



## **EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY**

### **EAST AFRICAN FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY POLICY**

**Adopted by the 34<sup>th</sup> Council of Ministers on 5<sup>th</sup> September, 2016**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The East African Community (EAC) is the regional intergovernmental organization of the Republics of Kenya, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania, Republic of Rwanda and Republic of Burundi with its headquarters in Arusha, Tanzania. In 2011, the EAC Food Security Action Plan (2011-2015) was adopted by the 9th Extraordinary Summit of the EAC Heads of State. One of the key recommendations of the action plan was the development of the EAC Food and Nutrition Security Policy (FNSP).

The FNSP helps the region to implement the provisions of the EAC Treaty (1999) Chapter 18 Article 110 which states: “Harmonize food supply, nutrition and food security policies and strategies” relating to stimulating agricultural development, eliminating hunger, eradicating poverty, and ensuring food security. This firms up cross-sector linkages necessary for implementation of chapters 11, 12, 14, 18, 21, 22, 25, and 26, inter alia of the 1990 EAC Treaty.

The FNSP responds to the current regional development and integration challenge in the EAC. It is aimed at achieving food and nutrition security in the region through pursuit of appropriate policy measures that target causal factors to food and nutrition insecurity in EAC. The magnitude of the challenge is manifested in the following revelations:

- Households in the EAC region are consuming inadequate foods in terms of quality and quantity needed for the dietary requirements that are commensurate with their nutritional needs.
- Majority of the population in the EAC region live on per capita food consumption of less than 2,100 Kcal. This is below the accepted global standards of 2,160 kcal per day.
- Rampant poverty, with majority of the population in the EAC lives below the poverty line of 1.25 dollars a day. This is an indication that these segments of the population are challenged in accessing sufficient food to meet their energy needs and inadequate varieties that will meet their nutritional requirements.
- Stunting (chronic deprivation) is worrisome in all the EAC Partner States as none of the countries exhibits below 20% (<20%) prevalence rate which is considered by World Health Organization (WHO) as low. Iron deficiency continues to be precarious while vitamin A and iodine deficiencies have been under control through supplementation and food fortification in the EAC countries. In addition, diet related illnesses (obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular illnesses and cancers) are on increase in the EAC region while HIV, TB and Malaria continue to pose social, medical and economic challenges.

The main causes and issues that are related to food and nutrition security are known and have been well documented but now require a regional policy response as the initial blueprint that will address the food insecurity and undernutrition, respectively.

EAC Partner States have made various efforts in the past to promote food security and adequate nutrition. These efforts include formulation of food and nutrition policies, agriculture and rural development policies and strategies as well as long-term development plans. Food and nutrition policies have been developed in Tanzania (1992), Uganda (2003), Rwanda (2005), Kenya (2007 and 2012), Burundi (2009) and Zanzibar (2008). These efforts

have culminated in the drawing up of National Nutrition Action Plans driven by the EAC Partner States' commitment to the global Scaling up of Nutrition (SUN)<sup>1</sup> initiative, i.e.

- Kenya, National Nutrition Action Plan, 2012-2017
- Tanzania: Nutrition Strategy, July 2011/12-June 2015/16
- Uganda: National Nutrition Action Plan, 2010-2015
- Rwanda, Nutrition policy (2007); Currently under revision to be finalized in 2014
- Burundi Nutrition Policy (at an advanced stage of development, 2014) & in pursuit to her commitments to the SUN initiative.

These policies have recognized the critical need for achieving food and nutrition security, but have in the past failed to address the complex challenges outlined in the situational analysis. Although these national efforts are commendable and have so far been consistent with the EAC principle of subsidiarity<sup>2</sup>, they now need to be aligned to the global food and nutrition security developments and the regional food and nutrition security policies, geared towards ensuring food and nutrition security for approximately 12.9 million people in the region, currently considered as food insecure.

The overall goal of the EAC Regional FSNP is therefore to achieve food security and adequate nutrition for the people in the East African region throughout their life cycle, for their health as well as their social and economic well-being. This goal is pursued through the broad policy objectives which seek to: -

1. Increase the quality and quantity of food, including those of animal origin and to ensure that all East Africans have adequate, diverse and healthy diets in a sustainable manner throughout their lives.
2. Reduce post harvest losses and promote value addition through the food production value chain.
3. Increase food availability at all times, for all the populations, using measures that ensure availability of food reserves to curb food-related emergencies.
4. Increase trade between member states and other regions inside and outside Africa and ensure realistic import duties on food items.
5. Increase employment opportunities, on and off farm.
6. Increase access to nutritious foods among the highly vulnerable rural, urban and peri-urban population groups.
7. Ensure consumption of safe, nutritious and high quality foods that conform to acceptable global and regional standards.
8. Increase protein and micronutrient intakes by increasing production and consumption of fish and fishery products; livestock and livestock products as well as non wood forest products.

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<sup>1</sup> SUN, 2013. Countries Scaling up Nutrition. <http://scalingupnutrition.org/sun-countries>

<sup>2</sup> The EAC Principle of Subsidiarity allows a Partner State to pursue national level policies to address specific concerns without reference to other EAC Partner States so long as they do not contradict or undermine regional laws or policies. The principle is applied in areas where the EAC has not developed common policies or regional laws.

9. Improve maternal nutritional and micronutrient status through consumption of nutritious foods, micronutrient supplementation and provision of appropriate health services.
10. Reduce the prevalence of stunting, wasting and underweight among children under five years old through a combination of nutrition specific and nutrition sensitive interventions.
11. Reduce the prevalence of anemia, vitamin A and iodine deficiency among under fives, pregnant and lactating women through both food based approaches, fortification, biofortification and micronutrient supplementation.
12. Improve health and nutritional status of the populations in public institutions such as schools, hospitals, prisons and armed forces.
13. Control prevalence of non-communicable diseases e.g. obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases and cancers through food-based approaches.
14. Provide timely information and research findings for evidence-based action on food and nutrition security.
15. Reduce vulnerability to emergency situations through timely risk reduction measures.
16. Reduce food and nutrition security through gender-based approaches.
17. Ensure greater achievements on food and nutrition security for PLHIV.
18. Mitigate the effect of climate change on food and nutrition security.
19. Cushion the vulnerable populations in the region from the negative effects of volatile food prices.
20. Reduce food contamination in the entire food chain and food safety measures in the region.
21. Ensure social protection measures for food and nutrition insecure population groups.
22. Incorporate multisectoral approaches to food and nutrition security through nutrition sensitive interventions.

Under each of the above policy objectives, a set of policy measures are proposed. The EAC FNSP also provides an institutional framework necessary for the achievement of the above objectives including coordination and Monitoring and Evaluation frameworks.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

|         |  |
|---------|--|
| ARNS    | Africa Regional Nutrition Strategy                             |
| ASAL    | Arid and Semi Arid Lands                                       |
| AU      | African Union  |
| BMI     | Body Mass Index  |
| CAADP   | Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program           |
| CET     | Common External Tariff   |
| CFS     | Committee on World Food Security                               |
| CMAM    | Community-based Management of Acute Malnutrition               |
| COMESA  | Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa                  |
| EA CMP  | East Africa Common Market Protocol                             |
| CSO     | Civil Society Organizations                                    |
| DHS     | Demographic Household Survey                                   |
| DRC     | Democratic Republic of the Congo                               |
| EAC     | East African Community   |
| EALA    | East African Legislative Assembly                              |
| EASC    | East African Standards Committee                               |
| ECSA-HC | East, Central and Southern African Health Community            |
| FAO     | Food and Agriculture Organization                              |
| FSN     | Food Security and Nutrition                                    |
| FNSP    | Food and Nutrition Security Policy                             |
| GDP     | Gross Domestic Product   |
| FAO     | Food and Agricultural Organization                             |
| FNS     | Food and Nutrition Security                                    |
| FNSP    | Food and Nutrition Security Policy                             |
| GFSI    | Global Food Security Index                                     |
| GHI     | Global Health Index  |
| GM      | Growth Monitoring  |
| HAACP   | Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point                         |
| HDI     | Human Development Index  |
| ICESCR  | International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights |
| IDA     | Iron Deficiency Anemia   |
| IDD     | Iodine Deficiency Disorders                                    |
| ISO     | International Standards Organization                           |
| IYCF    | Infant and Young Child feeding                                 |
| Kcal    | Kilocalories   |
| MDG     | Millennium Development Goals                                   |
| M&E     | Monitoring and Evaluation                                      |
| MSE     | Micro and Small Enterprise                                     |
| NCDs    | Non-Communicable Diseases                                      |
| NCPB    | National Cereals and Produce Board of Kenya                    |
| NEPAD   | New Partnership for Africa's Development                       |
| NWFP    | Non-Wood Forest Products                                       |
| ROW     | Rest of the World  |

|        |   |
|--------|---|
| SAM    | Severe Acute Malnutrition                                 |
| SFR    | Strategic Food Reserve                                    |
| SGR    | Strategic Grain Reserve                                   |
| SPS    | Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures                       |
| SQMT   | Standardization, Quality Assurance, Metrology and Testing |
| SSA    | Sub-Saharan Africa  |
| SUN    | Scaling up Nutrition                                      |
| TB     | Tuberculosis  |
| UN     | United Nations  |
| UNICEF | United Nations Children’s Fund                            |
| USAID  | United States Agency for International Development        |
| USD    | United States Dollars                                     |
| USI    | Universal Salt Iodization                                 |
| VAD    | Vitamin A Deficiency                                      |
| WASH   | Water, Sanitation and Hygiene                             |
| WHO    | World Health Organization                                 |



## GLOSSARY

**Adult underweight and overweight:** Defined by the body mass index (BMI): a simple index of weight-to-height. BMI is age-independent for adult populations and is the same for both genders. It is defined as the weight in kilograms divided by the square of the height in meters ( $\text{kg}/\text{m}^2$ ). A BMI of  $<17.0$  indicates moderate and severe thinness,  $<18.5$  indicates underweight,  $18.5\text{-}24.9$  indicates normal weight,  $\geq 25.0$  indicates overweight and  $\geq 30.0$  indicates obesity.

