

# Civil Society & Regional Food Security

POLICY BRIEF NO. 2

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## The Role of External Donors

External donors have always been important to SADC. Donors work at both the national and regional level to support closer regional integration, in food security amongst other things.

Donors also often prefer region-wide programmes as they appear to offer more efficiency in aid programming than might be the case with a series of relatively small programmes with similar objectives agreed with individual national governments.

The net result is that SADC currently has a larger proportion of its expenditure sourced from donors and a larger number of individual donors than any similar regional organisation. This does create management challenges and SADC and a 'donor group' (consisting of Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Norway, Sweden, UK, USA and the EU) meet regularly to ensure that decisions on aid support are informed by the best information available.

### The Donor Matrix

One aspect of this information-sharing is a donor matrix which sets out all the current and proposed regional projects, including projects within each of the four SADC Directorates. The matrix also covers 'other regional' expenditure such as programmes supporting UN agencies, NGOs etc. on a region-wide basis.

Within each Directorate, the level and source of support for each 'sector' is outlined.

SADC's Food and Natural Resource Directorate - FANR (see Policy Brief No. 1) receives about a quarter of the external funds available to SADC, and within FANR 'food security' is the second largest sector (behind environment/land and water management).

However, most of the FANR sector programmes, such as agricultural research, have food security objectives even if not strictly categorised as such.

It is also evident from the donor matrix that Directorates other than FANR are also engaged in different aspects of regional food security.

There are, for example, major programmes in SHDSP on HIV/AIDS, part of which address the common regional problem of vulnerability in rural households. In TIFI, the programmes to support regional economic integration and trade facilitation also stress incentives to increased aggregate food production and trans-border market development.

### Information and research

Donors are also strongly engaged in food security information, and especially vulnerability analysis, on a regional basis. FAO manages a Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information Mapping System (FIVIMS). FAO does not itself collect data but confines its role to co-ordinating national data collection efforts.

The WFP has its own Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (VAM) procedures principally in support of its own food aid programmes. It also provides support to the Regional Vulnerability Assessment Committee under a grant provided by the South African Government to assist regional food security (with the larger part of the SA going to FAO's Seed Programme).

USAID supports the Famine Early Warning System Network (FEWSNET) that provides regular data on climate, production and price data and has also conducted some vulnerability mapping. In conjunction with WFP, FEWSNET also has a programme to monitor informal cross border trade in maize, rice and beans.

Other donors involved in regional studies include UNICEF, which has initiated a survey of social protection initiatives in the region, and the World Bank, which has undertaken a study of the potential for regional grain

*LOOK, LISTEN & LEARN: Promoting the use of CSOs' evidence in policies for food security*

*An action research project in southern Africa*

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reserves and alternative mechanisms for coping with production and price volatility.

By virtue of their size and scope, there are three *regional* donors of particular interest to CSOs.



#### European Union

The largest donor by far to SADC is the EU. The specific Food Security Training programme within FANR is part of a much larger Regional Indicative Programme (2002-2007) that aims to increase economic growth and reduce poverty.

The main strategy being followed to achieve poverty reduction is through higher levels of export-led economic growth. This is achieved through the promotion of investment; support to supply-side measures to assist the region to increase production; and investment in transport and communications.

An important context for EU aid is the concurrent negotiations on an Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) with SADC countries (less South Africa which already has a reciprocal Trade, Development and Cooperation Agreement). An EPA does require SADC to offer reciprocal trade concessions and within SADC such concessions have yet to be agreed.



#### USAID

USAID regional support, like the EU, addresses food security through economic development, particularly private sector development. The broader context is the Presidential Initiative to End Hunger in Africa, which emphasises research and technology transfer; environmental management and conservation; trade and market development; HIV/AIDS and vulnerable populations; capacity building; farmer and rural business association development.

An important component of assistance is the Gaborone-based Southern Africa Global Competitiveness Hub (also known as the Trade Hub) which assists in promoting southern Africa products in US markets under AGOA and global markets more broadly.



#### DFID

The DFID regional programme, unlike the two others mentioned, is more concerned with food security as a specific problem for the poor rather than as a wider regional economic development problem. It's Regional Hunger and Vulnerability Programme (RHVP) reflects concern that vulnerability to shocks has increased, and household coping strategies have progressively weakened. It stresses the need for more effective action to tackle food security, both in emergency and development programmes.

The RHVP strategy outlines several areas where DFID will support both SADC and other region-wide efforts to improve regional food security. This will include an emphasis upon regional efforts towards a better understanding of vulnerability, more effective emergency responses, and measures to enhance social protection.

#### CSOs and Donors

Donors have generally found it difficult to design and effectively monitor regional programmes. In the case of regional food security programmes, there are also differences in approach as indicated above. At present, CSOs do not have a strong influence on donor priorities at the regional level even though many are closely engaged at the national level in both the design and implementation of donor programmes. Transferring some of this experience to the regional level would appear to be of value to both donors and SADC in designing more effective food security interventions.

*Project Brief  
The Look,  
Listen and  
Learn Project*

*Policy Brief  
No. 1  
- The Role of  
SADC*

*Policy Brief  
No. 2  
- The Role of  
Donors*

*Policy Brief  
No. 3  
- Seed  
Harmonisation*

*Look, Listen and Learn is a joint project between*

*Southern African Regional Poverty Network*

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