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Towards a common agricultural policy in Africa?

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Abstract: The paper analyses the structure and level of international cooperation among African states in the area of agriculture and rural development. It focuses on the African Union (AU) and its eight Regional Economic Communities. The international cooperation schemes between the World Bank, EU, FAO and African countries in agricultural policy are reviewed. The paper concludes that, despite numerous cross-border initiatives, governance of agricultural policies in the pan-African context remains fragmented. Policy-making and cooperation schemes need to be stepped up to address continent-wide challenges in the sector. There is an urgent need for the AU and the EU to intensify their cooperation in agricultural policies and development. The AU in collaboration with its regional bodies should establish a common agricultural policy for the continent. Such initiatives need to be Africa-driven and adapted to African needs. The EU should only provide technical know-how and institutional support if welcomed by African partners. Collective action towards rural areas via greater coordination of African agricultural policies and actions would help to develop the missing institutional framework needed for agricultural development in the continent. Fostering economic growth through agricultural development and reforms may also lead to a reduction of migration as witnessed by the EU in the sixties.

Keywords: agriculture, cooperation, EU, integration, policy, programme

Africa is a continent that is full of potential. With its vast population and natural resources, it has the potential to become one of the global centres of economic growth. Notwithstanding, Africa is still struggling to cope with multiple hurdles which are blocking its optimal development. Focusing on agricultural and rural development may help the continent overcome those challenges. If sound policies are made and implemented, agriculture may sustainably serve as a neutral sector for providing growth and jobs (Damme et al. 2013), and it is interlinked with other sustainability issues such as water, soil and ecosystem quality. Indeed, agricultural policy is a fundamental component of policy design: it can interfere with the poverty trap. On the governance side, since the period of decolonization, Pan-Africanism, and regional cooperation have been seen as one of the most important instruments to promote economic growth and development in Africa. Despite having set-up regional organizations since the 1960s, African regional integration is still in its infant stages. The overlapping framework of regional organizations has hindered the continent's ability to pool resources and integrate into the global economy. Also, African heads of state ambiguous commitments towards relinquishing their national prerogatives partly explain the continent's difficulties in setting up coordinated policies. This may have had an impact on the continent-wide and internationally supported agricultural policy and food security programmes in Africa.

Several studies have analysed international cooperation schemes in Africa (Hettne et al. 1999; Brautigam and Ekman 2012). For instance, three types of cooperation have been identified in the continent: market integration via the African Union (AU), region-boosting regionalism in the form of sub-continental regional cooperation and shadow regionalism of informal or semi-formal cross-border collaboration of public and/or private actors (Söderbaum 2015). Some researchers also point out that the European Union (EU) has been used as a role model for international cooperation in Africa (Hettne et al. 1999; Farrell 2005; Rosamond 2005). This is due to the common history, geographical proximity and economic and trade links (European

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Commission 2004). However, researchers believe that there is a gap between the rhetoric of integration and the concrete implementation of these agreements (Söderbaum 2015). Many of the regional cooperation commitments in Africa are not followed through. Civil society in Africa is yet another factor which is interplaying with official cross-border cooperation. In some cases, these organizations push for and promote integration while in other cases, they are radically opposed to any formal way of collaboration.

The first objective of this paper is to analyse the different institutional arrangements taken by African countries to coordinate their agricultural policies. The analysis will provide the understanding of international organizations that are currently in place, their roles in agricultural policy coordination and achievements made so far. The second part of the paper aims to formulate policy recommendations for a more integrated approach to agricultural policy coordination. The idea put forward is to explore the possibility of an institutional know-how transfer from the EU to the African situation. The paper also describes the preconditions needed to impulse agricultural integration and provides advice on the most important aspects of policy design and its implementation by African decision makers.

EXISTING SUPRANATIONAL STRUCTURES: AGRICULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

Several initiatives have taken place over the years to promote African integration (Table 1). At the continental level, the AU is in charge of coordinating regional cooperation and integration amongst the African States. Despite the AU's ambitious mandate, the organization still experience challenges and obstacles to its functioning. This has resulted in the organization experiencing several institutional and capability challenges when trying to foster coordination amongst the member states. The continent complex network of regional organizations may also have slowed down cooperation processes.

The African Union (AU)

The AU was established in 1999 and launched in 2002. The organization acts as the successor to the Organization of African Unity (OAU). While the former OAU's objective was to eradicate any form of colonialism, the AU has been tasked with accelerating African regional integration. Therefore, the objectives set in the Constitutive Act of the AU were very strong. The AU is seen as the guarantor of peace, security,

Table 1. Key dates in the history of the African integration process

Date	Event
1963	Creation of the Organization of African Unity (OAU)
1975	Creation of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)
1980	Creation of the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC)
1980	Lagos Action Plan was drawn
1981	Development of a Preferential Trade Area (PTA)
1983	Creation of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS)
1985	Western Sahara admitted in the OAU
1986	Creation of the Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development (IGADD)
1989	Creation of the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU)
1991	African Economic Community (AEC) created by the Abuja Treaty
1992	SADCC becomes Southern African Development Community (SADC)
1994	Common Market for East and Southern Africa (COMESA) replaces PTA
1996	The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) replaces the IGADD
1998	Creation of the Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD)
1999	Creation of the East African Community (EAC)
2001	Adoption of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)
2002	African Union formally replaced the OAU
2003	African Peer Review Mechanism was founded
2004	The Pan-African Parliament was inaugurated
2008	COMESA, EAC and SADC agreed to form and Grant Free Trade area
2012	The AU decided on the development of a Pan-Africa Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA) by 2017

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Table 2. State of integration at the African Union's (AU) level

Objectives set within the Abuja Treaty		At the AU level (continental level)	Completion date under the Abuja Treaty
4th Stage	Continental Customs Union	not achieved	2019
5th Stage	Continental Common Market	not achieved	2023
6th Stage	Continental Economic and Monetary Union	not achieved	2028

Source: UNECA (2013)

stability, democracy, popular participation and good governance (Art 3). Most importantly the AU referred to the 1991 Treaty of Abuja, which sought out to establish an African Economic Community (AEC) and a single continental market by 2028 (Table 2).