**Anemia:** A condition in which the number of red blood cells or their hemoglobin content is insufficient to meet physiological needs, which vary by age, altitude, gender, pregnancy status and smoking status. The most common cause of anemia globally is iron deficiency, but other causes include deficiencies in folate, vitamin B12 and vitamin A; chronic inflammation; parasitic infections; and inherited disorders. Severe anemia is associated with fatigue, weakness, dizziness and drowsiness. Pregnant women and children are particularly vulnerable to anemia.

### **Breastfeeding indicators:**

- **Early initiation to breastfeeding:** proportion of children born in the past 24 months who were put to the breast within 1 hour of birth.
- **Exclusive breastfeeding under 6 months:** proportion of infants aged 0-5 months who are fed exclusively with breast milk.
- **Continued breastfeeding up to 2 years:** proportion of children aged 6-11; 12-17; and 18-23 months who are fed on breast milk alongside complementary feeding.

**Child obesity:** weight-for-height  $>+3$  standard deviations above the WHO child growth standard median for children aged under 5 years. In some countries, overweight and obesity in children are measured as BMI centiles for age.

**Child overweight:** weight-for-height  $>+2$  standard deviations above the WHO child growth standard median for children aged under 5 years.

**Child stunting:** height-for-age  $<-2$  standard deviations below the WHO child growth standard median for children aged under 5 years. Stunting becomes a public health problem when  $\geq 20\%$  of the population is affected.

**Child underweight:** weight-for-age  $<-2$  standard deviations below the WHO child growth standard median for children aged under 5 years. Underweight becomes a public health problem when  $\geq 10\%$  of the population is affected.

**Child wasting:** weight-for-height  $<-2$  standard deviations below the WHO child growth standard median for children aged under 5 years. Wasting becomes a public health problem when  $\geq 5\%$  of the population is affected.

**Food safety:** Handling, preparation and storage of food in ways that prevent food borne illness. This includes a number of routines that should be followed to avoid potentially severe health hazards.

**Food Energy sufficiency:** Consumption of adequate foods in terms of quality and quantity to 2100 Kcal per day per person.

**Nutrition Security:** This is a term that's been prompted by the necessity to include nutritional considerations into food security. While food has been defined as any substance that people eat or drink to maintain life and growth, nutrition involves utilization of health services, healthy environment and caring practices, hence one is considered nutrition secure when she/he has a nutritionally adequate diet and when the food consumed is biologically utilized so as to maintain growth, resisting or recovering from disease, pregnancy, lactation and physical work (Frankenberger et al, 1997).

Nutrition security has thus been defined by FAO as a condition when all people at all times consume food of sufficient quantity and quality in terms of variety, diversity, nutrient content and safety to meet their dietary preferences for an active and healthy life, coupled with sanitary environment, adequate health and care (CFS 2012).

**Food and nutrition security:** Exists when all people at all times have physical, social and economic access to food, which is safe and consumed in sufficient quantity and quality to meet their dietary needs and food preferences, and is supported by an environment of adequate sanitation, health services and care, allowing for a healthy and active life.

**Vitamin A Deficiency:** Results from inadequate intake of vitamin A rich foods such as whole milk, butter, egg yolk, yellow/orange vegetables and fruits (carrots, orange-flesh, sweet potato, mango, papaya, etc) and fortified foods. Vitamin A deficiency (VAD) causes night blindness and high risk of blindness in its severe form. It also increases the severity and duration of infectious diseases like measles, tuberculosis (TB) and diarrhea thus leading to increased morbidity and mortality, especially for young children.

**Nutritional Anemia:** Results from insufficient intake and poor absorption of iron, folate and vitamin B12 by the body, diseases, especially malaria, worms and bilharzias. This problem is very common among pregnant women, children below five years of age and adolescents. Anemia leads to reduced physical as well as mental capacity. An anemic person becomes easily exhausted after performing light work or exercise. There is also a relationship between anemia and low birth weight, birth defects, abortion and reduced immunity among children. An anemic pregnant woman experiences increased frequency and occurrence of diseases and failure to withstand normal blood loss during delivery, either of which can be immediate cause of maternal death.

**Iodine deficiency:** The most frequent cause of preventable brain damage in childhood (this situation being the primary motivation behind the current worldwide drive to eliminate iodine deficiency) caused mainly by a low dietary supply of iodine.

**Iodine Deficiency Disorder (IDD):** Results from intake of foods deficient in iodine. Iodine deficiency disorders manifest mainly as goiter, which is the major observable sign, but with

more serious effects like physical, reduced attainment of optimal physical and mental development, mental retardation and reproductive problems including abortions and stillbirths.

**Underweight:** Low weight for age & low weight for height.

**Wasting:** Low weight for height.

**Stunting:** Low height for age.

**Agriculture:** In this document is taken to mean crop production, livestock production, fisheries aquaculture and forestry.

**Off Farm Employment:** This means non-farming income generation activities.

**Multidimensional Poverty Index:** Percentage of the population that is multidimensional poor adjusted by the intensity of the multiple deprivations at the individual level in education, health and standard of living.

**Human Development Index (HDI):** A composite index measuring average achievement in the three basic dimensions of human development- a long and healthy life, knowledge and a decent standard of living.

# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background

The East African Community (EAC) is the regional intergovernmental organization of the Republic of Kenya, Republic of Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania, Republic of Rwanda and Republic of Burundi with its headquarters in Arusha, established by the EAC Treaty in 1999. The Vision of the EAC is a prosperous, competitive, secure, stable and politically united East Africa. The EAC Mission is to widen and deepen economic, political, social and cultural integration in order to improve the quality of lives of the people of East Africa through increased competitiveness, value-added production, trade and investments.

The EAC Partner States aspire to the realization of an advanced regional economic bloc having a population that is not only food secure but also well nourished to positively contribute to economic development of the region.

In 2009, the EAC, through its leaders and in the context of EAC Partner States membership in intergovernmental and international organizations concerning food and agriculture, collectively agreed on three global goals:

- a) Reduction of the absolute number of people suffering from hunger, progressively ensuring a world in which people at all times have sufficient safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life;
- b) Elimination of extreme poverty and the driving forward of economic and social progress for all, with increased food production, enhanced rural development and sustainable livelihoods; and
- c) Sustainable management and utilization of natural resources, including land, water, air, climate and genetic resources for the benefit of present and future generations.

This ambition was harnessed in 2010 in the East Africa Common Market Protocol (CMP) which provides a framework for exploiting economies of scale in the production and supply of food, all geared towards realization of the following targets: -

- Increased agricultural production and productivity;
- Achievement of food and nutrition security;
- Promotion of investments in agriculture and food security;
- Development of effective agricultural markets and marketing systems
- Promotion of agro processing and value addition to agricultural products in the Community

In April 2011, the EAC Food Security Action Plan (2011-2015) was adopted by the 9th Extraordinary Summit of the EAC Heads of State. One of the targets of this Action Plan was the development of a Regional Food and Nutrition Security Policy (FNSP) to address numerous food and nutrition security challenges that the EAC region was

facing, including positioning the region to reap socio-economic benefits that accrue from robust nutrition policies and strategies. The FNSP helps the region to implement the provisions of the EAC Treaty (1999) Chapter 18 Article 110 which states: “Harmonize food supply, nutrition and food security policies and strategies” related to stimulating agriculture development, eliminating hunger and eradicating poverty, and ensuring food security. The FNSP firms up cross-sector linkages necessary for implementation of chapters 11, 12, 14, 18, 21, 22, 25, and 26 *inter alia* of the 1999 EAC Treaty.

## 1.2 Rationale and Scope of the EAC FNSP

### 1.2.1 Rationale

EAC Partner States have made various efforts in the past to promote food security and proper nutrition. These efforts include formulation of food and nutrition policies, agriculture and rural development policies and strategies and long-term development plans. Food and nutrition policies have been developed in Tanzania (1992), Uganda (2003), Rwanda (2005), Kenya (2007 and 2012), Burundi (2009) and Zanzibar (2008). These efforts have culminated in the following Partner States drawing up National Nutrition Action Plans driven by the EAC Partner States’ commitment to the global Scaling up of Nutrition (SUN)<sup>3</sup> initiative:

- Kenya, National Nutrition Action Plan; 2012-2017
- Tanzania, Nutrition Strategy; July 2011/12-June 2015/16
- Uganda, National Nutrition Action Plan ; 2010-2015
- Rwanda, Nutrition policy (2007); Currently under revision to be finalized in 2014
- Burundi Nutrition Policy (at an advanced stage of development, 2014)

Although these policies have recognized the critical need for achieving food and nutrition security, they have however failed in the past to address the complex food and nutritional security challenges that the region has been facing. According to the EAC Food Security Action Plan (2011-2015) nearly 12.9 million people in the region are considered to be food insecure. This fact is further affirmed by data on the region’s access to sufficient food which illustrates a surge in the population that is considered to be food energy insufficient by virtue of being below the global standards of energy sufficiency level of 2,100kcal per day.

