarian Reform, University of the Western Cape.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ Food and Agriculture organization (FAO). 2005. Initiative to Support NEPAD-CAADP Implementation. http://www.fao.org/tc/Tca/nepad/caadp_en.asp Retrieval date: 3 December 2008

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- **Increasing food supply and reducing hunger.** Africa currently lags behind all other regions in terms of farm productivity levels with depressed crop and livestock yields, and limited use of irrigation and other inputs. By accessing improved technology - much of which is simple and relatively low in cost - small farmers can play a major role in both increasing food availability close to where it is most in need, raising rural incomes, and expanding employment opportunities and contributing to a growth in exports.
- **Agricultural research, technology dissemination and adoption.** This aims at achieving accelerated gains in productivity. The primacy of agriculture in rejuvenating Africa's ailing economies is clearly spelt out in this document

In terms of implementation, African governments have made firm financial commitments.

Implementation of CAADP

In terms of implementation, African governments have made firm financial commitments. For example, in 2003, African leaders committed themselves to increasing national budget allocations to agriculture to at least 10% per annum by 2008. Development partners and multilateral institutions have also been mobilized around CAADP. The Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), IFAD, World Bank, the United States AID and World Food Programme (WFP) have all provided significant support in the advancement of the CAADP. According to the CAADP document, investment costs have been estimated at about US \$251 billion between the year 2002 and 2015, categorized under sustainable land management and reliable water control systems, improving rural infrastructure and trade-related capacities for market access, increasing food supply and reducing hunger and agricultural research, technology dissemination and adoption for which US\$68 billion, US\$128.8 billion, US\$ 49.6 billion and US\$ 4.6 billion have been allotted respectively²².

The CAADP implementation process is now being rolled out at the country level, with the support and leadership of RECs. As part of strengthening and accelerating country level implementation of CAADP, the SADC and ECOWAS Secretariats have received support in the form of dedicated CAADP coordinators, whose role is to coordinate country activities with RECs. Another area where progress is being made is under Pillar no. 4 of CAADP-Research Technology Transfer and Adoption, whereby significant resources from development partners are now earmarked for country implementation, and strengthening the capacity of sub-regional research organizations²³.

²² ²² Zaney, G.D. Is NEPAD a Viable Development Agenda? The Ghanaian Times, Tuesday, 08 August 2006. <http://www.newtimesonline.com/content/view/4243/55/> Retrieval date: 4 December 2008

²³ United Nations, 2006. UN Support to AU and its NEPAD Programme at: http://www.uneca.org/nepad/Projects_CAADP.htm Retrieval date: 4 December 2008

There are also critical challenges and limitations in enhancing access to information and knowledge on the CAADP and its implementation.

Although CAADP is continental in scope, particularly at the level of the Regional Economic Communities (REC's), focus is on implementing CAADP at the national level particularly through the country roundtable process. The country roundtables are where key players come together to assess the realities of their own particular situation and develop a road map for going forward. The roundtable process starts by getting national governments to buy into CAADP and to take leadership. This is then followed by engagements with key players through coalitions around a common commitment to move forward with CAADP.²⁴ As at July 2008 more than a dozen countries are working at various levels towards the CAADP roundtable processes. Rwanda was the first country to sign the first Country CAADP Compact with five other countries Ghana, Malawi, Uganda, Nigeria and Zambia en-route to adopting their compacts this year²⁵. One of the key success areas noted in the April - June 2007 Quarterly report on CAADP implementation is the strengthening of the commitment of the development partners to endorse and support CAADP at both the country and Regional Economic Country (REC) Levels, as well as to deepen ownership of the agenda by the RECs.²⁶

In terms of implementation challenges, a lack of institutional and technical capacities at country level to carry out government commitment on the agriculture agenda has stymied the realisations of the CAADP goals. There is also a lack of inter-ministerial coordination and collaboration at country level. This is partly due to the fragmented structural set-up of government departments and Ministries, which most often have not defined or provided very weak mechanisms for inter-ministerial collaboration. There are also critical challenges and limitations in enhancing access to information and knowledge on the CAADP and its implementation. This highlights need for vigorous efforts to inform both stakeholders and players involved (or potentially) in CAADP implementation and the general public on both the values and principles, the tools and methodologies/approaches and indeed the vision and value in CAADP²⁷.