The organization's institutional framework is inspired by the EU, most notably the establishment of an African Union Commission, a Pan-African Parliament, an Economic, Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOC), an Assembly of Heads of State and Government, and an Executive Council. However, contrary to the EU, the AU is, for the most part, an intergovernmental institution as the constitutive act did not put in place supra-national institutions. All AU bodies showcase members of government except for the AU Commission, which acts mainly as the secretariat of the organization. Since the creation of the AU, the primacy rules over national legislation has never been established. This has undermined the AU's position and made it difficult to enforce its policies (Flaesch-Mougin and Lebullenger 2010). Many critics have underlined that despite the organization's efforts, the AU's track record remains disappointing, especially in the field of human rights and democracy (Aljazeera 2010). The AU's weak capability to fostering change can be seen in its catastrophic handling of the Ebola crisis or its passivity in relation to the fight against Boko Haram (Aljazeera 2015).

The AU also experiences many challenges concerning its financial independence. Historically, the OAU and the AU have largely been financed by foreign donors. This is due to African member states' intermittent budgetary commitments towards the organization (Lawson 2009). At present, AU members only finance 28% of the organization's half-billion-dollar operating budget. Also, more than 750 million dollars are also provided by the EU, the USA, World Bank, China and Turkey for peacekeeping operations. This situation has often compromised the organization's independence towards the international community and weakened its reactivity as the AU tended to wait for the reception of foreign funds before engaging actions. Furthermore, many of the milestones expected to be achieved under the AEC are yet to be reached, and some doubts have been shed on the AU's ability to remain within schedule (Samatar 2013). Criticism has also been widespread with regards to the organization's ability to solve food security issues on the continent (The Economist 2015).

Nevertheless, the AU did make some progress in implementing ambitious policy programmes such as NEPAD adopted in 2001. This scheme was created by the AU to promote economic cooperation between African countries and solve Africa's major challenges in the field of development. It is the result of a merger between two previous development programmes: the Millennium Partnership for Africa's Recovery Programme (MAP) and the Omega Plan developed previously under the OAU. The NEPAD's primary objectives include eradicating poverty, promoting sustainable growth and empowering women to help Africa reach its Millennium Development Goals. To achieve this, six priority areas has been set up: agriculture and food security; climate change and natural resource management; regional integration and infrastructure; human development; economic and corporate governance; and cross-cutting issues, including ICT, capacity development and gender.

With regards to agriculture and food security, NEPAD focuses on agriculture-led development as the main way to help African countries improve their economic growth and reduce poverty. This is done by improving market access, financial and technical support to smallholder farmers. NEPAD objectives in agriculture and food security are coordinated through the Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP). The CAADP focuses on improving coordination processes amongst stakeholders, promoting shared knowledge and reflecting on past successes and failures. The CAADP scheme is composed of four pillars which strive to foster progress in agriculture through various measures, most notably the improvement of land management, water control systems, infrastructure and research and technology transfer. As part of the CAADP, the AU members agreed to raise agricultural production by at least 6% annually and increase public investment in agriculture by 10% of their national budget annually. These objectives are seen as a major step towards

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boosting agricultural development, and are used as indicators to measure NEPAD's success.

On the ground, the advancement of objectives and processes set under the CAADP is monitored through the Strategic Analysis and Knowledge Support Systems (SAKSS). The SAKSS was created by the International Food Policy Research Institute to support the implementation of the CAADP and improve project management. Indeed, the SAKSS's overhead objective is to help Regional Economic Communities (RECs) track the advancement of the CAADP and NEPAD by facilitating the access by RECs and their member states to make sound policies. By putting in place a regional SAKSS (ReSAKSS), a RECs can also track progress, document success and derive lessons that can feed into the review and learn processes associated with the implementation of the CAADP agenda.

Overall, projects organized through NEPAD have been seen through a positive light and received positive feedback from the international community. Indeed, NEPAD is the first comprehensive development approach initiated, implemented and owned solely by African governments. At the time of its establishment, this new programme was considered an important step forward in the development of African regional integration. Africa's economic performance when NEPAD was introduced (2000–2009) was significantly better than in the decade before its inception (1990–1999). As for the objectives related to agriculture, significant progress was also achieved. Indeed, by 2011, ten African countries had reached the 10% target budget allocation to agriculture as stipulated in CAADP, and nine countries achieved the target average annual growth rate of agricultural output of at least 6% (UNCTAD 2012). NEPAD has also taken measures to provide infrastructure, which is the key to agricultural development. This was done in 2010 when the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (IDA) was launched in Kampala. This programme lays the foundation for higher agricultural productivity in the region.