The nutrition security at the regional level is characterized by for low prevalence of stunting. Further, national policies, strategies and efforts are not specific to addressing chronic malnutrition, an integral development among young children, which is directly related to their poor cognitive, social and physical development and productivity later in life.

Food and nutrition security linkages have not been well understood in a comprehensive manner nor has the importance of value chains for nutrition been adequately appreciated. Interventions continue to concentrate on production of good sources of energy foods, rather than production and consumption of diverse foods. To unravel these complexities and the food insecurity situation in the region, the determinants of food availability, access, utilization and stability within the region must be understood. Achieving food and

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<sup>3</sup> SUN, 2013. Countries Scaling up Nutrition. <http://scalingupnutrition.org/sun-countries>

nutrition security and optimal nutrition is complex, requiring multidimensional approaches including strengthening health systems, agriculture systems, and social protection systems as well as harmonized policies, legislation, standards, guidelines and regulatory systems.

### 1.2.2 Scope

The EAC FNSP provides a basis for strategic and programmatic directions for EAC Partner States to use for managing food and nutrition security issues in the coming years. The FNSP recognizes that the term “food security and nutrition” continues to evolve. The terminology used in this policy document, “Food and Nutrition Security” has two components: 1) food security and 2) nutrition security. The current term used is aligned to the recommended terminology by the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), which has recognized the four dimensions of food security as availability, access, utilization and stability. On the other hand, nutrition security refers to access to food, care, health and sanitation. At the regional level therefore, all these dimensions of food and nutrition security have been recognized to determine the accepted terminology of food and nutrition security.

The FNSP is cognizant of the reality that malnutrition is a complex challenge that requires broad approaches incorporating broad-based interventions addressing immediate, underlying and basic causes of malnutrition, in the short, medium and long-term. It has therefore adopted multi-sectoral and integrated approaches towards improvements of the food and nutrition security situation in the region. The Policy also recognizes that achieving food and nutrition security does not lie with one sector but is rather cross-sectoral. The FNSP has therefore embraced cross-sectoral approaches as complements to nutrition sensitive interventions which long formed the basis of nutrition responses. It further recognizes that good nutrition starts during pre-pregnancy years and continues after delivery and through to a child’s second birthday. Proper nutrition continues through stages of early childhood years, during schooling years, to adolescence, adulthood and finally into the elderly years.

To effectively support the implementation of food and nutrition security actions, the FNSP describes the operational structures including the institutional arrangements such as food and nutrition security leadership, governance and management, coordination, integrated and multi-sectoral linkages for its operationalization. It also provides guidance for increased advocacy, investments and partnerships to advance food and nutrition security. To measure the impact of the outlined strategic actions, the strategy has incorporated a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework to ensure that implementation of strategic interventions are appropriately monitored and evaluated for greater impact.

The Policy fully recognizes the importance of creating a dynamic framework that is reviewed and adjusted on a periodic basis. This is a critical characteristic of any policy that recognizes the challenges of attaining food security and improved nutrition at all levels of society. Efforts contained in this policy document are broad-based in scope, addressing the many challenges posed by globalization, regional market integration, demographic change, urbanization, income inequalities, climate change and increasing pressure, on and demand for natural resources. Accordingly, the current policy addresses broad-based approaches associated with issues of chronic, poverty-based food insecurity and malnutrition, as well as

the perpetuity of acute food insecurity and malnutrition due to frequent and recurring emergencies and the critical linkages thereof.

### **1.3 Vision, Goal, Objectives of the EAC FNSP**

#### **1.3.1 Vision**

The vision of the EAC FNSP is a sustainable food and nutrition security outcomes for the entire population in the EAC Partner States at all times, especially vulnerable persons in the context of regional economic growth and development.

#### **1.3.2 Overall goal of the Policy**

The overall goal of the EAC FNSP is to attain food and nutrition security for all the people of East African Community throughout their life cycle, for their health as well as their social and economic well-being.

#### **1.3.3 Objectives of the Policy**

To respond to the food and nutrition security challenge among the EAC member states, the policy has been developed and will be guided by a number of objectives, namely:

- i) Provide a framework for action that strengthens linkages between nutrition, health, food security, agriculture, and other sectors to ensure reductions in malnutrition.
- ii) Identify aspects of agriculture that have the potential to lead to nutrition outcomes among the EAC member states.
- iii) Provide a framework for incorporating nutrition objectives and indicators into agriculture policies.
- iv) Identify aspects of food security that have a direct bearing on nutrition and health to be addressed by EAC food and nutrition security programs.
- v) Ensure access to safe and nutritious foods through a value chain approach towards sustainable food systems across Partner States from food surplus to food deficit areas.
- vi) Ensure achievement of sustainable food and nutrition security for all through increased investments in regional food systems (crops, livestock, fisheries and forestry) resulting in East Africa as a net exporter of food.
- vii) Put in place structured trading systems for food commodities and products.
- viii) Put in place measures that will respond to emerging issues, including risk reductions at regional levels on food and nutrition security.
- ix) Improve stability of food supply and access by improving the region's capacity for emergency preparedness and response.

## 2 EAC FOOD & NUTRITION SECURITY POLICIES

### 2.1 Food Security

#### 2.1.1 Agricultural production and productivity through a value chain approach

##### **Policy Issue**

Increasing demand for nutritious foods resulting from adequate food production (crop, livestock, fisheries and non wood forest products) in a manner that will lead to sustainable food supply and adequate nutritional status remains a major challenge in the EAC region. Lack of adequate food in terms of quality and quantity is attributable to a number of risk factors and shocks to food production amongst smallholder farmers. For instance, majority of the farmers in the East African region over-rely on rain-fed agriculture which is adversely affected by the impact of climate change thus resulting in seasonal variation of food availability and pastures in the rangelands. There remains limited adoption of irrigation and water management systems. There is under-utilization of the arable land in the region and this is a major impediment to food security with less than 25% of the arable land being utilized for production in the entire region. Other constraints include; limited access to quality agricultural inputs such as seeds, stocking material, feeds, fertilizers, fingerling, agrochemicals; crop and animal pests and diseases, low agricultural yields due in part to the small scale nature of agriculture; low diversification of food crops beyond staples; low productivity of livestock and limited use of modern technology. Besides, there is limited access to agricultural extension and advisory services as well as low budgetary allocation for research and agricultural development. Added together, all these conditions have continued to aggravate the regional food and nutrition security situation. Meeting the food production in a sustainable manner will continue to be challenging unless these conditions are addressed. A policy environment that will ensure an enabling environment in the region to fulfill the nutritional needs of the vulnerable population groups through food availability, access, stability and utilization is urgently required.

##### **Policy Objective**

To increase accessibility and availability of both quality and quantity of food to ensure that all East Africans have an adequate, diverse and healthy diets in a sustainable manner.

##### **Policy measures**

The EAC Partner States will:

1. Support promotion of regional food production (availability, access, utilization and stability) of nutrient-rich foods.
2. Promote innovative fish production technologies in household ponds and minor waters to increase production of nutrient rich fish species.
3. Promote use of appropriate technologies for livestock production and products along the livestock value chain.
4. Promote production of non-conventional livestock products (quails, insects, guinea pigs, etc) among small holder farmers for food and nutrition security and livelihoods.



5. Promote availability and access to improved seeds, planting and stocking materials and other inputs.
6. Promote access to finance and insurance services under favorable and affordable terms to farmers in the region.
7. Support investments in infrastructure (roads, water, power, communications, markets, etc.) to increase food production opportunities in rural areas.
8. Support development of water harvesting, conservation and use to promote agricultural production.
9. Support investment in irrigated agriculture.
10. Promote adoption of new technologies as well as proven indigenous knowledge to improve agricultural productivity and climate smart agriculture.
11. Support facilitation of targeted food support programs, emergency relief responses and social safety nets and sustainable livelihoods to increase food availability among the vulnerable population groups in the region.
12. Support increased funding to food and agricultural sectors to the minimum target of 10% of the national budget as well as periodic review as agreed by the NEPAD Heads of State in Maputo Declaration 2003.
13. Support development of insurance instruments to cover crop, fish and livestock production due to natural disasters, disease and input costs risks.
14. Promote efforts to control of trans-boundary pests and diseases that have implications on food and nutrition security.
15. Promote regional centers' of excellence to enhance food and nutrition security.
16. promote land consolidation initiatives especially for small holder farmers to ensure optimal productivity
17. Promote investment in research on crops, livestock and fisheries production linked to food and nutrition security.

### **Expected Outcomes**

- Reduced food insecurity and malnutrition through increased yield of diverse foods produced by farmers to meet the demands of sustainable food system.

