



Dialogue Report on the
“Multi-countries Smallholder Farmers High level Consultation
on Gender, Agriculture policies and Budget 2018/19
in line with Malabo Declaration and Biennial report 2018”

6th December 2017, Birchwood Hotel, Johannesburg

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1. Introduction

ESAFF convened a small-scale farmers dialogue themed; “Multi country Smallholder Farmers consultation on Gender, Agriculture Policies and Budget 2018/19 in line with Malabo Declaration and Biennial reporting”. The event was held on 6th of December 2017 in Johannesburg – South Africa. It brought together 30 smallholder farmers, CAADP Focal Persons from Lesotho, South Africa and Swaziland (LSS) as well as ESAFF personnel from Tanzania.

The dialogue focused on the three countries performance in the agriculture sector, budget and gender as per the Malabo Biennial Reporting required by the African Union in January 2018.

The dialogue was organised by ESAFF Regional based in Tanzania with the support from the Southern Africa Trust (SAT) and Bread for the World (BfdW). One of the aims of the dialogue was to outline country progress in terms of the attainment of the 7 Malabo Declaration goals.



Ms. Mamalefetsane-
Lesotho farmer leader and
Moderator

The conference was very enabling to farmers especially women and policy makers as the gender gaps that exist within the different countries came to light and action plans were made by each country. The dialogue also strengthened the advocacy spirit of farmers to push for change in national agriculture policies, budgets and promote accountability of government officials. The dialogue was moderated by a woman small scale farmer Ms. Mamalefetsane Phakoe (Lesotho), and the official opening and welcome note was done by the ESAFF Vice Chairperson, Mrs. Flora Maswanganyi (ESAFF RSA).



Ms. Flora M. ESAFF RSA
Farmer leader

2. Relevance and objectives

The dialogue was organized with the purpose of the promotion of agriculture policy, plans and budget awareness in line with gender mainstreaming in Lesotho, South Africa and Swaziland. The event also was instrumental in providing input to the process of finalizing agriculture sector budgets, plans and programmes for implementation in 2018/19. The three countries national budgets expected to be tabled in early 2018. The dialogue exposed the gaps that were existed in terms of the participation of women and the youth in policy formulation, planning and budgeting of the agriculture sector at grassroots, LSS national and SADC regional level. Action plans were laid down for future follow-ups. In a nutshell the dialogue aimed at the following points:

- Equip smallholder farmers with basic knowledge and skills related to agriculture policies, plans, budgets, programme implementation and monitoring with smallholder and gender lenses.
- Orient participants on National and SADC commitments in the area of agriculture and food security with gender perspectives and their performances per the current Biennial Reporting:
- Familiarize farmers with importance to participate at regional, national and district level in issues related to agriculture policies, plans and budgets
- Equip smallholder farmers with basic knowledge and skills related to agriculture policies, plans and budget 2018/19
- Determine and map actions to further influence plans, budgets, programme implementation at regional, national and district level

Presentations and Discussions



3. Presentation on Agriculture policy frameworks at AU, SADC (RAIP) and National level

A presentation on the Agriculture policy frameworks at continental level, SADC and national level was done by ESAFF Coordinator as the SADC Regional Agriculture Policy (RAP) Coordinator, Mr. Martin Muchero could not attend as he had another commitment.

In his presentation, Mr Joe Mzinga said agriculture influence economic growth in the region and can help millions of people to overcome poverty. He said that the study by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the UN concluded that the **agriculture sector can alleviate poverty 11 times** more than other sectors including oil and gas or mining and services (*The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2012*).



He highlighted the general outlook of the continent, and the importance of agriculture for SADC in terms of *Food security, Nutrition status and Poverty alleviation and wealth creation*. He stated that 292 million people are homed in the SADC and 61 % live in rural areas and depend on agriculture for livelihood. SADC has the potential to feed the continent. About 25.1 million people (8% of the total population) of the SADC are vulnerable to food insecurity with one meal per day. Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Lesotho, Malawi, South Africa and Zimbabwe have high numbers of food insecure people.

He further highlighted that despite the policies and programmes being implemented across the continent, there is evidence of stunting and malnutrition in SADC. Malnutrition and stunting rates continue to quadruple. That the majority of the SADC Member States (**12 out of 15**) have stunting rates above **20%**, The level deemed as unacceptable by the World Health Organisation (WHO). **DRC, Malawi, Mozambique, and Zambia** have severely high stunting rates of above **40%**, while Lesotho and the **United Republic of Tanzania (URT)** also have high rates of malnutrition of between **30% and 40%**.

He then explained about the Agriculture Policy Frameworks at *Global, Continental, Regional, National and Grassroots Level*. He emphasized how goal 1 & 2 of the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are tied to agriculture and reiterated their importance. He made mention of the Agenda 2030 and the goals we want to have achieved in Africa by then. He spoke



of the Malabo Declaration and emphasised goal 2 which is more on finance investment. He said many countries have not reached the 10% budget allocation annually to the sector and even the small that is allocated, there are challenges in some countries to realise in full budget. He cited examples in some countries where less than 20% of the budgeted was only disbursed.

