



## **ESAFF Lesotho**

### **Farmer's Position Papers on Malabo Declaration / National Budgets -2018**

*Small scale farmers speak for themselves*

#### **Executive Summary**

The objective of developing one farmer's position on Malabo Declaration and the National Budget is to increase farmers' articulation on policy, plans and budget and to devise advocacy strategies that could fast track the realization of the declaration. Representatives of farmer's organisations from all the districts of Lesotho and other private sector representatives (RSDA and LENAFU) participated. Factors such as poor implementation of agricultural programmes, farmer's exclusion, access to information, access to markets, poor institutional capacity, corruption in government departments came out as issues for concern for farmers. Advocacy strategies such as meetings with relevant stakeholders and lobbying were discussed and formed part of the action plan for future efforts.

#### **Introduction**

The training workshop on Malabo Declaration and its relationship with the NAIPs and DIPs forms part of the Project INFLUENCE activities and it is meant to improve articulation of farmers on policy, plans and budget issues.

It was a one day activity held at Mineworkers in Maseru Lesotho. The training was supposed to be made of 13 participants, 3 from other organization being LENAFU, RSDA and PELUM and 10 being farmers and farmer's organisations representatives from all the 10 districts of Lesotho but only 8 districts were presented. The participants were the youth, women and men. The participants were trained on the Malabo Declaration and commitments, NAIPS and the relationship between the two. Both males and females were given equal opportunity to attend the training. They then developed their opinions and views on the two documents and an action plan on the way forward. The opening remarks and the objectives of the training were introduced.

**The history of the Malabo Declaration** is emanating from the 2003 AU summit and then the Maputo Declaration. A Comprehensive Agriculture Adaptation Development Programme

(CAADP) was developed. The CAADP compact was officially signed in Lesotho on the 4<sup>th</sup> September 2013 and ESAFF Lesotho formed part of the NGOs that signed the compact. The Malabo Declaration was signed in Equatorial Guinea on 26-27 June 2014.

### **SSFs Perspectives on the ten demands on Malabo Declaration and NAIPS**

In groups, farmer's views and opinions on the Malabo Declaration commitments and NAIPS were as follows.

- 1) Malabo commitments and CADDP Compact are a very good tool but if can be implemented in the country and insisted that CADDP processes are still on hold since signing of CAADP Compact in 2013 because there are still no activities don concerning it.
- 2) SSFs are not included in agricultural policies and plans. There is still exclusion of SSF in the budget processes.
- 3) The Lesotho government still has not allocated 10% of the public expenditure for the past 14 years on Agriculture sector. It has allocated only 5.9% this year (2018).
- 4) The government subsidies hybrid seeds which are not affordable to everyone because of high unemployment rate and these seeds are only available from one place (Ha Foso) which is very far for many farmers. And again these hybrid seeds do not enhance sustainable agriculture production because they cannot be re-used or re-planted like indigenous seeds.
- 5) Youth are not given or supported with start-up capitals to start their own businesses then job creation is not supported by the government as a result neither 30% job creation nor 6% sustainable Annual Agriculture Production can be achieved. Youth participation is very limited in farming
- 6) There is still no market for farmers' produce, even when yields are high most of their produce become damaged e.g. they rot into waste. Again the government buys seeds from RSA instead of local farmers who produce seeds.
- 7) Farmers insisted that there should be policy that will support them to be insured on their produce in case of any loss caused by climate change e.g. drought affects food production and farmers need support to address them.. And again they insisted that there should be a policy which supports or encourages water harvesting to prevent drought.
- 8) The farmers complained that there is still lack of knowledge for them on CAADP progresses since the government does not share relevant information with them.
- 9) The farmers said the capital budget should be more than the recurrent budget which is not the case in this year's budget.
- 10) Farmers are not allowed to export their produce to RSA yet 90% of agricultural products sold in Lesotho come from RSA.

### **Action Points for farmers**

- a) Need to improve market access for farmers' produce
- b) Need for development of value chain to encourage job creation especially for youth and women.
- c) Need for intensive farmers training on agricultural policies and plans.
- d) Need to form strong farmers' associations with one voice to make noise in order to make government implement policies.
- e) Need for farmers to track the budget allocated to agricultural projects.
- f) Encouragement of indigenous seeds for sustainable agriculture but not hybrid seeds.
- g) Need for water harvesting to prevent drought

### **Conclusion**

This farmers position papers is used for advocacy with members of parliament, government and media