### **2.1.2 Promote effective Postharvest management measures and agro-processing**

#### **Policy Issue**

Post-harvest losses and wastage remain high in the region. The FAO has established these losses to be as high as 30% for cereals, 50% for roots and tubers and up to 70% for vegetables and fruits annually. Storage facilities with high moisture prevalence is a notable public health concern especially when contaminated foods are consumed, thus leading to aflatoxin contamination. Spoilage of animal products including milk, meat and fish is also substantial during periods of plenty. Inadequate storage infrastructure thus constitutes a public health threat when people consume spoiled food. Moreover, the use of traditional household food processing and preservation methods such as sun drying, fire drying, salting, fermenting, smoking, roasting and grinding, have been on decline while industrial methods have replaced traditional preservation methods. In this regard, promoting effective measures on food storage and agro-processing that will yield consumption of safe, high quality nutritious foods are important public health considerations in minimizing food losses and wastage.

**Policy objective**

To reduce post-harvest losses and promote value addition.

**Policy Measures**

The EAC Partner States will:

1. Promote best practices for post harvest handling and management along the food supply value chain, including livestock and fishery products
2. Promote rural infrastructure and appropriate technologies for processing and preservation of various foods, including livestock and fish products
3. Promote capacity building on effective post harvest management along the food value chain
4. Promote measures that will facilitate cross-border investment of food storage processing and preservation facilities.
5. Support development of regional knowledge base and information on post harvest management

**Expected Outcome**

- Reductions in post harvest losses and increased incomes across the food production value chain

**2.1.3 Promote Strategic Food Reserves (SFR)****Policy Issue**

The strategic food reserves play a significant role in addressing shocks that affects food availability as well as stabilizing food prices in times of need. Further, strategic food reserves have been recognized as an important function in helping countries to cope with food emergencies, while at times providing grain-loans to organizations or countries. Grain reserves take two forms i.e. physical or financial grain reserves. While physical reserves aim to meet national food shortfalls, financial reserves are meant for the purchase of a pre-defined amount of food in times of crisis.

The EAC Partner States have had varying experiences and challenges with strategic food reserves. These include; low volume of purchase and sales, bureaucratic procedures, under utilization capacity, chronic operating deficits due to pricing policies and delays in releasing funds among others. In a number of countries in the region, the strategic food reserves have not been effective in stabilizing staple grain prices and subsequently meeting the food security needs.

Overall, the SFRs in the East African countries comprise only of grains, which are not the main staple food for communities often facing hunger and famine. There is need, therefore, for the reserve to be expanded beyond grains to accommodate other foodstuffs. The specific mix of commodities and the mix between cash and physical commodities will be established by the FNSP in accordance with international guidelines and practices.

**Policy Objective**

To ensure food availability and accessibility for all the populations.

## **Policy Measures**

The EAC Partner States will:

1. Promote establishment and scaling up of food reserves.
2. Support and encourage Private and Public sector Partnerships on establishment of strategic regional food reserves.
3. Support establishment of the EAC food information system including the Regional Food Balance Sheet and regulatory measures to ensure accurate information on available food at any time.
4. Promote guidelines for trading on food reserve stocks to the regional market to avoid disruption of regional food markets.

## **Expected Outcome**

Reduction in the number of people who are food insecure.

### **2.1.4 Promote regional and international trade in food**

#### **Policy Issue**

Trade plays a significant role in food security, notably in enhancing food availability and access. To date, trade liberalization has enhanced the opportunity for availability and accessibility to a wide range of food commodities in the region. However, despite trade policy measures that have been taken to increase intra-regional trade, the regional agricultural trade remains low with EAC market being dominated by imports from Rest of the World. Presently, intra-regional trade share in total regional market for food products is less than 10% for most of traded food products. The insignificant volume of intra-regional trade has been attributed to various technological, institutional, legal and other barriers to trade that inhibit movement of goods and services from one country to another.<sup>4</sup>

Bulk of food commodities are also traded informally, thus denying policy makers an opportunity to capture data for purposes of planning and managing food supplies in the region. Informal cross border trade is fuelled by trade regulatory requirements that are times beyond the reach of informal cross border traders. These requirements include SPS regulations, Standards and Customs documentation requirements.

While the EAC Common External Tariff (CET) provides protection to the agricultural sector, the tariff may undermine access to food in seasons when the EAC Partner States are unable to produce sufficient food for the region. However, the EAC Customs Union Protocol has provided a policy space which the EAC Council uses to waive tariff of certain agricultural products whenever an EAC Partner States expresses need to import such products from Rest of the World as a result of regional shortage of such products. At the moment, however, there are no regional criteria to guide decision making on when waiver of duty on food items should be exercised to allow the region to mitigate regional shortages. Such a criteria is needed in order to ensure that trade policy does not undermine accessibility to food for all and at all times.

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<sup>4</sup> Omiti J, Ommeh-Natu H, Ndirangu L, Laibuni N, Waiyaki N (2011). Exploration of Food Security Situation in the Nile Basin Region., Journal of Development and Agricultural Economics Vol. 3(7) pp. 274-285

## **Policy Objective**

Increase trade between Partner States and other regions to ensure adequate food supply.

## **Policy Measures**

The EAC Partner States will:

1. Support establishment of a criteria for review of the Common External Tariff (CET) for agricultural produce that are classified as sensitive.
2. Promote trade of fortified foods and whole foods through review of customs nomenclature and tariff codes to ensure identification of these products for purposes of export/import declaration and trade facilitation.
3. Support development of standards for fortified foods.
4. Support implementation of EAC standards for trade in staple foods
5. Support removal of Non Tariff Barriers
6. Support establishment and implementation of shared Pest Risk Analysis.
7. Promote regional support for infrastructural development.
8. Promote harmonized investment incentives for food processing equipments.
9. Promote investments in market infrastructure.
10. Promote farmer access to timely and accurate market information services.
11. Promote urban and rural development plans for effective functioning wholesale and retail markets.
12. Promote regional trading of food stock held in warehouses and other collections points.
13. Promote regional trade for stocks held by regionally-registered private sector contributors to the EAC Regional Food Balance Sheet.

## **Expected outcome**

- Adequate food supply resulting from enhanced regional and international trade on food-based commodities.

### **2.1.5 Promote on-farm and off-farm employment opportunities**

#### **Policy Issue**

It is estimated that between 70% and 80% of the labor force in the EAC is involved in the agricultural sector in one way or another. Between 24% and 48% of the GDP of the member countries, is attributed to the agriculture sector with between 61% and 92% of the population in the region employed in the agricultural sector. Diminishing landholding sizes, declining land productivity and limited use of productivity enhancing technologies limit both on-farm employment and farmer incomes. While rural women provide over 70% of labor in smallholdings, the youth who are the majority of the population shun agriculture. However, access to, and control of, productive resources such as land and capital is mainly in the hands of men. In the Arid and Semi Arid Lands (ASALs), livestock herders live under constant threat of natural and man-made disasters.

The agricultural commercial sector provides employment for large segments of the population but wages are low and therefore compromising workers' access to nutritious foods. Formal and informal small and medium enterprises (SMEs) play a key role in off-farm employment. However, these enterprises face various challenges including an unfavorable policy environment, an inhibitive legal and regulatory environment such as multiple

licensing and fees, limited access to markets and financial services, inadequate skills and technology, limited access to infrastructure, inadequate business skills, weak linkages with large enterprises and limited access to information. All of these issues have implications on off-farm and on-farm opportunities.

### **Policy Objective**

To increase on- and off-farm employment opportunities.

### **Policy measures**

The EAC Partner States will:

1. Support increased investments in rural economy to enhance income generating activities.
2. Promote diversification of economic activities targeting on and off farm activities
3. Promote review of minimum wages regularly to take into account food and nutrition security needs, inflation rates and labor productivity.
4. Support measures that improve security and access to land and water resources especially by women, youth, the elderly, pastoralists, agro-pastoralists and child-headed households.
5. Support cooperatives, out-grower schemes, contract farming and fair-trade initiatives to increase the share of small producers in the production and export of high value crops, livestock and fish.
6. Promote simplification of business registration, licensing and regulations and provide legal and institutional support to small and medium enterprises to provide employment opportunity on and off- farm.
7. Support development of small and medium size firms that provide employment opportunity on and off-farm.

### **Expected Outcome**

Improved regional on and off farm employment opportunities

## **2.1.6 Improving food accessibility for the urban and peri-urban Poor**

### **Policy Issue**

Urban areas in the region are experiencing rapid expansion and massive population growth ranging from annual rates of 3.9% to 5.9% mainly due to rural to urban migration. Rural emigration results in transfer of poverty, hunger and malnutrition from the rural areas to towns and cities. In view of the fact that these population groups lack access to natural resources, principally land and water, that would allow them grow food on their own, they depend mainly on purchased food. The urban poor are thus highly vulnerable to economic crises such as high food prices since they spend a large share of their disposable incomes on food. Economic downturns can reduce their employment and income opportunities and these have the propensity towards far reaching implications on their food and nutrition security.

The urban and peri-urban poor may not be able to take advantage of employment and income earning opportunities when their health and nutrition status and overall well-being is at imminent and serious risk. It is therefore necessary to put in place urban and peri-urban

food production measures that will ensure overall food and nutrition security of the vulnerable population groups in urban settings.

### **Policy Objective**

Increase access to nutritious foods for highly vulnerable urban and peri-urban dwellers.

### **Policy Measures**

The EAC Partner States will:

1. Support regulatory frameworks governing formal and informal sectors in urban and peri-urban areas focusing on employment creation and poverty alleviation.
2. Support capacity building to enhance urban and peri-urban small businesses and entrepreneurial skills, including agricultural production.
3. Support small business enterprises in urban and peri-urban agricultural activities to access affordable financial resources.
4. Promote infrastructural development including roads and transport systems to markets to enable smooth movement of agricultural goods to and from rural-urban areas.

