



THE AFRICAN CAPACITY  
BUILDING FOUNDATION

*THE ROLE OF AGRICULTURE  
IN STRENGTHENING REGIONAL  
INTEGRATION IN AFRICA*

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### The Role of Agriculture in Strengthening Regional Integration in Africa

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# THE ROLE OF AGRICULTURE IN STRENGTHENING REGIONAL INTEGRATION IN AFRICA

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## I. INTRODUCTION

The concern for regional integration in Africa predates independence. The period 1960-1980, however, witnessed the emergence of major regional integration schemes that pushed forward the Continent's economic integration agenda. Post-independence regional economic integration and cooperation efforts resulted in a variety of initiatives with overlapping membership and mandates, making Africa the region with the highest density of economic integration and cooperation arrangements. Yet these arrangements failed to impact positively the Continent's economic performance. Inadequate political will and commitment to the process; high incidence of conflicts and political instability; poor design and sequencing of regional integration arrangements; multiplicity of the schemes, an issue which was addressed by ACBF 2006 survey conducted at the behest of the Heads of States and Government of the NEPAD; inadequacy of funding and exclusion of key stakeholders from the regional integration process are factors accounting for the ineffectiveness. Despite Africa's unsatisfactory track record in regional integration over the decades, the case for cooperation and integration has become much stronger in recent years, due to the fact that the continent is facing a number of major challenges, notably globalization and the changing global economic and political environments, to which enhanced cooperation and integration constitute an appropriate response. With the emergence of the New Partnership for Africa's Development, Africa's regional economic communities now have a more prominent role to play in the Continent's integration process. Enhanced regional cooperation and integration will provide the Continent with a platform for effective participation in international negotiations. Regional bargaining power and pooling of expertise are crucial to Africa in terms of a meaningful contribution to reshaping the global economic order and protecting the interests of its peoples. In this context, agriculture can play a leading role in addressing the challenge, as it has a powerful leverage on the overall national economic growth, especially during the early stages of economic development when it is the dominant sector. Agriculture can stimulate the economic growth of individual countries, and in so doing can promote regional integration through diversification of production and harmonization of agricultural policies within the African region.

## II. CHALLENGES FACING REGIONAL INTEGRATION IN AFRICA

Given the nature of the Continent's economies, regional integration is important for the development process. The success of the European Union (EU) since the 1950s bears a strong testimony to the potential benefits of regional integration. If properly conceived and implemented, regional integration offers numerous advantages to developing economies. Closer trade links among such economies have the potential of strengthening their capacity to participate in world trade. Countries can thus overcome obstacles caused by the relatively small size of the domestic markets, by offering producers opportunities to realize greater economies of scale and benefit from the establishment of regional infrastructure. A regional approach in major structural areas such as tariff reduction and harmonization, legal and regulatory reform, rationalization of payments system, financial sector reform, harmonization of agricultural policies, investment incentive and tax system harmonization, and labour market reform, among others, enables participating countries to pool their resources and take advantage of regional institutional and human resources. The regional approach also allows countries to have a common front for asserting their interests from a stronger and more confident position in the global market and international economic relations, as in the case on the issue of developed countries agricultural subsidies.

African countries were and remain fully cognizant of the benefits of regional cooperation and integration. This realization at independence made regional integration a core element on the Continent's development agenda. The establishment of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in 1963 by the then newly emerging states was inspired largely by the determination to promote the unity of African countries and coordinate their cooperation efforts for the achievement of improved living conditions for the people of the Continent. Regional cooperation and integration were also seen as vital for safeguarding the Continent's hard-won independence, ridding it of the vestiges of colonialism and apartheid, and overcoming the legacy of external exploitation and domination.

Over the last forty years, the institutional framework for Africa's integration process has evolved through a number of phases, in response to changing realities. The establishment of the African Union (AU) in 2001 constitutes the latest phase in the development of regional cooperation and integration on the Continent. Drawing on lessons from experience with regional integration in the post-independence years and taking account of the challenges facing the Continent in a rapidly globalizing world, the AU is expected to serve as the key instrument for the achievement of a rapid and sustainable development of Africa and the effective integration of the Continent into the global economic and financial systems.