Criticisms of CAADP

At a generic level, NEPAD has been accused of collaborating with neo-liberal interests at the expense of the rural and poor African masses. The mould of CAADP's irrigation schemes, which will be driven by the state, FAO and foreign agri-capital forces to engage in mechanised farming (for export and not food

²⁴ Kanyegirire, A. 2008. CAADP now seen as historic step in Africa's Development *CAADP Communications Manager, NEPAD Secretariat* at: <http://www.triomedica.co.za/work/nepad/newsletters/images/CAADP-historic-step.pdf>
Retrieval date: 4 December 2008

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ NEPAD Agricultural Unit CAADP. April – June 2007. Quarterly Report at: <http://www.nepad.org/2005/files/caadp/CAADPReport2ndquarter30807.doc> Retrieval date: 4 December 2008

²⁷ NEPAD Agricultural Unit CAADP. April – June 2007. Quarterly Report at: <http://www.nepad.org/2005/files/caadp/CAADPReport2ndquarter30807.doc> Retrieval date: 4 December 2008

crops) is likely to entrench dispossession of rural farmers' land. The Sudanese Geriza irrigation project, funded by the World Bank, International Monetary Fund and African Development Bank, which turned rural farmers into waged plantation labourers, provides a vivid example of an undertaking associated with FAO's neo-liberal approach to agricultural development²⁸.

The NEPAD/ CAADP agricultural strategy is steeped in a market led framework to development management, which requires a minimalist role for the African state and approach is fundamentally different from actually existing practices of global agrarian development. Its major limitation is that agricultural, trade and monetary policies of northern states directly counter the intended goals of weaker states. This is because agricultural development policy management in the developed countries is based on extensive state intervention in product and factor markets in favor of an agrarian structure comprising mainly protected owner-operated family farms, dominated by private sector transnational firms. Issues of equity are largely ignored yet the land question is central to issues of agriculture and food security for the small farms the plan purports to support²⁹.

NEPAD plan is Eurocentric and does not address adequately the development of the economy that protects the poor.

NEPAD plan is Eurocentric and does not address adequately the development of the economy that protects the poor. On the surface the NEPAD initiative seems to be comprehensive in addressing the structural constraints facing the development of land and agriculture in the continent but the reality is that the general provisions of the initiative, activities and ambitious projects need further assessment to investigate whether it is seriously addressing the special needs of the continent in general. For instance, NEPAD alludes to infrastructural development and access to resources like water and land but it is vague about the distribution of these resources³⁰.

Despite the shortcomings highlighted here, NEPAD provides a framework for mobilising Africa's land and natural resources for the good of African people. However, the challenge lies in ensuring broader participation of state and non-state actors in developing modalities and specific action programmes to utilise the continent's natural wealth and secure resource rights (access, use and ownership) for the rural and urban poor. This should include developing the productive capacity of the poor as well as fundamentally changing the structural constraints which adversely impact on poor people³¹. NEPAD has been criticised for not mobilising Africa's abundant natural resource wealth for the continent's

²⁸ Omoweh, D.A., 2003. The New Partnership for Africa's Development [NEPAD]: How Does It Address the Land and Resource Rights of the Rural and Urban Poor? Paper Presented at the 4th PAPLRR Network Workshop University of the Western Cape, Cape Town, South Africa May 5-7, 2003 at: <http://www.acts.or.ke/paplr/docs/CTPAPLRR-FinalDraftofNepad.Omoweh.pdf>. Retrieval date: 4 December 2008

²⁹ Saruchera, M. 2004. The context of land and resource rights struggles in Africa. Policy Brief: Debating land Reform and Rural Development. No 9 Pan Africa Programme on Land and Resource Rights. Programme for Land and Agrarian Reform, University of the Western Cape.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ Saruchera, M. 2004. The context of land and resource rights struggles in Africa. Policy Brief: Debating land Reform and Rural Development. No 9 Pan Africa Programme on Land and Resource Rights. Programme for Land and Agrarian Reform, University of the Western Cape.

development, but opening it to foreign exploitation and plunder instead. The initiative is silent on mobilisation, redistribution and utilisation of Africa's land for development, particularly for women³².