Similarly, countries that have agreed to implement NEPAD seem to have improved their economic indicators. However, agricultural policies implemented through the CAADP and NEPAD remain dependent on governments' or foreign countries' goodwill to provide funding which may lead to an adverse effect on the AU's ability to implement tough but necessary structural reforms in agriculture. Some regional organization such as ECOWAS have been more successful implemented by CAADP policies as they benefit from stronger cooperation structures (UNCTAD 2012). As such the level of integration and agricultural policy cooperation varies across the continent depending on the governments' political will and capabilities to implement necessary reforms. This might end up damaging the overall success of NEPAD and CAADP policies as lack of coordination may delay the global economic integration in the continent. Therefore, robust reforms and greater coordination amongst

Table 3. The eight Regional Economic Communities (RECs) parts of the AU and their respective member states

Name of the REC	Abbreviation	Member states
Arab Magreb Union	(AMU)	Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Tunisia
Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa	(COMESA)	Burundi, Comoros, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Rwanda, Seychelles, Sudan, Swaziland, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe
Community of Sahel-Saharan States	(CEN-SAD)	Benin, Burkina-Faso, Central African Republic, Chad, Ivory Coast, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Gambia, Libya, Mali, Morocco, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Somalia, Sudan, Togo, Tunisia, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Ghana, Sierra Leone, Comoros, Guinea, Kenya, Mauritania, Sao Tome and Principe
Economic Community of Central African States	(ECCAS)	Angola, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, DR Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Sao Tome and Principe
Economic Community of West African States	(ECOWAS)	Benin, Burkina-Faso, Cape Verde, Ivory Coast, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo
Inter-Governmental Authority on Development	(IGAD)	Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, Uganda, Tanzania
Southern African Development Community	(SADC)	Angola, Botswana, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe
East African Community	(EAC)	Burundi, Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Tanzania, South Sudan

Source: RECs website

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Table 4. Levels of integration in Regional Economic Communities (RECs) of the African Union

Stages of economic integration	AMU	COMESA	CEN-SAD	ECCAS	ECOWAS	IGAD	SADC	EAC
Free Trade Area	no	yes	ongoing	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Customs Union	no	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Common Market	no	ongoing	no	ongoing	yes	no	yes	yes
Monetary Union	no	by 2015	no	no	yes	no	by 2015	ongoing
Economic Union	no	ongoing	no	no	yes	no	by 2015	by 2015
Economic and Monetary Union	no	by 2018	no	no	ongoing	no	by 2016	no
Overall progress	no progress	in progress	no progress	no progress	in progress	no progress	in progress	in progress

For abbreviations' explanation see Table 1

Source: UNECA (2013), AU

African countries are needed to ensure that all the countries in the continent achieve food security.

Regional Economic Communities (RECs) in Africa

At the regional level, the AU recognizes eight economic communities as being part of the African Economic Community (AEC) (Table 3). However, levels of integration across these RECs varies immensely (Table 4). Some regional organizations focus more on specific policy areas while others adopt a global approach to trade liberalization. Some organizations are very active while others are nearly dormant. For instance, African leaders have recently decided to set up a free trade zone (The Tripartite Free Trade Area) which will comprise the Southern African Development Community (SADC); the East African Community (EAC) and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA). While this is a great achievement, it is also a perfect example of differentiated integration as some African member states are not yet able to participate in this free trade zone. There is also much debate between the RECs and the AU regarding the process of integration. A few RECs favour a bottom-up approach to integration, which would give priority to integration within the sub-regions before undergoing harmonization of the different RECs; while others would prefer a top-down approach to integration with the AU leading the way towards RECs' harmonization (Flaesch-Mougin and Lebullenger 2010).

The current framework has therefore resulted in a patchwork of the organization all with different scopes and mandates. Levels of economic integration also vary across different RECs depending on the region's economic situation and the political will of governments (Table 4). Indeed, it is common practice for national governments to belong to multiple and overlapping regional organizations. This fact partly explains the complexity of the current economic integration framework. Out of 54 member states, 33 belong to 2 RECs and 16 to 3 REC (Table 5). Only 3 member states out of the entire continent have chosen only to pertain to

Table 5. Number of countries belonging to one or more Regional Economic Communities (RECs)

	Member countries	Total
1 REC	Algeria, Cape Verde, Mozambique	3
2 RECs	Angola, Botswana, Burkina-Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, Tunisia, Zambia, Zimbabwe	33
3 RECs	Libya, Benin, Burundi, Central African Republic, DR Congo, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ivory Coast, Mali, Niger, Senegal, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda	16
4 RECs	Kenya	1

Source: Own analysis based on REC

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one regional organization. As a result, the implementation of agricultural cooperation policies suffers from a lack of coordination with regions more advanced than others in achieving the objectives set out under the CAADP. The list below summarizes RECs' current advancement regarding regional integration as well as their level of agricultural policy cooperation.

a) The Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD)

The CEN-SAD is a regional organization that was founded in 1998, as has brought together 28 African countries so far. The organization acts as a forum to conduct intergovernmental negotiations, create free trade zone and Common Market for agrarian products. While the integration process within the CEN-SAD is rather slow (the region has not implemented a Customs Union), the REC makes up a large proportion of Africa's economy as it represents 52.4% of the continent's total GDP. Presently, CEN-SAD has not yet implemented a common agricultural policy, nor has it launched the CAADP implementation process at the regional level. Nonetheless, many countries within CEN-SAD (except for Tunisia and Morocco) have individually launched CAADP implementation plans.

b) The Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA)

The organization was established in 1994 to replace the Preferential Trade Agreement for Eastern and Southern Africa (PTA) set up in 1981. The COMESA has 19 member states and is one of the most active economic organizations in Africa. Its mission is to achieve sustainable socioeconomic progress through increased co-operation and integration in all fields of development, particularly in trade, customs and monetary affairs, transport, agriculture, environment and natural resources. The organization is one of the most accomplished regarding regional integration. Similarly, the union established a Free Trade Area in 2000 and Customs Union in 2009.

