



# Governments can make the 2014 Malabo Declaration work for Small-scale Farmers and Agroecology

The East African Community (EAC) countries' combined population is expected to reach over 450 million by 2050, with the majority of those still being young. Over 85% of women who work in the EAC's agriculture sector, which is primarily subsistence farming, make up over 76% of the region's total workforce. The sector also contributes significantly to the national economies of the countries in the region.

The Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods was adopted by the African Union Assembly Heads of State and Government in June 2014 and provides the direction for Africa's agricultural transformation for the years 2015 to 2025, within the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), as a means to help achieve the goals. On the other hand, ensuring that effective governance structures and corresponding policies are in place at all levels is one of the crucial requirements placed on the agriculture sector. African governments recommitted to the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme's (CAADP) target to invest at least 10% of their budgets to agriculture in order to support an average agricultural productivity growth of 6% yearly under the 2014 Malabo Declaration of the African Union.

The commitments made in the Malabo Declaration are a focused strategy for realising the agricultural vision for the continent and inspiring increased action for equitable agricultural growth, enhanced smallholder livelihoods, and the eradication of hunger. Since agricultural development is seen as a key pillar in achieving about 9 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including Ending Poverty, Zero Hunger, Quality Education, Gender Equality, Clean Water and Sanitation, Affordable and Clean Energy, Decent Work and Economic Growth, Responsible Consumption and Production, Climate Action, and Life on Land, government investment in the agricultural sector can not only address hunger and malnutrition but also other challenges.

The seven Malabo Commitments include Re-committing to the principles and values of the CAADP process; Enhancing investment finance in agriculture; Ending hunger in Africa by 2025; Reducing poverty by half, by 2025 through inclusive agricultural growth and transformation; Boosting intra-African trade in agricultural commodities and services; Enhancing resilience of livelihoods and production systems to climate variability and other related risks; and Strengthening mutual accountability to actions and results.



## Drastic actions need to be taken by governments to achieve the Malabo Declaration, some key actions include;

1. Speedily and progressively implement Malabo Declaration and make it mandatory (legal requirement) to allocate not less than 10 percent of national budget to agriculture sector and operationalise Agriculture Investment Banks; Commit to end hunger and malnutrition by doubling productivity and reduction of post-harvest loss; Commit to reduce poverty by half by sustaining annual agriculture growth by at least 6% and create job opportunities to at least 30% of the youth in agriculture. Also the budget should commit to enhance resilience in livelihood and production among small-scale producers in the advent of climate variability and other shocks.

2. Assure that the 10% funding goes towards sustainable agroecological agriculture, which promotes organic fertilisers, pest and vector control, access to quality extension services, responsive research, appropriate technology, and fair markets. It

should also protect and preserve local seeds, preserve biodiversity, soil, water, and living organisms.

3. Make sure that 10% of the agriculture budget in each EAC state is distributed in a just and fair manner to support small-scale farmers, particularly young people and women at the local level.

4. Ensure that each EAC state establishes and operationalizes national and regional venues for increasing mutual accountability for actions and outcomes, where all parties will routinely assess plans and execution of the EALA Zanzibar Resolution of 2016 and the Malabo Declaration of 2014.

5. Agricultural research and extension can have huge financial returns and so have a big impact on food security. The growth and expansion of technologies and innovations, integrated capacity building, knowledge

management, and gender mainstreaming should be the government's key priorities. Improving policy and institutional frameworks and integrating agricultural research and extension policies into national multisectoral integrated food security frameworks in order to improve formal and informal connections between researchers, extension agents, and farmers.

6. Improve access to financing, high-quality inputs, and enhanced technologies, for instance, to strengthen sustainable intensification on small-scale farms. Small-scale farmers are especially vulnerable to risk and the unfavourable effects of nations' lack of commitment and support.

7. The Biennial Review (BR) process should incite urgent policy discussions about how to fund and develop capacity for action throughout the region.

In order to accelerate the pace of progress and ensure that agriculture contributes to the goals and targets set by the Heads of State and Government by 2025, there is a need for everyone to work together to maintain the momentum. Deeper and more audacious initiatives must be taken.

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