NEPAD document has no specific strategies for tackling the land and resource rights among the rural and urban poor, nor land initiative to resolve the broader land question in Africa. Rather than treat land as one of the pillars of the regional agenda, it is either mentioned in passing or implied in the initiatives on Agriculture, Environment, Culture, Energy, Mining, Tourism, and Water and Sanitation and Diversification of Africa's productive base. For instance, the agriculture initiative recognized the need to overcome the constraints of the industry in order to achieve food security in Africa, but only showed concern for land in the context of arresting the trend of decreasing farmland due to man and technology³³. The authors of the NEPAD-CAADP are more concerned with safety nets and emergency-related food and agriculture than long-term approach to collective self reliance in Africa's agricultural development. It is not clear how the rural and urban poor will benefit from the program, in spite of the centrality of the rural farmer to food production and food security in the continent³⁴.

The authors of the NEPAD-CAADP are more concerned with safety nets and emergency-related food and agriculture than long-term approach to collective self reliance in Africa's agricultural development.

Regarding the rights of the rural and urban poor to land and other natural resources, NEPAD is deficient in terms of initiatives, policy framework and the relevant institutions required to resolve historical and contemporary grievances around access, use and ownership of natural resources primarily land. The demographic pressure, coupled with ineffective state institutions in addressing the formalization Africa's dominant system of land tenure - communal tenure systems fails to receive any acknowledgement in the framework document. Pursuit of Agricultural growth within a neo-liberal environment largely disadvantages the growth of less resourced small scale subsistence farmers. In a context of tenure uncertainty, and irregular and speedy privatization of communal land, Africa has witnessed an increase in land related conflicts. These twin pressures namely, demographic pressure on a finite resource and poor governance in management and administration of Africa's land resource has culminated in a state of ineffective land administrative systems that stymie Agricultural growth.

Hence NEPAD's conceptualization in so far as agriculture is concerned (through CAADP) bodes on a romantic idealization that conceals complex problems pertaining to tenure insecurity, and how this is reinforced through its interface

³² *Ibid.*

³³ Omoweh, D.A., 2003. The New Partnership for Africa's Development [NEPAD]: How Does It Address the Land and Resource Rights of the Rural and Urban Poor? Paper Presented at the 4th PAPLRR Network Workshop University of the Western Cape, Cape Town, South Africa May 5-7, 2003 at: <http://www.acts.or.ke/paplr/docs/CTPAPLRR-FinalDraftofNepad.Omoweh.pdf>. Retrieval date: 4 December 2008

³⁴ *Ibid.*

with unimpeded population growth, declining agricultural technology and poor governance institutions. The overall thrust of Agricultural development reflects a bias with economic reductionism as reflected in the four pillars of CAADP reviewed earlier in the paper. The emphasis on production, greater efficiencies, and monetization of the sector reflects a resurgence of antiquated models of rural development that emphasized the growth of agriculture as a key pillar to rural development. This emphasis further throws into disarray any concerns for pro-poor small scale subsistence farmers whose sole barrier towards a vertical ascent to commercialization along the Agri-value chain are structural and resource constraints. Without measures to provide these, the growth of small scale resource poor farmers is heavily compromised. The modernist paradigm inherent in CAADP conceptualization inhibits its own ability to broaden its scope to take into cognizance Africa's ailing rural economies, and the need to incorporate rural development as a central facet informing any attempts geared towards the rejuvenation of Africa's Agricultural sector. To paraphrase, regional initiatives that seek to revitalize Africa's economic growth must be informed by the need to mainstream rural development programs in their approaches to economic development and central to this is the incorporation of agrarian reform.