SADC RAP and RAIP Priority Programmes were outlined, the focus of the SADC agricultural policies is tied directly to National agricultural policies. The even RAIP investment instruments were also highlighted such as the Value Chains, disaster preparedness, etc.

On the SADC Regional Agriculture Policy (SADC RAP), Food and Nutrition Security Strategy (FNSS) and The Regional Agriculture Investment Plan (RAIP), he said the SADC Development fund is set to enhance self-sustenance, however only 7 Member States have so far signed the agreement on the operationalisation of the fund. He added that no country had deposited instruments of ratification with the Secretariat with Mauritius indicating its willingness to sign.

The 7 countries that have signed the SADC fund agreement are Angola, DRC, Lesotho, Mozambique, Swaziland, Tanzania and Zimbabwe.

He then, posed three key questions to the small-scale farmers;

- Can SADC fully realise Malabo Declaration by 2025?;
- What would be the role of small scale farmers in the push for the realisation of the Malabo goals?
- What are the opportunities to influence agriculture policy plans, policies and budgets?

4. National Presentations on Small scale farmers involvement in Agriculture Policies, Plans and Budgets issues: Involvement and challenges with gender lenses.

The presentations started with a role-play presented by the farmers before national coordinator could begin. The brief role-play was highlighted all about outlining the journey that the farmers went through when doing Public Expenditure Tracking Survey (PETS) and dealing with government officials in their country. The key message sent by the role-play was the exposure of challenges that still limit women farmers in Lesotho.

The presentation was done first by a role-play by the farmers and Ms. Mathabiso, ESAFF Lesotho coordinator, where farmers realized they have no markets and engaged the government officials, but the officials didn't care. The farmers added that they work hard to feed Lesotho and Africa as a continent but in most of the case the government fail to protect the farmers. The coordinator presented the state of agriculture in Lesotho from the viewpoint of farmers and made highlights on the activities that ESAFF Lesotho had done throughout the year 2017 The challenges that were raised during the presentation were as follows:

The Malabo Commitment to Agriculture, June 2016



1. **Recommitment to the Principles and Values of the CAADP Process**
2. **Recommitment to enhance investment finance in Agriculture**
 - Uphold 10% public spending target
 - Operationalization of Africa Investment Bank
3. **Commitment to Ending Hunger by 2025**
 - At least double productivity (focusing on inputs, irrigation, mechanization)
 - Reduce PHL at least by half
 - Nutrition: reduce stunting to 10%
4. **Commitment to Halving Poverty, by 2025, through inclusive Agricultural Growth and Transformation**
 - Sustain Annual sector growth in Agricultural GDP at least 6%
 - Establish and/or strengthen inclusive public-private partnerships for at least five (5) priority agricultural commodity value chains with strong linkage to smallholder agriculture.
 - Create job opportunities for at least 30% of the youth in agricultural value chains.
 - Preferential entry & participation by women and youth in profitable and attractive agribusiness
5. **Commitment to Boosting Intra-African Trade in Agricultural Commodities and services**
 - Triple intra-Africa trade in agricultural commodities
 - Fast track continental free trade area & transition to a continental Common External tariff scheme.
6. **Commitment to Enhancing Resilience in livelihoods & production systems to climate variability and other shocks**
7. **Commitment to Mutual Accountability to Actions and Results**

These commitments and targets were approved by the Heads of State and Government of the African Union, in their Assembly in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, 26 - 27 June 2014

Challenges

- Inadequacy of Resources to support farmers especially women farmers
- Political instability- they had three elections in one term
- Failure to retain coordinators due to short term job contracts delayed activities (*Internal challenge of ESAFF Lesotho*)
- Reluctance of government officials on engaging and assisting farmers (i.e. no trainer on Malabo declaration)
- Underfunded activities (*Internal challenge of ESAFF Lesotho*)

Deliberations and clarifications

The Lesotho CAADP Focal point noted that there is still a need to improve on the government and farming community in terms of communication so that there be no grey areas left out while. In terms of market the farmers were advised that the Lesotho government doesn't support at the ends of the value chain but starts the work initially and work the way up. A mention was made of a department that deals directly with marketing that the farmers should consult with when doing their planning. In terms of information access, government official need to get authorized before they can share it thus we must.

Farmers were further advised that Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) is just that an understanding and is a gentlemen agreement. We need to check the legal state of that if whether it is legally binding especially when dealing with issues of market access. The farmers were further encouraged to do a market driven production and to explore value addition or to play a role in the next stage of the value chain.

Way forward

- Farmers must monitor projects closely at district level and build rapport with local government officials. It was informed also that the budgeting processes in Lesotho are done at ministerial level.

- Farmers need to be organised to participate effectively

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CAADP FOCAL PERSONS

Presentations and Discussions on the

National Agriculture Food and Nutrition Security Programs (NAFSPs) performance against the 7 Malabo Declaration Goals and Biennial Reporting

5 Country presentation on National Agriculture Food and Nutrition Security Programs (NAFSPs) performance against the 7 Malabo Declaration Goals and Biennial Reporting.