With regards to agriculture, the COMESA already launched a Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). The region has also made significant progress in the CAADP implementation at the country and regional levels. COMESA has developed a Regional Strategic Analysis and Knowledge Support Systems to inform and guide the CAADP Implementation Process (SAKSS). Also, all COMESA member countries have launched the CAADP process. In the same spirit, eleven nations have held a roundtable and signed a CAADP compact. Similarly, Malawi, Rwanda, and Uganda have established a country SAKSS.

c) East African Community (EAC)

The organization was founded in 1989 and has six members. The REC represents a relatively small proportion of Africa's economy as it accounts for only about 7.4% of total the continent's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Nevertheless, the EAC organization is the most integrated regarding economic cooperation. It has established a Free Trade Area, a Customs Union, and a Common Market. Negotiations for the establishment of the East African Monetary Union began in 2011 with the objective of establishing an African Federation. Agriculture is one of the most key sectors in East African regions, with about 80% of the inhabitants of the States in the region living in the countryside and heavily rely on agriculture for their livelihood. Taking this into account, the organization has developed the East African Community Agriculture and Rural Development Policy (EAC-ARDP) which strives to enable the region to achieve food security and rational and sustainable agricultural production. The EAC has not yet launched the CAADP process at the regional level. However, all countries within EAC have made exceptional progress in CAADP implementation and have signed the CAADP compact. Rwanda and Uganda have also established a country SAKSS (ReSAKSS 2016).

d) Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS)

Ten member states created the ECCAS in 1983 with the objective of creating a Common Market for the Central African States. Compared to the other seven RECs, the ECCAS makes up a relatively small proportion of Africa's economy as like the EAC; it accounts only for 8.7% of the continent's total Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Current military and civil conflicts in the region have undermined the ECCAS' ability to exploit its potential and delayed regional integration processes. While the REC has set up a Free Trade Area and a Customs Union, there has been no progress in the development of an economic and monetary union. Cooperation in the field of agriculture is nascent, and EECAS members just agreed in October 2014 to create a Common Agricultural Policy. Regarding the CAADP process, the ECCAS has not implemented the framework at the regional level. However, some countries at the national level have made significant progress in CAADP implementation. All countries within the REC, except Equatorial Guinea, have launched the CAADP process and four countries, have held a roundtable and signed the CAADP compact (ReSAKSS 2016).

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e) Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)

ECOWAS was created in 1975 and currently has 15 member states. The main objective of the community is to raise the living standard of its people, maintain and increase economic stability strengthen relations among the member states. Agriculture plays a key role in the region's economy. The organization accounts for 18.4% of the continent's GDP and a significant amount of its agricultural exports (36.4% of total agricultural GDP for 2003–2011). In 2005 member states adopted a regional agricultural policy the ECOWAP aimed at establishing a modern and sustainable agriculture based on effective and efficient smallholder farms and the promotion of agrarian businesses via the involvement of the private sector. ECOWAS has been very active in the field of regional integration. The organization possesses a Free Trade Area, a Customs Union and is on its way to establishing a common economic and monetary union. At the regional level, ECOWAS has not only signed a regional CAADP compact but also established a regional SAKSS and developed investment plans. Similarly, all ECOWAS members have signed the CAADP compact and developed investment plans (ReSAKSS 2016).

f) Southern African Development Community (SADC)

The 15 member organization was established in 1992 and accounts for 29.1% of Africa's GDP and 15% of its agricultural GDP. The SADC's objective is to promote sustainable and equitable economic growth and socioeconomic development through efficient, productive systems, deeper co-operation and integration, good governance and durable peace and security. The organization has established a Free Trade Area, Common Market and taken steps to establish a Common Market and an Economic and Monetary Union by 2015 and 2016 respectively. In 2013, the organization established the Southern African Development Community Regional Agricultural Policy, which aim is to contribute to the sustainable agricultural growth and socioeconomic development. The SADC has not yet launched the CAADP process, but has established a regional SAKSS. At the country level, all countries except for Botswana, have launched the CAADP process. Seven countries have signed the CAADP compact, and three countries have developed an investment plan (ReSAKSS 2016).

g) Arab Maghreb Union (AMU)

The 5 member organizations aim to safeguard the region's economic interests, promote economic and cultural cooperation, among North African states. The AMU is one of the least integrated RECs on the continent as it has not yet established a Free Trade Area nor a Customs Union. Within the organization, many negotiations are held back due to the issue of Western Sahara, which Morocco does not recognize as a legitimate state. For instance, the AMU has not yet launched the CAADP process, and many of its members have been relatively slow in implementing the CAADP. At the national level, Mauritania is the only country within the AMU to have held a CAADP roundtable and signed the compact. No countries within the AMU have established a country SAKSS (ReSAKSS 2016).

In summary, the integration process in Africa is an unfinished process. Despite recent initiatives taken by the AU to promote integration, progress made in this field has remained weak. This can be seen by looking at the levels of intra-African trade amongst the major RECs. Over the last ten years, intra-African trade has remained relatively low (12%) compared to other geographic areas (60% for Europe, 40% for North America, and 30% for Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)) (UNECA 2013). This is mainly due to structural impediments linked to the nature of African markets. Indeed, lack of product diversification and low trade complementarity between African countries are the main obstacles to achieving free trade in the continent (African Development Bank 2016). Also, there remains high trading cost for operators conducting business across the African member states. This is due to the taxes and duties that are frequently levied on foreign goods. Other constraints to trade include 'border red tapes' such as the lengthy periods to receive

Table 6. Number of Regional Economic Communities (RECs) having developed a regionalized agrarian policy

REC	Common Agricultural Policy (Y/N)	Date of creation of the policy
AMU	no	
CEN-SAD	no	
ECOWAS	yes (ECOWAP)	2005
ECCAS	No	
COMESA	yes (CAP)	2002
EAC	no	
IGAD	no	
SADC	yes (RAP)	2013

For abbreviations' explanation see Table 1

Source: RECs' websites

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trade approvals, strict licensing requirements for cross national boundaries, and unnecessary controls and road blocks (Rakotoarisoa 2011). While the AU has given more visibility to the continent on the global scene, it has not managed to impose a continent-wide consensus in economic integration. Some RECs remain more advanced than others in this area, and there are discrepancies in the way the integration process at the regional levels. Concerning the agricultural integration levels remains highly differentiated with only ECOWAS, SADC and COMESA set up common agricultural policies at the regional level[1] (Table 6).