### **Expected Outcome**

- Improved food security for the urban and peri-urban poor in the EAC partner states.

## **2.2 Nutrition Security**

### **2.2.1 Maternal nutrition for women of reproductive ages**

#### **Policy Issue**

Good maternal nutrition is a determinant of sound nutrition, health and well being of children. The EAC faces a high prevalence of undernutrition characterized by low body mass index (BMI) and micronutrient deficiencies for mothers as well as the resultant high malnutrition rates for under five year old children. There is also growing concern of overweight and obesity among women of child bearing age. There is thus an urgent need to improve maternal nutrition through actions that will pay attention to dietary diversification in consumption of nutrient rich foods. Ensuring maternal nutrition is the first step to guaranteeing sound nutrition and health status of mother and baby, especially during the first 1000 days from conception to two years of the child's life.

#### **Policy Objective**

Improve maternal nutrition through food based approaches, micronutrient supplementation, provision of appropriate health services and behavior change communication initiatives.

#### **Policy Measures**

The EAC Partner States will:

1. Promote healthy food consumption patterns among women of reproductive age before, during and after pregnancy
2. Promote healthy dietary practices, lifestyle and physical activity amongst women of reproductive age
3. Promote social and behavior change communication for improved nutrition among women of reproductive age

4. Promote routine nutritional screening, early detection and appropriate management of anemia and other micronutrient deficiencies among pregnant and lactating women
5. Support prioritization of nutritional conditions of women of reproductive age through gender sensitive nutrition initiatives
6. Support both community and facility based safe motherhood initiatives linked to maternal nutrition
7. Promote integrated and multisectoral approaches to maternal nutrition

#### **Expected Outcome**

- Reduced under nutrition among women of reproductive age to acceptable World Health Organization standards
- Reduced low birth weight according to global standards

### **2.2.2 Infant and young child nutrition**

#### **Policy Issue**

Undernutrition is a common challenge in EAC Partner States. Promoting optimal infant and young child feeding practices is vital in ensuring new born and child health. All children have a right to benefit from optimal feeding practices and be protected from the adverse effects of malnutrition. A sound and healthy start to life will guarantee healthy and productive adults who will participate fully in national development. Nutritional considerations are therefore critical during the 1000-day window of opportunity. Supporting interventions that ensure improved quality and increased coverage of nutrition services for under five year old children is vital.

#### **Policy Objective**

Reduce the prevalence of stunting, wasting, underweight, overweight and obesity among under five year old children.

#### **Policy measures**

The EAC Partner States will:

1. Support cost effective and high impact nutrition specific interventions for infant and young child nutrition
2. Support nutrition sensitive interventions for optimal child nutrition
3. Promote scaling up of facility and community-based interventions on infant and young child feeding and caring practices.
4. Support strengthened routine growth monitoring and promotion for under five year old children
5. Support strengthened infant and young child feeding and care practices in the context of HIV&AIDS.
6. Strengthen capacity of service providers involved in supporting infant and young child feeding and care practices
7. Support development and enforcement of legislations and regulations that improve infant and young child feeding practices.
8. Promote sustainable integrated approaches to child health and nutrition interventions

### **Expected Outcomes**

- Reduced stunting, wasting, underweight, overweight and obesity among under five year old children according to acceptable WHO standards
- Reduced micronutrient deficiencies among under five year old children according to acceptable WHO standards

### **2.2.3 Adolescent Nutrition**

#### **Policy Issue**

Adolescence is the period following childhood characterized by greater demand of calories due to increased physical growth and development. Failure to consume adequate diets during this period can slow down linear growth. Adolescence is also a period marked by changed lifestyles and eating habits that dramatically affect nutritional intake. Available empirical evidence shows that many youth consume inadequate nutritious foods such as micronutrient rich foods. Healthy foods such as fruits and vegetables don't appeal to them coupled with perceptions that traditional vegetables lack taste. They also don't consume high fiber foods. Rather they are more attracted to highly processed foods consisting of saturated fats, snacks with high salt levels and added sugars as well as carbonated drinks rather than milk and nutritious fruit juices.

Reduced food intake among adolescents has wide implications for micronutrient deficiencies especially among reproductive age groups. Two notable micronutrients namely; iron and folate has effects on pregnancy outcomes and predisposes pregnant and lactating adolescent mothers to iron folate deficiency. Evidence available shows that these micronutrients are associated with congenital birth defects such as neural tube deficiency and low birth weights.

The knowledge regarding impacts of poor nutrition on adolescence health is inadequate in the region while the influence of media predisposes them to poor eating habits. Of great concern is the rising incidences of obesity and overweight among adolescence and these are known to be associated with health risks such as cardiovascular diseases and diabetes. Providing nutritious diets for adolescence therefore results in better health outcomes and will reduce risks of future chronic disorders. It's for these reasons that these are population groups need nutrition interventions in the EAC partner states.

#### **Policy objective**

Improved nutritional status amongst adolescents in the Partner States

#### **Policy measures**

The EAC Partner States will:

1. Promote behavior change initiatives on appropriate nutrition practices and healthy lifestyle
2. Promote nutrition screening among adolescents to identify those at risk of undernutrition and over nutrition
3. Promote development of dietary guidelines on healthy diets, lifestyle and physical activity among children, adolescents and adults
4. Promote research on adolescents nutrition



### **Expected outcome**

- Reduced underweight, overweight and obesity among adolescents
- Reduced micronutrients deficiencies among adolescents

## **2.2.4 Micronutrient deficiency, prevention and control**

### **Policy Issue**

Micronutrient deficiencies pose major public health challenges in the EAC Partner States. The major micronutrient deficiencies are vitamin A, iron deficiency anemia, iodine deficiency disorder and calcium and zinc deficiencies. There is also lack of up-to-date data on micronutrient status in the region to guide effective actions. Initiatives to address micronutrient deficiencies in the region include the regional food fortification initiatives that have been supported by ECSA. This initiative has achieved some modest gains and successes in many countries in the region. There are also national level initiatives focusing on mandatory fortification of foods by large scale producers. In addition, biofortification initiatives exist on a limited scale. These initiatives have been reflected up in the policy measures towards effective micronutrient controls in the EAC region.

### **Policy Objective**

Reduce the prevalence of anemia, vitamin A, iron, zinc, calcium and iodine deficiencies to acceptable WHO standards.

### **Policy Measures**

The EAC Partner States will:

1. Promote behavior change to improve consumption of micronutrient rich foods amongst the vulnerable population groups.
2. Promote consumption of livestock, fish, insects and non wood forest products to improve protein and micronutrient intakes amongst the vulnerable population groups
3. Promote increased supply and coverage of micronutrient supplementation programs notably; Vitamin A, Iron folate and micronutrient powders
4. Promotion of periodic monitoring and consumption of iodized salt
5. Promote and enforce food fortification to increase vitamin A, iron and iodine content in appropriate food vehicles.
6. Promote increased coverage and consumption of bio-fortified staple foods to improve micronutrient status.
7. Support continued engagement with the private sector on development of safe and reliable micronutrient supplements
8. Support de-worming interventions in the region to reduce the burden of worms among school going children.
9. Promote and support periodic assessments on micronutrient deficiency, prevention and control.

### **Expected outcomes**

- Reduced micronutrient deficiency prevalence according to WHO standards

## 2.2.5 Prevention and management of acute malnutrition

### Policy Issues

East African Region countries are from time to time faced with emergency situations which range from droughts, floods and civil unrest. These circumstances cause acute food insecurity which results in increased wasting rates. Additionally, the Arid and Semi Arid Lands (ASAL) in the region experience frequent food insecurity. Prevention and treatment of severe and moderate acute malnutrition among under five year old children, including pregnant and lactating mothers and other vulnerable groups have been established to reduce incidences of severe and moderate wasting rates. Acute malnutrition among these age brackets implies that their growth is affected during this period of time thus increasing the likelihood of not meeting growth and developmental milestones.

### Policy Objective

To reduce wasting rates among under five year old children, pregnant and lactating women and other vulnerable groups.

### Policy Measure

The EAC Partner States will:

1. Support scaling up of nutrition interventions that detect, treat and prevent acute malnutrition among under five year old children, pregnant and lactating women and other vulnerable population groups
2. Strengthen capacity of health workers and community-based resource persons on prevention, detection and treatment of severe acute malnutrition and moderate acute malnutrition
3. Harmonize technical guidelines for treatment and prevention of severe acute malnutrition and moderate acute malnutrition.
4. Support provision of adequate supplies and commodities for treatment of severe acute malnutrition and moderate acute malnutrition in all the nutrition service delivery points
5. Support nutrition surveys using the appropriate survey methodologies
6. Promote local production of ready to use therapeutic food products to manage severe acute malnutrition

### Expected Outcomes

- Reduce wasting rates among under five year old children, pregnant and lactating women and other vulnerable population groups according to acceptable global standards

## 2.2.6 Nutrition and Feeding in public and private institutions

### Policy Issues:

The current education curriculum in EAC Partner States needs to be augmented with nutrition and health education programs at early childhood care centers', primary and secondary schools. Presently, pupils are completing their schooling with limited nutrition and health related information. This does not assure a future generation that will be able to make well informed nutrition specific decisions on food choices and food habits for their families and the vulnerable members in the community. Policy guidelines are also required for institutional feeding in prisons, armed forces and hospitals. These are presently lacking. Adequacy of food provided in these institutions with regard to dietary requirements are

important policy considerations. To enhance school health and nutrition as well as institutional feeding in public settings (hospitals, prisons and armed forces), the EAC member states need to commit to a number of policies.