With the emergence of NEPAD, which today represents a Continental instrument for advancing people-centred development based on democratic values and principles, the RECs now stand to play an even more prominent role in the regional cooperation and integration process. While internally NEPAD commits African governments to good governance and detailed programs of action for addressing major development challenges on the Continent, the initiative represents a platform for Africa's engagement

and equal partnership with the broader international community. It therefore provides a strategic framework for the establishment of partnerships aimed at encouraging development initiatives and programs on the Continent.

Nonetheless, overall progress in Africa's integration process over the last four decades has been sluggish. The process has not produced significant positive impact on the economic performance of the Continent. Unlike the economic integration schemes in other parts of the world, such as the EU in Europe, the North America Free Trade Area in North America and the MERCOSUR in South America, African RECs have not succeeded in accelerating growth or trade. A fair general assessment of African regional integration arrangements indicates their failure in meeting their stated objectives. Intra-African exports as a proportion of the Continent's total exports amounted to only 7.6 per cent in 2000 as against a ratio of 17.2 for Latin America, a region which has not been as active as Africa in the promotion of cooperation and integration. In spite of the multitude of regional integration schemes on the Continent, average income per capita is lower today in Africa than it was at the end of the 1960s.

The factors accounting for the poor performance include:

- Lack of complementarity of member countries' agricultural production structures.
- Lack of political will to mainstream regional commitments and agreements into national plans to ensure the success of the process.
- Weak national and regional institutions
- Lack of coordination and harmonization of economic policies.
- Lack of involvement of other stakeholders – the private sector and civil society - in the cooperation and integration process.
- Inadequacy of human and institutional capacity for the design and implementation of cooperation and integration programs.
- Disproportionate allocation of resources highly skewed in favour of conflict-related issues as against economic cooperation and integration issues.
- Inadequate socio-economic infrastructure.
- Poor perception and assessment of benefits associated with the process:
  - Public revenue loss, especially due to small states tariff reduction
  - Lack of assurance of market integration benefits to individual member countries
  - Unequal distribution of benefits derived from integration
  - Strong concern for short-term losses as against long-term benefits
- High incidence of conflicts and political instability.
- Poor design and inadequate sequencing of regional integration arrangements.
- Multiplicity and overlapping membership of regional integration schemes and mandates.
- Inadequate funding of regional integration process and related institutions.

Thus, the Continent's high enthusiasm for regional integration has not been matched by commensurate political will and commitment of member states to effectively implement agreements reached under various integration arrangements. Few countries on the Continent seem to be prepared for the partial surrender and the pooling of sovereignty, which is critical for the success of any regional integration scheme. Many protocols have been signed but remain unimplemented, due to absence of effective sanctions against defaulting member states and weak enforcement and implementation capacity. Lack of political will and commitment has been reflected in the failure to meet target dates set for the attainment of objectives. The integration process on the Continent is also constrained by the high incidence of conflicts among member states. Conflicts hinder integration and development by curtailing economic activities, destroying infrastructure and constituting a serious barrier to the flow of trade and investment. Effectiveness of the process is also being limited by the multiplicity of schemes, which imposes a huge burden on the limited administrative and financial capacities of the countries concerned and leads to conflicting obligations. This explains why most member states find it difficult to adequately meet financial obligations to integration schemes and the failure of such schemes to effectively implement their policies and programs.

Africa's regional integration process has also been set back by the poor design and sequencing of the arrangements. This is reflected, *inter alia*, in the heavy emphasis of most of the schemes on trade liberalization and market integration without much regard for the fostering of production integration/regional complementarities or the development of regional infrastructure (especially transport and communication) to drive market integration; the inability to adequately handle issues relating to human rights, good governance, accountability, and transparency, which are vital for political stability, peace and security and required for the attainment of economic objectives of integration; the absence of self-financing mechanisms for the regional integration organizations; the inadequacy of mechanisms to ensure that the benefits of integration are equitably distributed among the member states; the lack of involvement of the private sector and civil society in the integration process; and the disproportionate time allocated to conflict-related issues, which has significant implications for the skills and competencies required by the RECs.