Furthermore, each of these policies are at different stages of development as they have different objectives and have not been put in place at the same time (this applies in particular to the regional Agricultural Policy (RAP) set up by the SADC as it has just been put in place recently). Many critics have underlined that, much like the current REC framework, these differentiated states of agricultural integration may lead to a patchwork of policies which will be tough to integrate at the continental level to establish a continental agricultural policy (Engel and Jouanjean 2013). Furthermore, the lack of information regarding the concrete measures implemented as part of those regional agricultural policies make it hard to predict their level of efficiency. There is next to no data on the benefits derived from these new policies and their effect on the market.

Another obstacle which slows down the African integration process is that many African countries are still very reluctant to let go of taxes and duties as they fear to lose the revenues derived from these measures, and to protect some '*sensitive products*'. This may be because *'sensitive products'* have high tariff revenues or have a significant socioeconomic or political importance for their countries. Sadly, there seems to be little momentum and guidance given by the AU in these matters. This can partly be explained by the intergovernmental functioning of the Union and the climate of general distrust amongst African leaders, which complicates the AU's role as a promoter of economic integration.

COOPERATION BETWEEN THE EU AND AFRICA

Africa and the EU share a long history of cooperation and interaction in the field of political, economic, social and cultural policies. The EU has been a major provider of development aid to Africa in recent years. The EU's Official Development Assistance (ODA) to Africa carried out under the European Development Fund (EDF) and the EU Budget indicates that Africa is the EU's most important continent for development support. For instance, between 2007 and 2013, the EU member states' ODA to Africa was estimated about €141 billion. Similarly, the EU released over €3.5 billion for food security in Africa between 2007 and 2014. Even though the EU ODA to Africa for the period 2014–2020 declined to about €31 billion, the amount is substantial to make a difference regarding development. The ODA is focused on governance and human rights (27%); human development (21%); and food and nutrition security and sustainable agriculture (13%) during the programming period (Africa-EU Partnership 2016).

Also, due to their colonial history, many African countries still showcase strong ties with some EU member states. However, the increasing economic and political globalization has presented new challenges for both regions and calls for a renewed approach to cooperation. Consequently, relations between the two continents are gradually being deepened and re-evaluated to face the challenges ahead. This partly led to the first EU-Africa Summit, held in Cairo in April 2000. The summit gave a new dimension to the African-EU partnership and established an institutional framework for political dialogue between the two regions. The Cairo summit also aimed at promoting a constructive dialogue on socioeconomic and development issues. It most notably resulted in the adoption of the Cairo Declaration where both the EU and the African continent agreed to work on their converging interests. With regards to food security issues, both parties agreed that agricultural development is the key to poverty reduction and economic growth. Also, all parties agreed on policies to tackle the root drivers of migration in countries of origin, transit and the destination.

Seven years later, the EU and the African states adopted a Joint Africa-EU Strategy at the second EU-Africa Summit held in Lisbon, in December 2007. This event radically changed the nature of the relationship between the EU and Africa. Diplomatic relations were taken to the next level with both sides agreeing to move from a donor to a partnership relationship and setting up a long-term strategy to strengthen

[1]This is not to say that other Regional Economic Communities (RECs) are not working on issues related to agriculture but just that it is done at intergovernmental approach and not necessarily coordinated through the REC.

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EU-Africa relations. In the field of agriculture, the major developments consisted in a greater emphasis on enabling access for African farmers to international markets (particularly through educating farmers about Sanitary and Phytosanitary Standards) and promoting South-South trade as well as the reducing non-tariff barriers to trade. The Lisbon Summit also resulted in the establishment of a new EU-AU Partnership on agricultural development. This partnership was tasked with providing support to the objectives set out under NEPAD and the CAADP, notably through capacity-building. It also included a strong engagement of the EU in Africa's agricultural research programmes, such as the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA)[2].

With regards to migration, member states set out to implement the Declaration adopted in November 2006 at the Tripoli EU-Africa Ministerial Conference on Migration and Development. Both parties recognized the link between migration and development and agreed to help Africa build its capacity to manage migration better. The summit also addressed the need to combat irregular migration. In 2010, African and European Heads of State met again to adopt the second action plan for the Joint Africa-EU Strategy during the third EU-Africa Summit in Tripoli. The action plan emphasized the importance of stronger cooperation between the private sector, the state, and other stakeholders. Objectives set under the second action plan in the field of agriculture and migration followed the guidelines laid down in the Joint Africa-EU Strategy but were much more precise than those set under the first Action Plan.