The session was composed of presentation by CAADP focal points on the achievements of the country towards reaching the 7 Malabo goals in Lesotho.

Lesotho and Malabo Implementation – by CAADP Focal Point Lesotho Me Mathoriso Molumeli

Reporting of the Lesotho CAADP process and inclusion of non-state actors, the CAADP team was not meeting and at the point where it met it was like an Agriculture Ministerial meeting. The turnover that occurred over the year affected the performance of the team. This affected a lot of things and in a way stalled the CAADP process in Lesotho. However, recently it was reported that CAADP team in Lesotho have started working again and is making consultation with other institutions.



Mrs Molumeli, Ministry of Agriculture Lesotho

The budget in Lesotho comprises only of the ministry of agriculture (only government money) it grew from 3.4% in 2015 to 3.8% in 2016. But nowadays we are struggling with money/the budget. The presentations revealed that there was no statistical data on participation of men and women in agriculture CAADP processes in Lesotho. Statistic however shows that 1.17 million people are documented as the total number of individuals participating in agriculture sector. The data was not dissected in terms of gender. The estimate revenues and the actual ones are not as per the requirements of what is needed to report on CAADP. In Lesotho stunting was reported to be at 42.7% (Malabo goal is 10%). Minimum acceptance diet is at 5% rather than 20 % of Malabo. Data on PHL is not corrected. The country faces serious challenges in terms of data collection. Through the leadership of the PMs Office a diagnostic study on zero hunger was conducted as well as a diagnostic study on policies and budget participation.

Presentations and Discussions on the National Agriculture Budget Priorities for the year 2018 and main beneficiaries

The presentations were done by the CAADP Focal Person.

5.1 Lesotho 2018/19 budget priorities

The CAADP Focal Point of Lesotho, Me Mathoriso Molumeli made highlights of some of the challenges that the country CAADP team encountering. She said by December 2018, Lesotho is in the process of finalising the ministerial budget to submit to finance department on the 8th of December 2017. The budget was said to have ceilings that normally fall below the ministry targets and this constrains its programmes. Also, the wage bills in Lesotho are said to be even higher than that of many developed countries. The government is now forced to prioritize the spending because of the ceilings. The main challenge is that of top down approach being used in developing projects.

She then said that farmers are not part of the budgeting process and it is done by government officials. This might be the issue because the country was still in the process of decentralization. During budget presentations by the ministry of finance CSOs are normally present. She then went on to outline some of the weaknesses in the government system when coming to agriculture.

Areas for improvement

- There is no categorisation of farmers, the farming community of Lesotho is still generalized as small-scale farmers.
- Market access: parliament issued a directive for Government MKT institutions to buy local produce first. Under school feeding programme they also follow the same directive,
- Farmers in Lesotho are, at all levels involved in the development of policies and strategies. But, lately because of budget constraints the ministry had to scale down on number of participants in stakeholder consultation.
- The budget has increased a lot in terms of government projects, and as officials have anticipated challenges in the aspect of capacity which makes the performance not to look very impressive.

The presentation from the 3 CAADP Focal Points of Lesotho, Swaziland and South Africa were followed by a session of deliberations.

Deliberations on Lesotho



From the deliberations, the Lesotho CAADP Focal Point said that the government may have had a caucus on the main contributors of the economy and priorities of the budget will be made based on the contribution of the sector to the economy. It was added that what farmers need to do is invest more towards increasing performance of the sector to trigger budget

increase. It was agreed that farmers together with the government need to come up with activities that will promote better performance of the sector. The priorities are also led by forums such as ESAFF Lesotho, and ESAFF must continue to advocate for this when engaging with officials from the different levels of government.

Country group discussions, Way forward and Action plans

What can we do to improve agriculture budget priorities and expenditure in LSS countries from 2018/19 onwards.

After country group work, farmers with the CAADP focal person had discussion on what should be done to improve agriculture budget plans, budget and expenditure from 2018/19 onwards. The following are the action plans agreed:

- Farmers to be engaged in priority setting at national ministerial level as well as district level through various fora,
- Access to the finance/budget books once they are published
- Buy audit books
- Farmers should organised well,
- Work closely with DPE forum and other NGOs.



6. Conclusion

In conclusion, the small-scale farmers were urged to be proactive and continue to make the government accountable. Farmers were encouraged to work harder to contribute to the growth of the economy make relationships with the governments, work hard to build those relationships. It was added they must not work in isolation and must organise so that the government can take them serious. The CAADP Focal Points were humbled by the value that ESAFF see in them as country CAADP FP and they further added that if ESAFF and SAT continue with such forums then a lot will be learnt and a lot will come out. Lastly the farmers were hinted with the saying that *“You cannot change the way government work, but rather know how it works to influence it.* Government officials must not get tired of CAADP, what we must know is that change takes time”. ESAFF Regional was once more commended by the small-scale farmers and CAADP FP on the exemplary leadership to its country members, and urged to continue to nurture the growth of its country members.