*The environment plan
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Related to the Agricultural development initiatives, the NEPAD environment action plan for the first decade of the 21st century is a coherent and strategic long-term programme which sets out measures that Africa will take to confront its economic growth challenges with full consideration of the impact on the environment, poverty and the social sphere. The environment plan will ensure the integration of environmental imperatives into all NEPAD actions and programmes. However, the environment plan has been criticized for not acknowledging the causes of environmental degradation that it seeks to address; instead it focuses mainly on conservation, desertification and global warming. This has been viewed as a deliberate move to avoid criticising the West for its contribution to the degradation of Africa's environment during colonialism. The plan ignores the environmental degradation that accompanied the systematic extraction of raw materials, mining and land appropriation under colonialism.³⁵ NEPAD sees sub-regional and regional approaches as necessary for improving Africa's competitiveness, mindful of the fact that as markets most African countries are small. The formation of the East African Community partly addresses this need (EAC).

³⁵ Saruchera, M. 2004. The context of land and resource rights struggles in Africa. Policy Brief: Debating land Reform and Rural Development. No 9 Pan Africa Programme on Land and Resource Rights. Programme for Land and Agrarian Reform, University of the Western Cape.

East African Community (EAC)

A major task ahead is to consolidate and fully implement the Customs Union in parallel with the three other pillars of East African integration.

The East African Community (EAC) is the regional intergovernmental organisation of the Republics of Kenya, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania, Republic of Burundi and Republic of Rwanda. It was formed through the Treaty for Establishment of the East African Community which was signed on 30th November 1999 and entered into force on 7th July 2000. The EAC aims at widening and deepening co-operation among the Partner States in, among others, political, economic and social fields for their mutual benefit.³⁶ These objectives are articulated in Article 5 (1) of the Treaty, which enjoins member states through the EAC to develop policies and programmes aimed at widening and deepening cooperation for their mutual benefit³⁷. In pursuant to these objectives, the EAC adopted a development strategy aimed at facilitating the implementation of the Treaty in a systematic manner.

The 1st EAC Development Strategy (1997-2000) was designed to re-launch East African cooperation. The 2nd EAC Development Strategy was aimed at the consolidation of the East African Cooperation culminating in the launching of the East African Customs Union with effect from 01st January 2005. A major task ahead is to consolidate and fully implement the Customs Union in parallel with the three other pillars of East African integration. Thus, the primary objectives of this strategy will be to consolidate and complete the E.A Customs Union; establish the EA Common Market; and lay the foundation for an EA Monetary Union and an EA Political Federation. This marks the next five years (2006-2010) as the most crucial and complex period of East African integration³⁸. The establishment of the East African Common Market will be a primary goal of the EAC Development Strategy (2006-2010) in which a larger market and more attractive single investment area will be created with a view to providing the opportunity to the region to be more competitive and more amenable to effective participation in the global economy³⁹. In essence the EAC development strategy (2006 - 2010) is heavily influenced by developments in the world economy, the regional economy and in the national economies.

In terms of sector specific preferences accorded in development strategy, agriculture and food security, industry, tourism and wildlife are listed as key drivers for the economies. The majority of the East Africans derive their livelihoods directly from the land as subsistence farmers, pastoralists and agro-

³⁶ Regional Economic Communities (REC). East African Community at: <http://www.africa-union.org/root/AU/recs/eac.htm> Retrieval date: 4 December 2008

Mrango, H.E. 2002. The New Partnership For Africa's Development (Nepad): East African Community (Eac) And Tanzania Perspectives. *President's Office, Planning and Privatization, DSM At:* <http://tanzania.fes-international.de/doc/regional-eac-and-tanzania-perspective.pdf> Retrieval date: 4 December 2008

³⁷ East African Community Development Strategy 2006 – 2010 “Deepening and Accelerating Integration”

³⁸ East African Community Development Strategy 2006 – 2010 “Deepening and Accelerating Integration”

³⁹ *Ibid.*

pastoralists. In Kenya this accounts for 75 percent, 80 percent for Tanzania and 86 percent for Uganda. Agriculture in this regard is listed as one of the cross cutting issues that member states should take on board in its “Agriculture and Food Security” programme. The overall objectives of co-operation between Partner States in the agricultural sector are the achievement of food security and rational agricultural production within the Community. The Partner States undertake to adopt a scheme for the rationalisation of agricultural production with a view to promoting complementarity and specialization in and the sustainability of national agricultural programmes. This approach is guided by the need to ensure EAC Agricultural regimes remain competitive, promote value-addition and enhance cross border trade for sustainable food security. To this end, EAC Development Strategy has developed a common agricultural policy, strategy and regulations which guides and regulate the development of the agricultural sector in EAC⁴⁰. Some of these interventions include:

This approach is guided by the need to ensure EAC Agricultural regimes remain competitive, promote value-addition and enhance cross border trade for sustainable food security

- Implementing the EA Agricultural and Rural Development Policy and Strategy that have already been developed;
- Finalise the establishment of the East African System of Early Warning to monitor food shortage;
- Ensure application of the Sanitary and Phyto-sanitary measures in place;
- Harmonise remaining regional policies, regulations, and standards/SPS;
- Strengthen Partner State Agriculture/Livestock institutions, farmer associations, traders and processors associations;
- Undertake joint activities on regional basis such as seed multiplication and distribution, plant and animal diseases control, irrigation and others;
- Promote joint negotiations on agriculture issues at regional and international level;
- Implement projects on control of trans-boundary animal diseases;
- Promote joint research in the agricultural sector recognizing different agronomic zones in the region;
- Prepare alternative strategies for helping pastoralists to diversify their developmental activities.

However the development strategies adopted in the “Agriculture and Food Security Sector” are blunt, managerial in outlook, and fail to acknowledge the complex, historical and political forces that have conjured up in the post-independence epoch and undermined the success of land and agrarian reform in the Eastern and Southern African countries. The crisis of land inequality, declining agriculture, failed rural development, and underlying causes are primarily viewed as a function of a-historical and a-political process, which demands a technical approach to “fixing” the malaise of rural under-development in the member states.

⁴⁰ East African Community Development Strategy 2006 – 2010 “Deepening and Accelerating Integration”

The challenge of land tenure insecurity, and the socio-economic exclusion these creates for marginal groupings should indeed form the basis in defining reforms within the Agricultural sector.

This is more urgent, given the fact that the centrality of agriculture as a major driver of Rural Development and Economic Development cannot be understated. More significantly, is the fact that the EAC member states have increasingly experienced a declining trend in the share of agriculture to overall economies to varying degrees hence underpinning livelihoods sources of its rural population⁴¹, a trend commonly referred to as de-agrarianisation⁴². Within the land reform front, in all the three countries, reforms have been or are being undertaken to address the challenges associated with land tenure⁴³. Although the three countries have followed different political trajectories in the period following political independence, there was a striking commonality in the manner in which they continued to weaken community control of their land rights and appropriated authority over land from communities and their institutions⁴⁴. Irrespective of the challenges incomplete land tenure reforms presents for rural livelihoods, the EAC development strategies have failed to incorporate these concerns into their programme on “Agriculture and Food Security”. The challenge of land tenure insecurity, and the socio-economic exclusion these creates for marginal groupings should indeed form the basis in defining reforms within the Agricultural sector. In this regard, no evidence is available to suggest that the EAC has initiated key programmes around land and agrarian reform, and rural development programmes like its counterpart SADC.

Southern African Development Community (SADC)

SADC is made up of Angola, Botswana, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The organisation started in 1980 as the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC), with the main aim of coordinating development projects in order to lessen the countries’ economic dependence on the then apartheid South Africa. SADC’s objectives include achieving development and economic growth, alleviate poverty, enhance the standard and quality of life of the people of Southern Africa and support the socially disadvantaged through regional integration; evolving common political values, systems and institutions; promoting and defending peace and security; promoting self-sustaining development on the basis of collective self-reliance, and the interdependence

⁴¹ East African Community Development Strategy 2006 – 2010 “Deepening and Accelerating Integration”

⁴² The concept of ‘de-agrarianisation’ of a number of economies throughout the world previously largely or highly dependent upon agriculture is now widely acknowledged within the development literature (see Bryceson 2004 below) as rural people combine on - farm and off - farm livelihood strategies, as adoptive mechanisms to mitigate against the diminishing returns experienced from engaging in purely land-based livelihood provisioning strategies.