More recently, the fourth summit was held in 2014 in Brussels. During this summit, the EU and the Africa adopted a Roadmap for 2014–2017, which sets out the new objectives to implement the Joint EU-Africa Strategy. The main novelty for this summit was that the member states agreed that cooperation should become more and more result-oriented and that greater emphasis on setting up actions at the inter-regional, continental or even global level. In the field of agriculture, member states expanded their policies to include issues linked to food security and sustainable agriculture. With regards to immigration, member states adopted, during the summit, a Joint Declaration on Migration and Mobility and set up an Action Plan for the period 2014–2017. The member states emphasized on the need to combat illegal immigration and human trafficking and agreed to step up their efforts to reduce the costs of remittances. Better migration and mobility management were also a key focus to solve migratory issues between the two continents. Throughout the different summits, it is possible to see the gradual strengthening of the African-EU policy cooperation in the field of agriculture and migration. This might be partly as a result of setting up the AU, and the implementation of the NEPAD and CAADP have provided the continent with slightly centralized institutions that can facilitate interactions with global bodies, such as the EU.

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION SCHEMES FOR AGRICULTURE IN AFRICA

Historically, Africa has always been very reliant on foreign aid to implement structural reforms. Indeed, one-third of the world's aid commitments is targeted towards the continent. Despite the enormous amounts of foreign aid received, the continent has still been unable to implement the necessary reforms to improve its economic situation. Also, there has been many cases of foreign aid being used for things other than the intended purposes and partly ending up in the hands of corrupt officials (Akwagyiram 2013). Africa's dependency on global funds is seen as counterproductive. Many opponents to foreign aid have said that the current system pushed African nations into the culture of assistance and did not promote innovation (Damme et al. 2013) or the rise towards economic independence. It appears a broad range of foreign aid projects are short term to provide long-term solutions to Africa's deep structural problems.

The recent economic issues across the globe have led to profound changes in the distribution of foreign aid envelopes. Developed countries are increasingly cutting back on their commitments regarding aid payments in Africa. According to the OECD, in 2013 bilateral aid fell by 4% and 5.6% to Sub-Saharan Africa and Africa respectively (OECD 2014). This phenomenon underlines the growing need for African countries to improve the use of foreign funds. Assessing foreign aid effectiveness is, therefore, becoming a focal point to legitimize development policy, secure funding and guarantee future access

[2]FARA is an African continental organization responsible for coordinating and advocating for agricultural research for development within the African continent.

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Table 7. Agricultural programmes implemented by FAO

Programme	Date	Budget	Number of countries	Objectives
MAFAP	2009–	n.a	10 countries	creation of sustainable policy monitoring systems and evaluation
Assistance to NEPAD & the AU & CAADP	2006 – 2009	n.a	country-wide (except Morocco and Central African Republic)	strengthening the capacities of NEPAD & the AU concerning the implementation of CAADP & NEPAD
Assistance on implementation of CAADP Programmes	2008– 2010	n.a	country-wide (except Morocco and Central African Republic)	support & advice for CAADP implementation
Support in implementation of CAADP	2010– 2013	n.a	country-wide (except Morocco and Central African Republic)	reducing hunger and poverty in line with MDG1
FAPDA	2008– 2015	n.a	countrywide	capacity development of countries' policy monitoring and analysis as well as exchange of information

CAADP – Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme; FAPDA – The Food and Agriculture Policy Decision Analysis; MAFAP – Monitoring African Food and Agricultural Policies; NEPAD – New Partnership for Africa's Development

Source: FAPDA – The Food and Agriculture Policy Decision Analysis; FAO (2013)

to investments. Several global organizations are currently implementing development projects targeted towards improving African agricultural policies and critical infrastructures. While their intentions are laudable, the results often appear difficult to quantify. Lack of reporting, as well as unclear objectives with regard to the overall scope and integration of certain foreign programmes, make it difficult to assess. The activities of some of these organizations are summarized as follows:

FAO

The main agricultural development projects in Africa that have recently been developed by FAO is presented in Table 7. Out of the five programmes currently implemented by the FAO in Africa, four projects did not provide information on their state of advancement/implementation/completion. The amount of budget allocated to each of the five projects was also missing. As for the only project that

Table 8. Agricultural programmes implemented by the World Bank

Programme	Date	No. of countries	Budget (US$)	Objectives
Lending for Sub-Saharan Agriculture	...	47	$1 billion in 2010 + $300 million in 2013	reducing hunger, poverty and environmental degradation
WAAPP 1B	2010–2016	3	$119 million	accelerating adoption of technologies
WAAPP 1C	2010–2016	6	$83.6 million	accelerating adoption of technologies
WAAPP 2A	2011–2016	3	$51 million	accelerating adoption of technologies
APPSA	2013–2020	3	$94.6 million	increase availability of agricultural technologies in the SADC region
Nigeria*	June 2013– March 2015	Nigeria	$100 million	strengthen policy environment and institutional capacity to improve agricultural productivity and market access

Nigeria* – Agriculture Sector Development Policy Operation in Nigeria; SADC – Southern African Development Community WAAPP – programmes implemented by the World Bank aimed at increasing the availability and use of new agricultural technologies

Source: World Bank

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did provide information (MAFAP) the documentation available went into great detail summarising the key achievements reached by the programme and the factors that had an impact on the project's success or failure during the implementation place. MAFAP complied with the initial objectives set out by the FAO and suggested that the framework was effective in reaching its objectives (FAO 2013).

The World Bank (WB)

World Bank is another donor that provides funds for agricultural related activities in Africa. Table 8 presents an overview of recently funded projects by WB. Looking at the different programmes set out by the Bank it is possible to see that programmes with the same objective are not necessarily integrated into the same framework (Bookstein and Lawson 2002). For instance, WAAPP Programmes implemented by WB aimed at increasing the availability and use of new agricultural technologies. However, as they concern different countries, they are considered as three independent programmes. This may result in a lack of coordination of the initiatives, whereas significant synergies and economies of scale could be achieved through merging. Also, one may remark that objectives of different policy programmes often overlap. Differences in the budget also strike the eye with substantial disparities among various programmes. Nigeria alone received substantial amounts of money over a short period, compared to the other development programmes. Here again, there seems to be a lack of coherence in the different policies set out for the African continent.