### **III. THE IMPORTANCE OF AGRICULTURE IN AFRICAN ECONOMIES**

Despite Africa's unsatisfactory track record in regional integration over the decades, the case for cooperation and integration has become stronger, not weaker. This is due to the fact that the Continent has in recent years been confronted by a number of major challenges to which enhanced cooperation and integration constitutes an appropriate response. Of particular significance in this regard are the challenges associated with globalization and the changing world economic and political environments. There are also some persistent and emerging internal problems, which require regional approach for their effective solution. The Continent needs regional integration to broaden its markets and attract foreign investment. Africa's failure to attract a fair share of global investment, in spite of its rich endowment of natural resources has been due largely to the perception of the Continent as the world's riskiest place to do business. The high

risks of doing business derive not only from the high incidence of conflicts and political instability, and the good governance deficit, but also from high business costs associated with the inadequacy of transport, communications and power infrastructure. A well-designed and effectively implemented regional integration process can help to address these problems. Enhancement of regional cooperation and integration is essential for Africa to deal effectively with its development challenges.

Agriculture can play a key role in this process, in view of its importance in African economies. According to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), agriculture dominates the economies of most African countries, providing jobs, income and exports. Agriculture accounts for 30-50% of the GDP in most African countries and 70% or more of total employment, while contributing 20% of the Continent's export earnings. A well performing agricultural sector is fundamental for Africa's overall economic growth. A high and sustained growth in the agricultural sector is crucial for addressing poverty and inequality, particularly in the rural area where more than 70 percent of the total population and the majority of the poor and undernourished are living. A healthy agriculture sector means more jobs, more income and more food for the poor. Improving agricultural performance generates income in both rural and urban areas. As incomes increase, households save more and spend more, stimulating growth and investment in other sectors. Agriculture provides tax revenues and supplies a wide range of raw materials to agricultural-based local manufacturers. Processing agricultural products accounts for two-thirds of manufacturing value-added in most African countries. Agriculture-led development generates economic growth, lowers the costs associated with food imports and opens the way to expanding exports. Increasing agricultural productivity, expanding exports and producing higher value crops all raise agricultural profitability and the incomes of those involved. Land owners, agricultural workers, input suppliers, retailers and the entire chain of activities servicing agriculture benefit. Labour incomes increase as the unemployed find work and the underemployed find more work. It has been argued that, agricultural growth also has powerful leverage on broader national economic growth, especially during the early stages of development when it is the dominant sector<sup>2</sup>. It does this by:

- generating more food and raw materials at lower prices, lowering wages and making industry more competitive;
- freeing up foreign exchange for the importation of strategic industrial and capital goods;
- providing growing amounts of capital and labor for industrial development; and
- raising rural incomes and providing a growing domestic market for nascent national industries.

However, for agriculture to efficiently play this role and improve its contributions to poverty reduction, capacity enhancement for the advent of a new breed of rural population is a must. A well-educated and trained rural population, with access to roads, health care facilities, irrigation and locally appropriate production technologies will produce consistently higher yields. Investments in human capacity and rural

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<sup>2</sup> See Peter Hazel, IFPRI

infrastructure, together with improved access to local and international markets will lower production costs, raise profits, improve competitiveness, produce higher levels of incomes and foster regional integration.

#### **IV. ADDRESSING CAPACITY BUILDING CHALLENGES FOR INCREASED REGIONAL INTEGRATION THROUGH AGRICULTURE**

Despite the importance of agriculture in African economies, the sector remains quite under-developed due to lack of adequate strategy, policies and capacity. The agricultural sector can play a leading role in stimulating Africa's economic growth and accelerating the pace of regional integration process in Africa. Cooperation and integration are vital for the development of regional infrastructure, production and management of regional public goods and services, promotion of intra-Africa trade, and support other developmental programs such as commonly shared water resources and environmental protection.

If regional cooperation and integration are to be a driving force for Africa's integration into the world economy, the Continent must persevere on this path, while ensuring a balanced distribution of the benefits of the process across countries. Individual African countries lack the expertise and negotiating capacity to protect their interests in crucial international negotiations. Greater and effective regional cooperation and integration will be needed to provide a platform for the effective participation of the Continent in the world trade negotiations. Regional bargaining power and the pooling of expertise are crucial to Africa in terms of a meaningful contribution to reshaping the global economic order and protecting the Continent's interests.

The AU/NEPAD Plan of Action puts forward a set of priority areas that require regional cooperation to improve the agricultural sector in Africa.

- Disaster prevention and mitigation and food security: Natural disasters such as drought, flood, and plant and animal pests are weakening Africa's agricultural production base. The establishment of early warning systems based on environmental information is crucial, but requires the capacity to effectively use this information to prevent and mitigate disasters. In terms of food security, regional and sub-regional food reserves could be set up through regional cooperation for emergency food delivery. The SADC Regional Early Warning System (REWS) is one example of regional early warning system, which is responding effectively to drought situations by collecting and sharing timely data on the effects of drought and the status of food security in the region. With respect to pest control, programs similar to the FAO-initiated Emergency Prevention Systems (EMPRES) can be developed for an early and coordinated action against plant and animal pests and diseases.