**Policy Objective**

Improve health and nutrition status in public and private institutions with institutional feeding initiatives.

**Policy Measures:**

The EAC Partner States will:

1. Support the incorporation of nutrition in the education curriculum of primary and secondary levels to instill sound nutritional practices.
2. Support and promote adequate intake of macro and micronutrients in public and private institutions offering institutional feeding programs
3. Support strengthened capacity for service providers in public and private institutional feeding programs on sound nutrition practices
4. Support the scaling up of safe water, sound hygiene, care practices and sanitation in the context of institutional feeding
5. Promote development and implementation of nutrition guidelines for institutional feeding
6. Promote multisectoral responses for institutional feeding programs including private sector involvements
7. Promotion of extra-curricular activities for public and private institutional feeding programs

**Expected Outcomes:**

- Adequate recommended nutrient intake for institutional feeding

**2.2.7 Prevention, and management of non-communicable diet related diseases (NCDs)**

**Policy Issue**

Obesity, overweight and their metabolic syndromes as well as diabetes, cardiovascular diseases and cancers are closely associated to dietary consumption patterns and lifestyles. In the EAC partner states, dietary transitions are now exemplified by the changing eating patterns thus increasing risks to NCDs. There has been a recent shift from consumption of traditional high fiber cereals and nutritious foods to consumption of highly processed and refined foods low in fiber but high in salt, sugar content and saturated fats. Consumption of these foods poses a major cause of NCDs and contributes to emerging health problems.

**Policy Objective**

Prevent and manage non-communicable diet related diseases

## **Policy Measures**

The EAC Partner States will:

1. Promote healthy diets, lifestyles and physical activity to reduce prevalence of diet related non-communicable diseases
2. Promote nutrition counseling, education and treatment for the prevention and management of non-communicable diseases
3. Support institutional and human resource capacity on prevention and management of diet related non-communicable diseases
4. Support nutrition education on nutrition information not supported by empirical evidence on nutrient supplements
5. Promote compliance with Codex standards on food labeling.
6. Promote regional research capacities on magnitude, trends, prevention and management of diet related non-communicable diseases.

## **Expected outcomes**

- Reduction in the prevalence of diet related diet related non-communicable diseases.
- Improved management of diet related NCDs conditions

## **2.2.8 Nutrition management of communicable diseases (HIV&AIDS, TB and Malaria)**

### **Policy Issue**

Communicable diseases such as HIV&AIDS, TB and Malaria continue to be issues of nutrition concern in the in EAC Partner States. In particular HIV&AIDS, TB and Malaria have led to negative social, medical and economic effects. In the past 10 years, the rising cases of multi-drug resistance TB have complicated the fight against TB and HIV co-infection. Because of the link between HIV&AIDS, TB and Malaria, the dual burden has complicated the management and treatment of these diseases. Nutrition response to these illnesses can reduce the devastating negative impact of HIV&AIDS.

When it comes to malaria, population groups that are at increased risk are under five year old children and pregnant women. Malaria remains a major cause of morbidity and nutritional anemia. Underweight children are more susceptible to nutritional implications of malaria due to their compromised immune system and therefore cannot mount an appropriate immune response against malarial parasites. In malaria endemic zones, malaria makes a great contribution to iron deficiency anemia.

### **Policy objective**

Integrate nutrition in the management of HIV&AIDS, TB and Malaria to reduce the impact of communicable diseases

### **Policy measures**

The EAC Partner States will:

1. Strengthen nutrition counseling and education at health facilities and community levels on HIV&AIDS, TB and Malaria

2. Promote regional Elimination and/or Prevention Mother to Child Transmission of HIV&AIDS programs for pregnant and lactating women
3. Strengthen institutional and human resource capacity to address nutritional needs in the management of communicable diseases
4. Promote targeted food assistance to vulnerable individuals infected and affected by HIV&AIDS and TB
5. Promotion of integrated nutrition interventions in the prevention and management of HIV&AIDS, TB and Malaria.

### **Expected outcome**

Reduced vulnerability to undernutrition as a result of HIV&AIDS, TB and malaria

## **2.3 Cross Cutting Issues for Food & Nutrition Security**

Achievements in food and nutrition security are determined by a number of cross-cutting issues and these are often outside the health sector mandate. Cross-cutting policy issues linking nutrition and food security have been outlined below;

### **2.3.1 Gender considerations in food and nutrition security**

#### **Policy issue**

Women account for 70% of the agricultural labor force yet their access to and control over productive resources like land and capital remains limited. Women's role in agriculture has historically been undervalued especially when it comes to decision-making. Women for instance lack access to land, resource entitlements, inputs, and technology and have little contact with extension services.

Women also play significant roles in guaranteeing household food security, children's nutritional and health status. Indeed, it's been established that women spend a great share of their incomes on family food needs. Besides, they play important roles in food processing, marketing and preparation of foods at household level. Yet women's nutritional status remains wanting. The physiological needs of women during pregnancy and lactation expose women to malnutrition, especially micronutrient malnutrition e.g. anemia and folate deficiencies. Maternal health and nutrition is a critical determinant of child health and nutrition during the period from conception to the child's second birthday. Further undernourished women have the propensity to give birth to low birth weight babies, a recipe for child morbidity, mortality and future non communicable diseases. Mainstreaming gender considerations across the food security value chain is therefore imperative to sustainable food and nutrition security outcomes in the EAC partner states.

#### **Policy Objective**

Promoting food and nutrition security through gender-based approaches.

#### **Policy Measures**

The EAC Partner States will:

1. Promote gender responsive food and nutrition security policies.

2. Promote equal participation and representation of all groups; including women, youth, elderly and people with disabilities in decision-making processes related to food and nutrition security.
3. Promote labor saving technologies for food production, processing and preparation that have implications on women's time for self and childcare.
4. Support measures and initiatives that encourage women's access to and control over resources
5. Support programs that focus on gender empowerment by strengthening decision-making capacities on food production, processing, marketing and consumption.
6. Promote appropriate women's agricultural empowerment interventions that allow them to take care of children while they participate in economic activities.
7. Address social and cultural bottlenecks to attain food and nutrition security at all levels

#### **Expected Outcome**

- Improved gender considerations for food and nutrition security.

### **2.3.2 Water, Sanitation and Hygiene for food and nutrition security**

#### **Policy issue**

Inadequate access to safe water and sanitation services coupled with poor hygienic practices has adverse effects to nutritional status. Many diseases are associated with unsafe water and poor sanitation as water is a vehicle for transmission of pathogens and contamination in food. Unsafe water sources are major causes of diarrheal diseases, a major cause of child mortality and morbidity in poor households. Diarrheal diseases have far reaching implications on nutritional status due to loss of nutrients in the body and dehydration. Even if food is sufficient, diarrhea will inhibit nutrient absorption. Safe drinking water and sanitation is therefore a solution to prevention of diarrheal diseases. In addition, parasitic infections e.g. soil helminthes are also caused by poor hygiene and sanitation and lead to anemia and reduced physical and cognitive development. Women in poor rural settings spend long hours in search of water and this implicates child feeding and care seeking practices. Too little water is harmful to health as households with inadequate water can't prepare food under good hygienic conditions. On the other hand, farmers are likely to be less productive due to ill health arising from waterborne diseases.

#### **Policy Objective:**

Promoting universal access to sustainable safe water, adequate sanitation and improved hygienic practices

#### **Policy Measure**

The EAC Partner States will:

1. Promote and support universal delivery and access to sustainable safe and clean water, adequate sanitation and hygiene for improved food and nutrition security
2. Promote technical capacity on improvement of water quality services, adequate sanitation and good hygienic practices

#### **Expected outcome**

- Improved availability, accessibility and utilization of safe water, adequate sanitation and good hygienic practices for improved food and nutrition security outcomes.

### 2.3.3 Food and Nutrition Security in the Context of HIV& AIDS and TB

#### **Policy issue:**

HIV&AIDS and TB have continued to affect all dimensions of the food and nutrition security value chain, notably availability, access, sustainability and utilization. People infected by HIV&AIDS and TB experience low diets in terms of quality and quantity and under nutrition subjects them to other infections thus worsening their nutritional status. As EAC partner states grapples with mitigation strategies for HIV&AIDS and TB, new infections continue to constrain the gains previously made and is constraining the food production systems thereby undermining food utilization for among PLHIV and TB. HIV&AIDS has resulted overtime on changes in the food systems through morbidity and mortality of able bodied members of communities, less cultivated land, yield decrease due to failure to cultivate crops on time, changes in production of labor intensive nutritious crops and loss of local indigenous knowledge on farming practices as parents die before teaching children farming systems that have evolved through generations. The agriculture sector has therefore been faced with both the demand and supply components of HIV&AIDS thus undermining the food and nutrition security both in the long and short term basis. The Partner states will therefore need to address HIV&AIDS and TB through appropriate strategies to mitigate the devastating effects of HIV&AIDS on food and nutrition security.