The EU

Table 9 shows that the EU has been financing agricultural programmes in Africa in recent years. Nevertheless, assessing the outcome of agricultural programmes developed by the EU has been quite difficult. In most cases, the available documentation only provides general declarations of intentions with no indications as to how projects may be implemented on a concrete basis. Furthermore, in most of the programmes, no indicators have been previously established objectively to measure each country's progress and account for possible delays in project implementation. There seems to be no concrete global strategy for European investments with regards to development aid. The EU's programmes are not necessarily linked with one another, nor do they refer to a common political framework that would guide their implementation. Additional questions are also raised most notably regarding the interaction between EU projects and that of other international institutions.

By and large, global development aid projects are too dispersed to provide a global solution to developmental problems in Africa. Even at the international level, agricultural schemes are compartmentalized and lack a global vision. Many of them do not elaborate documentation which reflects on the mistakes or challenges encountered or the possible step forward. What is needed is a robust coordination of projects both at the national and international levels with concrete progress indicators and reporting obligations. This could increase existing synergies and lead to convergence of African economies. This also calls for deeper

Table 9. Agricultural programmes implemented by the EU

Programme	Date	No. of countries	Budget	Objectives
PAEPARD	2007–2017	Continent-wide	n/a	consolidate scientific and technical cooperation between Europe and Africa
JOLISAA	2010–2013	3 countries	€1,6 million	improve understanding of agricultural innovation focusing on smallholder farms
INSARD	2011–2013	3 countries	€0,5 million	facilitate NGO and small farmers organization's involvement in implementation of agricultural R&D
Pan-African Programme	2014–2020	Country-wide	€845 million	support to the Africa-EU Strategic Partnership

INSARD – Including Smallholders in Agricultural Research for Development; JOLISAA – Joint Learning in and about Innovation Systems in African Agriculture; PAEPARD – African-European Partnership on Agricultural Research for Development (coordinated by the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa)

Source: EU, PAEPARD, JOLISAA, INSARD

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cooperation amongst the African states themselves and between the African continent and international donors as well as the international community.

In conclusion, with regards to the international cooperation schemes for African agriculture, there is a multi-source financing of agricultural projects in place. They all aim at providing the added value and promoting the economic viability of the agricultural sector. However, they suffer from an isolated approach per donor and focusing on the particularities rafter than on a structural reply to developing agriculture and rural development policies.

POLICY RECOMMENDATION: TOWARDS CREATION OF THE COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY FOR AFRICA

The analysis of the regional cooperation at the Pan-African level (AU) and several regional sub-continental cooperation showed that despite useful structures being put in place, these institutions still experience difficulties in improving African agricultural outputs. Similarly, the analysis has shown that international cooperation schemes suffer from a lack of coordination and tend to focus on specific cases rather than on developing a general framework for cooperation in agriculture. This allows for the backlogging of Africa's production potential and compromises the sustainability of the African farming sector. Useful insight can be gained by looking at the history of the EU with regards to agricultural policy. Indeed, the European experience with the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) can be a source of policy inspiration to Africa. The CAP had two key impacts on the EU which may be relevant to the African case today. First, the policy was successful in reaching its Treaty objectives: achieving the food supply and improving farmers´ welfare.

At the end of the World War II, Western Europe, experienced challenges similar to those faced currently by the African continent. The conflict had crippled the agricultural production and food security could not be guaranteed. During that period, the European agricultural sector was vastly underdeveloped (low mechanization, weak yields, smallholder farming) and lagged behind the industrial sector (Tracy 1989). The CAP's initial objectives were aimed at increasing agricultural productivity, modernizing agricultural production, stabilizing market prices and supplies, improving farmers' standard of living and providing affordable food to European consumers. This was done, most notably through support high farm gate prices, combined with border protection measures and export support. Financial aid was also granted for the restructuring of farming so that production would be aligned with economic and social imperatives of the time. In retrospective achieving, an agreement on the CAP was no small feat considering the diversity of member states' agricultural infrastructures, legislations, and markets (Roederer-Rynning 2014). Nevertheless, the policy proved effective as the EU was able to attain its objective and reach self-sufficiency by the 1970s.

As earlier mentioned, the CAP was highly successful in increasing European agricultural output. Unfortunately, its initial success has brought about its attendant challenges (Fennell 1997). By the 1980s, the EU had to contend with almost constant surpluses of the main farm products. These measures had a high budgetary cost, distorted global market signals, and were unpopular among consumers and taxpayers. They also showed that a successful agricultural integration needed to take into account the more global political and economic context and better subsidy utilization.

The CAP reforms continued well into the 21st century; the objective now is to reduce financial support progressively and increase the competitiveness of the agricultural sector in the global markets (Burrell 2009). Despite its minimal mandate, the 2003 reform is one of the most extensive modifications of the CAP ever undertaken. The 2003 reform acted as a midterm review of the process engaged in 1999 and aimed further to enhance the competitiveness of the agricultural sector, promoting a market-oriented, sustainable agriculture and improving rural development policy and instruments. It was later followed by the 2008 Health Check of the CAP which attempted to simplify, streamline and modernize the CAP framework to grant more flexibility to farmers and help them better adapt to market signals and face new challenges such as climate change, water management, and bio-energy.