- **Water management:** An integrated approach to water management is essential for an effective use of water resources for irrigation, particularly in rain-fed areas. Measures should be put in place to improve traditional swamp and flood irrigation; rehabilitate modern irrigation schemes; locate ground and surface water; and, ensure equitable use of river basins among the countries.
- **Combating desertification and reforestation:** Conservation techniques such as dune stabilization, soil management, and reforestation could contribute to the rehabilitation of the environment and ensure the sustainability of the agriculture sector.
- **Trade facilitation:** Intra and inter-regional trade should be promoted to improve market access for agricultural products. Compliance with international sanitary and phytosanitary standards, adoption of internationally acceptable norms, lifting of trade barriers are among key actions that need to be taken. Particular attention should be given to small-scale farmers and the role of women in agricultural development.
- **Harmonization of policies:** National agricultural policies need to be reformed and harmonized across the regions in order to help define priorities and achieve mutual benefits within the region. Other policies such as cross-border trade policies and policies related to standards and quality of production should be aligned to support the growth of the agricultural sector in the African region.
- **Strengthening Regional and Sub-Regional Research Systems:** Collaboration among regional agricultural research systems is crucial in the pooling of financial and human resources, to ensure the sustainability of their activities. It also paves the way for long-term capacity building for institutional development, which is central to the emergence of new agricultural technologies.

## **V. INTERVENTIONS IN THE STRENGTHENING OF THE ROLE OF AGRICULTURE IN INTEGRATION**

For Africa to effectively participate in the international monetary, financial and trading systems, it needs capacity to, among others:

- Interact meaningfully within the framework of the international structures that govern the international monetary, financial and trading systems.
- Understand the wide range of international trade agreements and obligations
- Negotiate favorable terms of trade for the continent and enhance value for its exports.
- Provide appropriate environmental incentives to stimulate greater flow of trade and raise the region's share in global trade and financial flows.

Capacity for successful implementation of regional cooperation and integration, at the moment, is grossly inadequate. In countries where some of it exists, it is neither optimally utilized nor sufficiently nurtured.

Capacity building interventions to strengthen the growth of key productive sectors is important to the building of regional integration and trade capacity. Agriculture, industry, mining and the services sectors need to be strengthened to raise productivity, increase output and boost trade. Thus, in this context, capacity building in trade policy development would be well served, if, among other issues, it simplifies regulatory and administrative requirements for trade and investment, supports the reform of the telecommunications sector and harmonizes policies and legislations across the regions in Africa. There are dire needs in these areas, just as much as there are ongoing efforts to address some of them. Other priority areas include capacity building interventions that seek to anticipate or effectively assess the impact of advances in bio-technology; support the development of early warning systems as well as the prevention, monitoring and management of natural and man-made disasters; and enhance reconstruction efforts.

It is therefore important to note that the building of long-term regional integration capacity must meet some basic fundamentals for the capacity building process to be sustainable. Among these are the following:

- The capacity building process must avoid donor bias – it should be undertaken by African institutions. Technical assistance should be used wisely and should not be substituted for indigenous capacity building efforts.
- It must be driven by carefully assessed needs of beneficiary countries and RECs, and not by needs perceived by donors and other development partners. Capacity needs assessments are therefore vital, so also is a medium-term capacity profiling exercise.
- Capacity building programs must provide an equal response to the needs of the four main actors – the RECs as well as individual countries' government, private sector and civil society. Emphasis should be placed on training, research, information and knowledge sharing. Thus, resources for capacity building must be optimally allocated to meet the needs of the four actors.

In order to strengthen the capacity of Africa's RECs for the implementation of NEPAD's priority programs and activities relating to their primary mandates, ACBF, on behalf of the AU Commission and NEPAD Secretariat, has conducted a survey to assess the capacity needs of the RECs. The aim of the survey has been to determine the institutional and human capacity requirements of the RECs for the effective and efficient implementation of the priority programs, which are largely in the five sectors, namely, Energy, Transport, Telecommunications, Information and Communication Technology, and Water Management. The implementation of the Action Plan as an outcome of this survey will be instrumental in boosting the capacity of Africa's RECs, thereby accelerating the process of regional integration in Africa.

