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FACULTY OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND HUMAN NUTRITION

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN NUTRITION

DAY PROGRAM

LEVEL V

ASSIGNMENT OF NUTRITION POLICY AND FOOD LEGISLATION

EAC FNSAP 2018-2022 (SUMMARY)

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1.INTRODUCTION

The East African Community (EAC) region suffers from frequent food insecurity despite the huge resource endowments and great potential for production of adequate food. Food insecurity in the region is caused by both natural and policy related factors. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) estimates that 20 million of the over 160 million people in the region are food insecure. It is against this back drop that in 2011, that the EAC Heads of States Summit directed the Secretariat to develop the first Food Security Action Plan (FSAP) 2011-2015 to guide the implementation and actualization of the regional food security objectives.

2.OBJECTIVES OF EAC FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY ACTION PLAN (FNSAP) 2018-2022

The goal of the EAC Food and Nutrition Security Action Plan (FNSAP) 2018-2022 is to contribute to elimination of hunger, malnutrition, and extreme poverty in the East African region by the year 2022. This will be achieved through three interrelated objectives and six intermediate result areas as follows:

(i) To improve sustainable and inclusive agricultural production, productivity and trade of crops, animal and animal resources, fisheries, aquaculture, apiculture and forest products; Under this objective there are three (3) intermediate results (IR);

- IR1: Improved agricultural production, productivity and incomes
- IR2: Improved trade and market access
- IR3: Increased farm and off-farm enterprise and job opportunities for youth and women at all levels of the Value Chains

(ii) To strengthen resilience among households, communities and livelihood systems by promoting sustainable utilization of natural resources, environmental conservation and uptake of disaster risk reduction with enhanced post-harvest value addition. Under this objective there are:

- IR4: Strengthened disaster risk preparedness and management with sustainable utilization of natural resources and environmental conservation under the changing climate

- IR5: Improved post-harvest handling, agro-processing and value addition

(iii) To improve access and utilization of nutritious, diverse, and safe food. The IR under here is;

IR6: Increased investment in nutrition

The action plan has also proposed Cross-Cutting Intermediate Results (CCIR) which include.

- CCIR1: Commitments by EAC Partner States and donors to invest in the action plan
- CCIR2: improved governance, policy, and institutional effectiveness

3. FACTORS INFLUENCING FOOD SECURITY

3.1.Climatic change

Climatic change: directly affects livelihoods in the EAC region due to the high dependence of households on rain-fed agriculture. In the EAC, the pastoral livestock production systems, and hence pastoralist communities, in mostly northern Kenya and South Sudan are generally viewed to be the most vulnerable to climate change impacts. Analysis of climate-related impacts on staple crops such as; maize, beans, rice, cassava, sorghum, millet, and bananas, as well as the cash crops like tea, coffee and cotton show a reduction in production and productivity of up to 30-50% across the continent, and will need some kind of adaptation plan

3.2.Rapid urbanization

Rapid urbanization: it is associated with less under-nutrition than rural populations, but more diet-related non-communicable diseases such as obesity and diabetes, and greater risk from food price volatility. While the urban poor experience low-quality diets and food safety risks, they potentially have good access to fresh produce and micronutrient fortified products. Urban residents also have access to a wider array of foods. However, their food security is dependent on their income and ability to purchase food products. Poor families in urban areas spend up to 60% of their budget on food. Low incomes combined with high food prices can therefore increase their risk of hunger and malnutrition. Lastly urbanization affects food security by contributing to the emerging and growing challenge of depleting natural resources through demand for more housing hence either using up agricultural land or contributing to depleting natural resources.

3.3 The rapid growth in population

in the region means that the demand for food and especially basic staples is increasing. Since the region is generally food deficient, it is currently heavily dependent on food imports which is not sustainable in view of the rapid population growth.

3.4 Poverty

Amongst a large number of the EAC population comes in the way of achieving household food security. As a result, there is a large population in the EAC region who are not able to afford food daily. This has led to high incidences of acute and chronic hunger in the region. It explains why, although the EAC region accounts for less than 4% of the world's population, it consumes 20% of the international food aid. Over 11 million people in the region are in need of humanitarian food assistance at any given time. The poverty situation is aggravated by the large scale unemployment in the region.

3.5 The declining soil fertility in the EAC

The declining soil fertility in the EAC is a major constraint to agricultural transformation in the region. Roughly 28% of rural farmers cultivate land that is considered to be degrading over time. However, more continuous cultivation of existing plots would not necessarily pose problems to sustainable intensification if soil quality were maintained or improved over time, for example, through adequate soil management practices such as; crop rotations, use of fertilizers and other inputs. Smallholder farmers are largely unable to benefit fully from yield gains even when they plant certified seeds because they farm on depleted soils that are non-responsive to fertilizer application. A holistic and integrated land management strategy is needed, which focuses on raising organic matter, moisture retention, and other forms of soil rehabilitation in addition to greater inorganic fertilizer use

3.6 Conflicts in the region

It have had devastating effects especially where they have continued for a long period of time such as in Somalia. The burden of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) in East Africa is a major effect of conflict. The Daadab refugee camp in the Northern part of Kenya is the largest refugee camp in the world hosting over 440,000 instead of its capacity of 90,000 refugees mostly fleeing from Somalia. Contributing to meeting the food needs of refugees places an additional burden on recipient communities where food security is already marginal leading to acute food shortages. The number of displaced people from some of the EAC