The latest development regarding reform occurred in 2013 through the greening of the CAP. This is to date, one of the most significant reforms ever performed and an important shift in previous CAP policies. The most important element of the new CAP is the «greening» payment, which means that 30% of direct income support for farmers will be given if they adhere to certain farming practices that are suitable for the environment. Throughout the European integration process, the CAP has been reformed and expanded to meet the needs and ob-

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jectives of the EU and the international market. This has not been a process without hurdles, but if anything, it showcases the benefits that can be derived from strengthening and deepening agricultural policy cooperation at the continental level. Drawing upon this history of the CAP, the paper draws some recommendations to be applied to the situation of African agricultural policies.

Taking into account the above analysis, the following policy recommendations can be made:

– Just like the EU CAP, the AU can fully integrate agriculture into other sectors, which may improve the socioeconomic standing of the continent.
– What African policy-makers can do at this stage is to draw policy lessons from the EU. The first precondition is that any '*Africa-like*' CAP should be driven by African actors and not exported to Africa from outside.
– Also, a lesson learned can also be drawn from the ASEAN cooperation, which is softer and consensus based. In the case of ASEAN, integration has occurred in a rather incremental manner with the member states, mainly focusing on policy areas where valuable economic gains could be made from integration (Low 2003; Severino 2008).
– Elements of the content for a possible '*Africa-like*' CAP should focus on the creation of the institution, and regularity frameworks, allowing the implementation of policy choices.
– On the institutional side, the AU can strengthen the impartial agricultural policy initiatives should be adopted by the AU decision makers. Once the decisions are made, the institutional structures can implement and/or supervise the national implementation.

On the regulatory side, under the policy guidance from the ministerial or heads of state level, the AU institutional arm can propose soft (incentive) or hard (regulatory) mechanism to achieve key reforms leading to (a) economic productivity improvement of agricultural and food sector, (b) promote sustainable use of natural resources such as soil, water and biodiversity, and (c) encourage social inclusion, migration prevention and welfare improvement for rural regions.

In concrete terms, the regulatory side can start with focusing on issues, which do not involve subsidizing farmers and actors in the countryside. Some of the measures are suggested as follows:

– Harmonization of statistical methods, data collection, and data sharing within the AU.
– Ensuring proper cadastre and property register within the AU members.
– Putting in place operational marketing standards for agricultural and food products.
– Harmonization of the key production methods, such as the use of pesticides and veterinary products.
– Creating conditions for free movement of agricultural and food products within the AU.
– Providing guidelines and/or rules for minimum sustainability standards and their implementation.
– Creating the framework for value added schemes, such as organic farming, labelling, and origin geographical schemes.

In the next stage and if cooperation demonstrates results and mutual trust, the AU can reflect on subsidy schemes. Any such a scheme should be WTO-compatible and should pass two tests. First, one is political: any subsidy scheme should improve the competitiveness of the sector in as close as possible to the Pareto efficiency, meaning that resource allocation would enhance national welfare better off without making it worse off to any country. The second test is of the political nature: it should reach an agreement of all the AU members.

The added value of the proposed way is on one hand fostering the integration of the African economies and on other hand addressing in a systemic way the agricultural policies and prosperity of rural areas. This approach can be combined with the international cooperation with the EU and other organisations. The external institutional and financial support can be targeted to support the collective rather than isolated measures. Private sector involvement can be helpful to this end as well.

CONCLUSIONS

This paper has analysed the state of African international and regional cooperation institutions showing their strength and weaknesses. It has come to conclusions regarding the future of agricultural policy integration and cooperation programmes:

Harmonizing and streamlining regional and continental cooperation infrastructures: The current regional and continental organisations set up is too diverse and spread out to enable the member states have clear visibility over policy commitments and set out achievable objectives. The result is highly differentiated levels of integration across the continent and varying methods of integration across policy

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directions. A first useful step to end this confusion could put a stop to multiple member state membership to the RECs. Member states should only belong to one REC. There also needs to be a continent-wide reflection on how to create a convergence between the RECs and how to integrate each REC within the AU.

Better the coordination of international cooperation projects: The African continent needs to overcome the aid-recipient paradigm which leads it to adopt a passive approach to project development and has often hampered the liberation of African leaders in implementing policy solutions. There needs to be a more systematic approach to development with a particular focus on the effect that agrarian policies can have on the economy. On the donor side, current development programmes are scattered and vary in scope and duration. Development-aid needs to become more strategic and adopt a global perspective. There is an urgent need for global reflection on how best to leverage development funds and create maximum value addition in Africa. This implies greater coordination between different donor agencies, such as WHO, FAO and the EU. In the case of the EU, strengthening the EU-African strategic partnership may be the way to go to ensure better coordination and understanding between Western and African leaders. It can also ensure sound policy-design, implementation and evaluations.

Strengthening the rule of law: As it currently stands, the AU is weak to impose its decision on member states. African leaders are often not held accountable for not abiding by their official agreements. Similarly, at the local level, rules and regulations or international standards are not necessarily respected. This diminishes the attractiveness of the continent as a whole, but also hinders the continents' potential for export and economic growth. There is a need to be a real regulatory effort on the part of African states to implement and respect new regulation. This can be done through straightforward and gradual steps such as enforcing international sanitary and phytosanitary standards, applying sustainability standards and fighting corruption.

Developing critical infrastructures to match future capabilities: Many African problems stem from the fact that it is unable and unequipped to keep up with its rapid growth rate. This is partly caused by the fragmented nature of its agricultural policy-making which has been unable to forecast accurately the increase in traffic and growth derived from the benefits of harmonization. This is problematic considering the attempts at harmonization currently being developed by the AU through the NEPAD. For successful policy implementation to be ensured and sustained, African countries need to keep on investing in human capital, infrastructure building, data collection and policy analysis and make real efforts to forecast future demand accurately and build critical infrastructure accordingly.

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