

PANEL 10-OVERCOMING FARM LEVEL CONSTRAINTS

“AFRICAN FARM LEADER PERSPECTIVE”

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Markets and Overcoming Supply Side
Constraints for African Agriculture”

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1. Major supply-side Constraints Facing Farmers in the COMESA Region

a) **Production-related Constraints:**

- Shortage/inadequacy of appropriate equipment/inputs for land clearing, opening, preparation/ploughing, planting, fertilizers and agro-chemicals, harvesting and small-scale agro-processing/value addition.
- Lack of financial services and agri-insurance schemes especially production credit.
- Low purchasing power by small-scale producers to afford inputs, hire of labour. This is compounded by unfavourable taxation regimes.
- Arable land shortages and tenure limitations, including high rental fees.

- Inaccessibility to agricultural advisory services and/or new agricultural technologies.
- Lack of irrigation infrastructure to counter the adverse weather patterns.
- Untimely remedial responses to outbreaks of diseases and pests.
- Lack of strong linkages in the value chain especially the agricultural research-extension-farmer-market continuum.
- High cost of diesel (farm power) and other utilities.
- Lack of coherent and consistent agricultural policy framework.

b) Marketing-related Constraints:

- Lack of Market information (inputs/outputs).
- Price instability.
- Poor infrastructure- access roads, etc.
- Lack of appropriate storage facilities at farm-hold as well as community level-cold chain storage for perishables like milk, fruits/vegetables, etc.
- Difficulties related with maintaining quality (standards) and quantity especially in Contract Farming scenarios.
- Much bureaucracy and high cost associated with marketing produce, e.g. taxation of produce by Local Governments.

- High freight charges and local transport costs for marketing of produce.
- Unnecessary long delays, much bureaucracy especially at border entry points, and/or un-official levy fees for cross border agricultural trade.
- Inadequate/lack of credit schemes to facilitate agricultural marketing within and outside the country.

2. ROLES OF DIFFERENT PLAYERS IN ALLEVIATING THE CONSTRAINTS

a) Government (local and central):

Mainly providing conducive policy environment to enable the other key actors play their relevant roles. However, the current policy frameworks are insufficient and in some cases, there is lack of commitment to implement, e.g. The AU Commitment to support agriculture by 10% of budgetary allocations.

b) Donors:

Supporting Government institutions and non-public organizations in providing the necessary services, e.g. agricultural advisory services, research, provision of marketing information, support to Farmer Organizations Institutions, support to appropriate agricultural infrastructure development, etc.

c) Private Sector:

Direct acquisition and distribution of agricultural inputs to the farmers. Also investing in processing equipment, storage, transport and marketing.

d) CSOs and Farmer Organizations:

- Provision of agricultural advisory services
- Sale of agricultural inputs
- Marketing of agricultural produce/products

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- Information dissemination
- Farmer training
- Organizing agricultural shows/ field days, farmer exchange visits, establishment of demonstration farms, etc.
- Representation and articulation of farmer's voice at different fora
- Lobby and advocacy

3. What Needs to be Done

- Appropriate Agricultural Insurance Schemes against the risks Put in place farmer friendly financial services which can lend to agriculture at affordable interest rates.
- of drought, flooding, fires, diseases and pests.
- Invest in mechanization to reduce human drudgery.
- Invest in establishment of small scale irrigation schemes.
- Support appropriate post-harvesting technologies.
- Provide schemes and/or policy framework to support farmer group marketing.

- Land titling, land accessibility and ownership, land markets.
- Facilitate investments in small-scale on- farm/community level agro-processing (value addition).
- Review existing policies to make them more relevant and supportive to agriculture and the farming communities.
- Reduce the cost of doing business in agriculture-taxation regimes, bureaucracy, corruption and high costs of transport and utilities.