Partner States is a major source of concern for the region as it leads to rain in the often scarce resources, which are diverted to contain the problem. Conflicts remove able-bodied men from agricultural production which then places an extra work burden on women. During the genocide in Rwanda in 1994, an estimated 1 million people were killed leaving most families without breadwinners, livelihoods and homes

4. CHALLENGES IN THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR IN EAC

The Challenges contributing to food and nutrition insecurity as mentioned in section 2.1 are many, however it is important to note that in tackling these challenges lays the opportunities that will transform the EAC into a food secure region. Some of these challenges and the opportunities they present are discussed below:

4.1. Agricultural production and productivity in the EAC

Agricultural production and productivity in the EAC: it remains low by global standards. Farmers in the region have challenges in increasing production and productivity in terms of area under cultivation and yields per acre respectively. These challenges are largely due to policy, natural and technological factors. The policy issues that constrain production and productivity include: inadequate legal and regulatory framework and weak institutional framework. The natural factors affecting productivity include: degradation of natural resources as well as climate change. The main technological factors include; limited use of yield-enhancing inputs such as improved seeds, fertilizers, fodder, feeds, vaccines, farm equipment and machines. These challenges are in addition to the general poor farm management practices. They are faced with a myriad of challenges, especially access to finance to buy yield enhancing inputs. Cross cutting issues affecting production include: high incidence of poverty, gender inequality and the non-inclusion of the youth in agriculture. The nature of the challenges facing the region demands a strategy that applies a more resilient agricultural production system.

4.2 ACCESS TO FINANCE

A key challenge in the agriculture sector in the EAC is access to finance: This is critical if agricultural transformation is to be realized in the region. The shift from subsistence-oriented agriculture by mainly the smallholder farmers to commercial agriculture will require farmers to access finance to expand their production through mechanization, use of improved inputs and storage facilities, and/or diversify their products to meet market requirements.

4.3 Limited market access:

by mainly the small-holder farmer in the EAC region constraints development of agriculture and food security. Lack of market access restricts opportunities for income-generation. It also exacerbates the problem of post-harvest losses. Farmers require certain infrastructural facilities to enable them effectively market and sell their commodities. The poor state of the EAC rural infrastructure including power, transport, storage, irrigation and telecommunication accounts for the high transactions costs of doing business in the region.

4.4. Prevalence of pests and diseases

Prevalence of pests and diseases: The spread of trans-boundary plant and animal pests and diseases has increased dramatically in the EAC in recent years. This may be attributed to globalization, trade and climate change, as well as reduced resilience in production systems due to decades of agricultural intensification. The EAC has seen outbreaks and upsurges of pests like the armyworm which devastated crops in Kenya from the beginning of 2017 and diseases like the maize lethal necrosis virus which spread in the regions maize growing areas in 2013/15.

4.5. Poor Nutrition

Poor Nutrition: East Africa's nutrition security efforts remain hindered by a multitude of factors. Each of the EAC Partner States have developed policies and strategies to promote food security and proper nutrition. These policies have recognized the critical need for achieving food and nutrition security, however they have failed to address the complex food and nutritional security challenges in the region. Moreover, regional nutrition activities are not well coordinated.

5.KEY AREAS RECOMMENDED FOR IMPROVEMENT

5.1. Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning System

Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning System: The FSAP 2011-2015 did not have a monitoring and evaluation framework and it did not have a reliable performance management plan (PMP). The other critical areas missing within the action plans M&E system was lack of a clear database for tracking of indicators. As a result, it was challenging to generate information on implementation progress that could be used for learning and decision making. A draft M&E plan was however developed in 2014 but was never implemented.

5.2. Financial resources

Financial resources: A resource mobilization plan was not developed as envisioned thereby partly attributing to inadequate financial resources which constrained the implementation of the action plan. The assumption was that the Partner States would allocate adequate financial resources for implementation which was not the case. Funding from development partners could not cover all the actions that were proposed. The FSAP 2011-2015 assessment recommended strengthening of financial planning and tracking of resources both at the Partner State and the regional levels, so that the resource flow and resource use efficiencies can be analysed periodically

5.3 Lack of prioritization criteria

Lack of prioritization criteria: One of the major challenges of the FSAP 2011-2015 was lack of a prioritized implementation plan. At the Partner State level, there were inadequate mechanisms for tracking and alignment of actions to the FSAP 2011-2015 priorities. At the regional level, prioritization of actions in the annual work plans were mainly premised on committed donor funds. As a result, prioritization of actions was determined mainly by availability of donor funds and by extension therefore, donor priorities.

5.4 Human Resources

Human Resources: Low staff levels implied that the lean secretariat would focus more efforts on operational issues at the expense of strategic roles in the action plan. Closely linked to the human resource gaps was the low financial absorption capacity that occasionally led to low burn rates.

5.5 Weak coordination

Weak coordination: The EAC Secretariat's role was to coordinate and provide oversight in the implementation of the action plan at the regional level, working closely with other stakeholders in pursuit of regional initiatives such as development of relevant policies, strategies, action plans and regional programs

6. CONCLUSION

Therefore, to maximize long-term impact on its ultimate beneficiaries in Partner States, a wide variety of actors will be engaged in its programs to achieve objectives effectively and sustainably. These actors may include Public sector actors, including policy makers, agriculture and health extension agents, health and education system actors, and national agricultural research institution. Private sector actors, such as producer associations, small and medium enterprises in the agriculture and food sectors, lenders, and insurance providers. Research and academia– national regional and international researcher institution, universities, and regional think tanks. Civil society and community-based actors, including faith-based and civil society advocates for the poor and hungry, and women’s and youth organizations.