Various regional initiatives and research centers on agriculture have sprung across Africa. The African Union/NEPAD Secretariat developed, in collaboration with the

United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), a Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAAPD) to stimulate and sustain economic growth in Africa. The RECs and their member countries' programs are mandated to manage and implement CAAPD, in order to ensure ownership and leadership of the program by African countries. With the support of the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), the NEPAD Secretariat has identified priority agricultural investment programs, designed a roadmap to speed up CAAPD implementation process, and drawn a list of actions to be taken by December 2006.

Nonetheless, the Secretariat is faced with a number of key challenges to be addressed for an effective coordination and implementation of the initiative. The RECs are expected to implement a set of early actions. Similarly, African governments should strive to improve the governance of the agricultural sector, align their national agricultural strategies with the regional initiatives, provide adequate financing to the agricultural sector, and establish partnerships with the private sector. Peer-review and monitoring mechanisms need to be put in place to evaluate and track the progress made in the agricultural sector. In addition, intra-regional agricultural trade within Africa and the integration of regional agricultural markets are among the challenges that need to be tackled. On the international scene, African countries need to build capacity to fend off the persisting agricultural protectionism and detrimental subsidies that are hampering the growth of agriculture in Africa. Effective response to these issues requires enhanced capacity within the regional organizations and individual countries.

In an effort to strengthen the capacity of the agricultural sector, ACBF launched in 2001 the "Projet de renforcement de l'interface entre les Etats et les Chambres d'agriculture en Afrique de l'Ouest" (PRIECA/AO) [Project to Strengthen interface between Chambers of Agriculture and Public Sector in West Africa]. The project was set up to build the analytical capacity of the Chambers of Agriculture and that of the West and Central African Ministers of Agriculture Conference (CMA/AOC) Secretariat; disseminate best practices and knowledge; strengthen information exchange systems between the public and the private sector; set up mechanisms of dialogue between the private and public sectors on agricultural policies; and create conditions for the participation of farmers support institutions in decision-making at the national and regional levels.

PRIECA/AO is the only regional interface project in West Africa providing a formal forum for business leaders, government officials and representatives of regional and international organizations in the agricultural sector. The Project was designed to formalize the dialogue between West African ministries of Agriculture and farmers' interest groups through the Chambers of Agriculture. As soon as PRIECA/AO became effective, it became the technical arm of NEPAD and ECOWAS in the formulation of the agriculture component of the NEPAD initiative. Consequently, the PRIECA/AO work program has been expanded to include activities relating to NEPAD's development program.

During the first phase of the project (2001-2004), PRIECA equipped six Chambers of Agriculture with internet and intranet systems in order to facilitate exchange of information among the Chambers in West Africa; conducted innovative research on

topics, including cotton subsidies and WTO, international trade, market information strategies, NEPAD, regional agricultural policies, and biotechnology. PRIECA also implemented a mechanism for dissemination of information at the regional level and targeting international donor organizations. Most importantly, PRIECA/AO hosted a major conference attended by ECOWAS Ministers of Agriculture, and representatives of business and farmers' umbrella organizations. One of the outcomes of the Conference was the adoption of a declaration on the negative effects of agricultural subsidies of the North on the African countries' agriculture. The Conference also initiated the first steps towards bringing the issue to the WTO Court and to the Cancun Conference. In February 2005, ACBF approved a second-phase funding for PRIECA with a view to further consolidating the project's achievements.

Besides PRIECA/AO, which has become an important forum for research and advocacy in respect of issues relating to the effects of industrialized countries farm subsidies on agricultural exports from West Africa, ACBF intervenes in various other interventions to support agricultural development of the continent. The Foundation's policy units, for instance, provide inputs to macroeconomic policy reforms of which agricultural policies are a part. In this regard, IPAR participates in the Kenyan Stakeholders Consultative Strategy Formulation Task Force on Rural Development (KRDS), while KIPPRA provides inputs for efforts by the Government of Kenya to rationalize the country's participation in multilateral trading arrangements. These inputs also contributed to the country's position at the WTO Meetings in Doha and Cancún.