#### **Policy objective:**

To ensure greater food and nutrition security achievements for HIV&AIDS and TB while at the same time addressing new infections.

#### **Policy Measures**

The EAC Partner States will:

1. Promote sustainable mitigation strategies to improve communities abilities to cope with the negative effects of HIV&AIDS and TB on food and nutrition security
2. Support initiatives that address the special food and nutritional needs for PLHIV and those suffering from TB
3. Promote multisectoral responses to reduce vulnerability to food and nutrition insecurity in the context of HIV&AIDS, TB.

#### **Expected outcome**

- Reduce vulnerabilities to food and nutrition security along the value chain among PLHIV and those infected with TB

### 2.3.4 Climate change in the context of food and nutrition security

#### **Policy Issue**

The changing climatic conditions are currently undermining efforts to reduce hunger and malnutrition in the region. It is now apparent that climate change is affecting food and nutrition security through water shortages and availability, water quality, food safety, water borne diseases and loss of biodiversity. Effects of climatic changes such as protracted droughts, floods and *El Niño* pose serious setbacks to food and nutrition security by affecting

adversely all aspects of the food chain notably; food availability, access, sustainability and utilization. Climate change leads to reduction in food productivity and besets sustainable food production and food supply systems. The need to strengthen people's resilience to the devastating effects of the changing climate is thus unquestionable.

### **Policy Objective**

Mitigate the devastating effects of climate change on food and nutrition security.

### **Policy Measures**

The EAC Partner States will:

1. Support coordinated regional frameworks on addressing the devastating effects of climate change on food and nutrition security.
2. Support development of regional multisectoral frameworks on implementation of food security in the context of the changing climatic conditions.
3. Support integration of regional climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies to food and nutrition security.
4. Promote strengthened regional level capacity, information and knowledge sharing, communication and research on climate change and food and nutrition security.

### **Expected Outcome**

- Reduction of the effect of climate change on food and nutrition security.

## **2.3.5 High food prices on food and nutrition security**

### **Policy Issue**

In East Africa, high food prices have profound and far reaching negative implications on food and nutrition security especially amongst the vulnerable segments of the population. High food price has implications on regional hunger as majority of rural and urban populations are hardest hit by soaring food prices. High food prices have implications on food production and present a threat to small holder farmers, livestock producers and fisherfolks. This is especially when the fuel and price of inputs soars thus affecting costs of production and transportation to markets. In this regard, the high food price will hurt both the producer and the consumer alike. The nutritional risk due to effects of food price fluctuations are notable and affects both the quality and quantity of foods consumed. The consumption share of dietary energy from high value nutritious foods such as vegetables, fruits, meats and dairy products which are richer in proteins and micronutrients tend to decrease with high food prices. This means that poor and the vulnerable population groups are likely to suffer from undernutrition when prices increase due to lack of diverse intake of nutritious diets. As well, the slow fetal growth during maternal pregnancy and stunting up to 2 years of children's lives is irreversible even after the prices have stabilized. Hence children's growth will not wait for the food prices to become stable. In this regard, efforts aimed at stabilizing food price among Partner states are in dire need.

### **Policy Objective**

Cushion the vulnerable populations in the region from the negative effects of volatile and fluctuating food prices that implicate the food and nutrition security.



## **Policy Measures**

The EAC Partner States will:

1. Promote appropriate strategies that cushion Partner States from effects of high food price volatility.
2. Promote sustainable and resilient food production systems through research and appropriate technologies
3. Strengthen capacity of smallholder farmers on risk management through resilient food production systems
4. Strengthen food assistance programs targeting vulnerable population groups.
5. Promote safety nets and social protection mechanisms to cushion vulnerable population groups from the negative effects of high food price

### **Expected Outcome**

- Reduced vulnerability to food and nutrition insecurity due to effects of high food prices.

### **2.3.6 Food safety & quality control in the context of food and nutrition security**

#### **Policy Issue**

Modern farming systems, agro-processing and marketing are sometimes characterized by misuse of chemicals and pesticides which results into residues in the food system and affect human health and nutrition. As well, inadequate standards on food processing, improper storage techniques and poor preparation of foods due to unhygienic standards are contributors to food hazards. Consumers are scarcely protected along the food chain. Risks exposing food to unsafe conditions across the entire food chain from the farm to the folk is inevitable given the diverse food handlers, and this has the propensity to increase incidences of food adulteration and contamination.

Post harvest management (handling, storage and processing) as well as poor infrastructure due to absence of cold storage facilities in local markets subject food to spoilage and contamination. Informal markets and small holder producers often lack knowledge and skills on food hygiene and handling practices thus heightening increased risks to food safety. Also, some of the village level foods processing industries are ill equipped to handle food safety issues while small holder farmers face challenges of timely delivery of raw materials to markets due to poor road networks.

Street foods constitute an important sector in the food safety supply chain. Street foods have grown immensely over the years with low income urban workers depending largely on them for their daily food needs. While street foods serve a number of functions; i.e. are fairly priced, ready to eat, highly accessible being sold by vendors and hawkers in offices, hospitals, schools, bus stations, railway stations, inside public means of transport, in residential areas, they nonetheless pose food safety concerns. They are prepared under unhygienic conditions, in open, dusty conditions and in the absence of clean water and sanitation services. Street foods are therefore susceptible to microbial and environmental contamination including food poisoning. To date, there are no regulatory frameworks and guidelines provided on the sale and consumption of cooked street foods.

Agricultural production of nutrient-rich vegetables in urban and peri-urban areas typically occurs along roadsides and polluted riversides using water contaminated with raw sewage and subjecting them to heavy metal contamination e.g. Lead. In areas with no piped water, contaminated river water may be consumed directly. The high price of bottled drinking water also encourages consumption of unsafe water. Illegal alcohol is also known to cause serious illness and in some cases, death. These public health concerns present a formidable challenge to achieving improved food security and nutrition in urban and peri-urban areas. Improving quality and safety standards of food across the value chain are critical policy considerations among the EAC Partner States.

### **Policy Objective**

Reduction of contamination in the entire food chain and assurance of food safety and quality standards among the Partner States.

### **Policy Measures**

The EAC Partner States will:

1. Promote safe food production (crops, livestock and fisheries) along the value chain.
2. Enhance government and private sector capacity on prevention of contamination and control of food safety and quality issues across the food value chain
3. Support initiatives to strengthen regulatory mechanisms on food control systems in the region
4. Support development of food safety standards and guidelines for food and nutrition security.
5. Support development of monitoring frameworks for the implementation of food safety and quality standards for food and nutrition security.
6. Support regional research studies on food safety and quality control measures for food and nutrition security

### **Expected Outcome**

- Improved safe food supply systems in the region

### **2.3.7 Social protection**

#### **Policy issue:**

Most farmers in EAC are subsistence farmers who are exposed to economic risks related to drought leading to crop/livestock losses, drastic fluctuations in the prices of agricultural inputs and change in produce value. Additionally, sections of the populations in EAC Partner States are affected by tribal clashes political instability and other natural hazards. Resultantly, they need agricultural, food and nutrition related social protection to support improvement in food security and reduce risks to malnutrition.

#### **Policy objective:**

To ensure social safety nets for food and nutrition insecure population groups.

#### **Policy measures:**

The EAC Partner States will:

1. Promote social safety nets aimed at reducing under nutrition for vulnerable population groups
2. Promote provision of cash transfers and grants for subsistence farmers and business individuals in vulnerable areas.
3. Support food distribution systems (food stamps, general food distribution, school feeding, and supplementary feeding) as a way of protecting those affected from emergencies due to droughts, floods and civil unrest, *inter alia*.
4. Promote insurance services that cover loss of crop/livestock due to drought, flood and other calamities to cushion farmers on their negative effects.
5. Promote development and implementation of a system of protecting livestock farmers in arid and semi arid lands such purchasing of livestock during drought and re-stocking during non-drought seasons.
6. Promote agricultural inputs incentives targeted at subsistence farmers.
7. Promote establishment of affordable national health insurance for the vulnerable population.
8. Support institutionalization of Social Protection to cater for special nutritional needs of vulnerable population groups

#### **Expected Outcome**

- Enhanced food and nutrition security among the vulnerable population groups.

### **2.3.8 Multi-sectoral approaches to food and nutrition security**

#### **Policy Issue**

There is now an urgent need for nutrition outcomes to be considered as part of agriculture, trade and industry, health, gender, education, environment and other relevant sectors and to develop strong coordination and linkages between these relevant sectors. It's now becoming increasingly clear that the agricultural sector is critical to enhancing nutritional outcomes, yet for a long time there has been a glaring disconnect between the two sectors either on programming, research or in policy development.

Agriculture does not only contribute to the demands of food supply but also to enhanced livelihoods through job creation and increased income for majority of the rural population who reside in the rural settings. Some examples of agricultural interventions with propensity to improve nutritional status includes; home gardens, bio-fortification of crops e.g. orange fleshed sweet potatoes, small scale production of aquaculture, poultry and small ruminant gardens and fruit gardens. If well designed, food and agriculture policies can address the requirements of optimal nutritional outcomes.

Agriculture is therefore one of the sectors that can make enormous contributions to nutrition outcomes, hence tackling nutrition through links with agriculture should now be an imperative policy and programmatic consideration in the region. For effective and accelerated achievements of nutrition outcomes, multisectoral collaborations are vital between food security and nutrition subsectors. But this also involves all relevant sectors that are food and nutrition security sensitive.