Bryceson, F. 2004. Agrarian Vista or Vortex: African Rural Livelihood Policies. Review of African Political Economy. Number 102 (31): 617 - 629

⁴³ Odhiambo, M.O., 2006. Improving Tenure Security for the Rural Poor: Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda – Case Study. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. Support to the Legal Empowerment of the Poor (LEP).

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

Do regional initiatives integrate land reform and rural development?

of Member States; achieving complementarity between national and regional strategies and programmes; promoting and maximizing productive employment and utilisation of resources of the Region; achieving sustainable utilisation of natural resources and effective protection of the environment; and strengthening and consolidating the long-standing historical, social and cultural affinities and links among the people of the Region⁴⁵.

With regard to addressing land and agrarian issues, the SADC body has a department of Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources (FANR) Directorate. The main objective of this directorate is to develop, promote, coordinate and facilitate the harmonisation of policies and programmes on food, agriculture and natural resources.⁴⁶ Another initiative, the SADC Land Reform and Management Support Facility, has also been established to give guidance to member states that exhibit varied land problems. The SADC Land Reform and Management Facility, still in its early phases of formation, is conceptualised to give support to member states in the development and implementation of land and agrarian reform programmes. It was also envisaged to provide a platform for sharing experiences and information on land and agrarian reform issues in the region. The main consideration going into the formulation of the Land Reform and Management Support Facility was the centrality of land in the social and economic development of the region and in poverty reduction initiatives which stressed the need to accord prominence to land issues at the regional level.⁴⁷ In the SADC region land is a key production resource to 70 percent of the rural based population who depend on agriculture and utilise natural resources for income and livelihood. Therefore, access to land becomes very crucial for the rural poor to enable them to participate in economic activities that lead to poverty reduction. In this regard, the Land Reform and Management Support Facility aims to achieve the following objectives⁴⁸:

Another initiative, the SADC Land Reform and Management Support Facility, has also been established to give guidance to member states that exhibit varied land problems.

- assist member states in the formulation and implementation of pro-poor land policies and programmes
- facilitate in capacity building for the improvement in delivery of land and agrarian reforms
- promote documentation and sharing of best practices and experiences and facilitate research into aspects of land in an effort to provide the necessary land related information.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ Communiqué on meeting of Southern African Development Community (SADC) ministers responsible for lands, Sandton, Johannesburg, South Africa 27 March 2008

⁴⁷ Communiqué on meeting of Southern African Development Community (SADC) ministers responsible for lands, Sandton, Johannesburg, South Africa 27 March 2008

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

Conclusion

Despite the centrality of land as a primary resource that supports approximately 70% of the region's population in the Eastern and Southern part of Africa, it is self-evident from a cursory review of the selected regional initiatives, that mainstreaming of rural development programmes has failed to take place. Despite the huge potential, rural development, and the promise of land reform holds for the respective regions, regional initiatives in this regard are either nascent (in the case of SADC) or ambivalent (in the case of EAC) in assessing the actual challenges facing unresolved land questions in the region remain salient. To its credit, SADC through the Land Reform and Management Facility has acknowledged the need to accord assistance in the formulation and implementation of pro-poor land policies and programmes. This exemplifies structural and political limits faced not only by SADC member states but EAC members in dealing with their land question. The approach to the land question as noted through NEPAD (CAADP), and EAC development programmes is rather technical and a-political. Where mention is made, and specific programmes developed, the paradigmatic approach adopted (e.g. NEPAD) is largely seen to be empathetic to failed neo-liberal models that emphasise agricultural liberalisation and privatisation of land. These latter trends are largely seen as an obstacle to attaining a pro-poor land reform programme. Therefore regional groupings must integrate rural development and land reform as key pillars informing their programme of action. The review undertaken clearly shows that the approach to agricultural development undertaken by these regional groupings is de-linked from programmes of land and agrarian reform. These latter programmes are profoundly political questions, as they deal with issues of land rights, their distribution, strength and character across the member states. Coupled with the failure to legalise communal land tenure successfully, and accord statutory recognition to informal land rights essentially means that attempts to progressively change the agricultural regimes, induce increased production in an increasingly competitive and liberalised agri-economy are doomed to fail.

The review undertaken clearly shows that the approach to agricultural development undertaken by these regional groupings is de-linked from programmes of land and agrarian reform.