The Economic and Social Research Foundation (ESRF) in Tanzania is playing a significant role in providing policy advice services to the government in the areas of regional integration and trade. It is also coordinating the drafting of Tanzania Agricultural Marketing Policy. The Economic Policy Research Centre (EPRC), Uganda serves on a number of Decentralization Review Teams in the country. The Centre has a presence in several committees including the National Steering Committee for the Modernization of Agriculture. Botswana Institute for Development Policy Analysis (BIDPA), Botswana; ESRF, Tanzania; the Kenya Institute of Public Policy Research and Analysis (KIPPRA), Kenya; and the Namibian Economic Policy Research Unit (NEPRU), Namibia provided inputs that strengthened negotiation missions relating to World Trade Organization (WTO) Meetings in Doha (Qatar) and Cancún (Mexico) on November 2001 and September 2003, respectively.

Prior to its integration into the Directorates of the African Union (AU), the Policy Analysis Support Unit (PASU) at the AU served as the technical coordinator of the AU Panel of Experts, providing support to the Union on issues relating to trade negotiations at the level of the WTO and the ACP-EU frameworks. The Institute for Economic Development (IDEC) in Burundi was involved in the design of the country's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP), which included agricultural reform policies and programs.

## VI. CONCLUSION

Regional cooperation and integration are a long-term process and a necessity for Africa's development. Integration provides a platform for effective participation of the Continent in the international monetary, financial and trading systems. It will strengthen the Continent's bargaining power and enable it to effectively pool its expertise and utilize developmental resources. Central to the integration process is the role of agriculture. A productive agricultural sector can be a catalyst in stimulating growth in the other economic sectors and generate sustainable development. Africa's agricultural production base should be diversified to promote complementarity in production structures, while agricultural policies and programs need to be harmonized. For agricultural development to play an effective role in the regional integration process, emphasis should be given to its capacity needs, ranging from financial and infrastructural to the human and institutional dimensions. There are ongoing interventions in response to these needs, and positive outcomes are becoming visible. ACBF will continue to provide human and institutional capacity building support for both agricultural development and the regional integration process on the continent.

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## THE ACBF WORKING PAPER SERIES

**Overview:** The ACBF Working Paper Series (AWPS) was launched in October 2004 as one of the instruments for disseminating findings of ongoing research and policy analysis works designed to stimulate discussion and elicit comments on issues relating to capacity building and development management in Africa. A product of the Knowledge Management and Program Support Department of the African Capacity Building Foundation, a Working Paper very often ends up as an Occasional Paper, a book or some other form of publication produced by the Foundation after a thorough review of its contents. It offers a means by which the Foundation seeks to highlight lessons of experience, best practices, pitfalls and new thinking in strategies, policies and programs in the field of capacity building based on its operations and those of other institutions with capacity building mandates. AWPS also addresses substantive development issues that fall within the remit of the Foundation's six core competence areas as well as the role and contribution of knowledge management in the development process.

**Objectives:** AWPS is published with a view to achieving a couple of objectives. Fundamental among these are the following:

- To bridge knowledge gaps in the field of capacity building and development management within the African context.
- To provide analytical rigor and experiential content to issues in capacity building and the management of development in Africa.
- To highlight best practices and document pitfalls in capacity building, the design, implementation and management of development policies and programs in Africa.
- To systematically review, critique and add value to strategies, policies and programs for national and regional economic development, bringing to the fore pressing development issues and exploring means for resolving them.

**Focus:** AWPS focuses on capacity building and development management issues. These are in the following areas:

- Capacity building issues in the following six core competence areas and their relevance to development management in Africa:
  - Economic Policy Analysis and Development Management.
  - Financial Management and Accountability.
  - Enhancement and Monitoring of National Statistics.
  - Public Administration and Management.
  - Strengthening of Policy Analysis Capacity of National Parliaments.
  - Professionalization of the Voices of the Private Sector and Civil Society.
- Engendering of development
- Development challenges, which include issues in poverty reduction, HIV/AIDS, governance, conflict prevention and management, human capital flight, private sector development, trade, regional corporation and integration, external debt management, and globalization, among others.

**Orientation:** Papers published by the Series are expected to be analytical and policy-oriented with concrete guide to strategies, policies, programs and instruments for strengthening the capacity building process and enhancing growth and development. In line with the objectives of the Series, such papers are expected to share experiences, information, and knowledge, disseminate best practices and highlight pitfalls in capacity building processes and/or the management of development policies and programs.

**Contributions:** AWPS welcomes contributions from policy analysts, development practitioners, policymakers, capacity building specialists, academics and researchers all over the world, but with a focus on the African context.