### **Policy Objective**

Enhance integrated and coordinated multi-sectoral approaches to food and nutrition security interventions.

### **Policy Measures**

The EAC Partner States will:

1. Promote incorporation of nutrition into the design, planning and implementation of agriculture, health programs for improved nutrition outcomes
2. Promote inclusion of nutrition objectives into policies, strategies and action plans for agriculture, health, WASH, gender, environment and education...
3. Promote delivery of effective multisectoral responses, coordination and governance on food and nutrition security at national and regional levels
4. Promote a common understanding among policy makers, stakeholders and nutrition-related sectors in EAC partner states on the role of agriculture for improved nutrition.
5. Promote appropriate M&E indicators on multisectoral responses for food and nutrition security outcomes
6. Promote an enabling policy environment for investment along the food and nutrition value chain.

### **Expected Outcome**

- Achievement of food and nutrition security outcomes through multi-sectoral approaches.

#### **2.3.9 Food and nutrition security surveillance, information and research**

### **Policy Issue**

Food and nutrition security information and research findings in the EAC and other regions are useful to inform policy and program formulation on trends, challenges and progress being made. Presently, regional information and research findings on food and nutrition security are minimal and where they exist, they are scattered among the institutions or organizations that commissioned the work and for their own use.

### **Policy Objective**

Provide timely and accurate regional information and research findings on food and nutrition security.

### **Policy Measures**

The EAC Partner States will:

1. Promote development and operationalization of regional food and nutrition security information management systems
2. Promote regional level food and nutrition security operational research on food and nutrition security situation in the region
3. Promote regional collaboration on food and nutrition security surveillance and research.

## **Expected Outcome**

Improved food and nutrition security information and research systems.

### **2.3.10 Early warning & emergency management for food & nutrition security**

#### **Policy Issue**

Acute food insecurity and malnutrition in the EAC is compounded by risk factors such as periodic droughts, floods, diseases and periodic civil strife (or conflict) in selected pockets of the region. Recent decades have witnessed several major droughts in the region, with increased frequency as a result of climate change. Floods occur regularly and although generally more localized than droughts, they remain an important cause of food, health and other related emergencies. Heavy rainfall and the resultant floods have also increased the burden of human and livestock diseases, requiring special emergency initiatives as they present serious threats to human health as well as negatively affect trade. Early warning and emergency response are thus imperative policy concerns in the EAC region.

#### **Policy Objective**

Reduced food and nutrition security vulnerability to emergency situations.

#### **Policy measures**

The EAC Partner States will:

1. Support countries to develop contingency and mitigation plans to enable appropriate response to food security and nutritional effects of impending emergencies
2. Promote improved pre and post disaster recovery systems to minimize the adverse effects of food and nutrition security
3. Support programs on disaster risk management through smart agriculture
4. Promote safety net programs during emergencies targeting people with special nutritional needs
5. Promote strong linkages between emergency and development programs with food and nutrition security objectives.
6. Support the development of the EAC guidelines on emergency response, preparedness and mitigation for food and nutrition security.

#### **Expected Outcome**

- Improved resilience to the resultant shock in the event of emergencies.

## 3 POLICY IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

### 3.1 Enabling Environment for the implementation of the Policy

#### 3.1.1 Institutional Framework for implementation of EAC FNSP

To implement the FNSP, it is imperative to have a functional regional institutional framework that will ensure that policies and decisions made at the regional level are supported and implemented at national levels. There is no doubt that effective implementation of this policy will require cross-sectoral and multisectoral responses through active participation and involvement of relevant government line ministries, civil service organizations, research institutes, United Nations organizations, private sector, and development partners. The policy implementation will further require coordinated responses from relevant actors in the region influencing food and nutrition security. Figure 8 depicts the proposed institutional framework, which is based on both top-down and bottom-up communications and engagements. This is shown by the direction of the arrows. Levels of multisectoral and broad functions are explained thereafter.

**Sector Councils:** Under the multi-sectoral council, two key sectors will steer the EAC FNSP: Sectoral Council on Agriculture and Food Security and the Sectoral Council of Ministers of Health. The Sectoral Council on Agriculture and Food Security will take the lead as the chair and will alternate with the Council of Health Ministers. Their key function will be to ensure that the FNSP is implemented at the regional level and that Partner States adopt the regional policies and/or are supported to do so, collaborating with other sectoral councils. In a vertical engagement, they will be responsible for ensuring that the respective countries' EAC focal points (Ministers of Regional Cooperation) understand the EAC FNSP and champion the implementation in their respective countries.

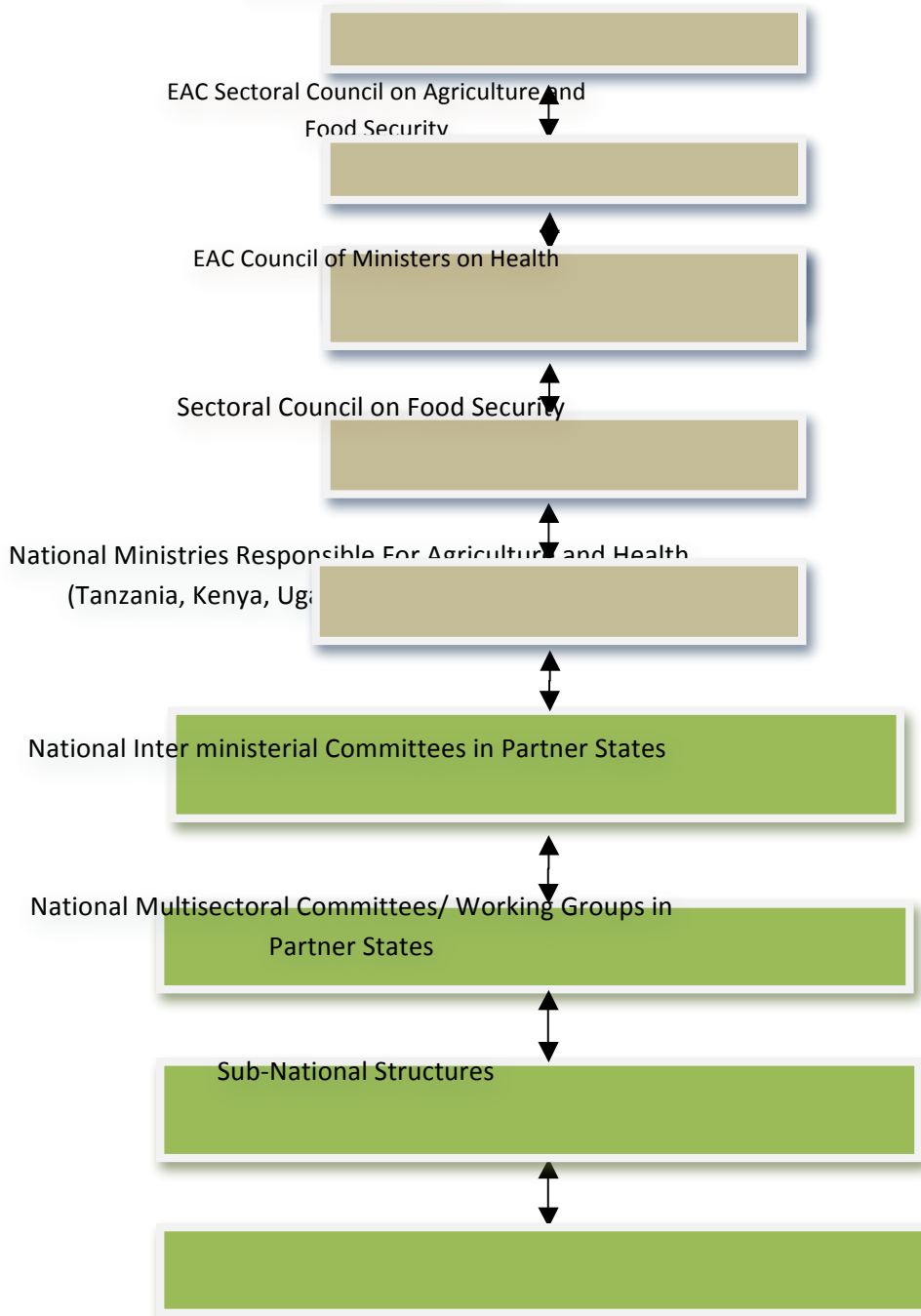
**Country level Ministers of Regional Cooperation:** Based on the EAC structure, they are the Partner States' representatives to the EAC and will officially take the lead in championing the regional policies in their respective States by working with the lead ministries in their respective countries. They will spearhead policy directions and other critical decisions to their respective country ministers relevant to food and nutrition security.

#### **Ministers/Cabinet Secretaries responsible for food and nutrition security.**

They will be in charge of adopting and implementing the EAC FNSP in their respective countries. In addition to providing progress and proposing regional support needed in the country, they will oversee the implementation of the EAC FNSP through the country level inter-ministerial committee on food security and nutrition. The existing multi-sectoral structures in Partner States should be strengthened for effective implementation of the FNSP.

It is envisaged that the EAC FNS policy will not be a one-way policy, but countries will also report progress in FNS, challenges, and channel national proposals and other issues during regional discussions, through the structures that are highlighted in Figure 1.

Proposed institutional framework for the EAC Council of Ministers



### **3.1.2 Coordination & governance mechanisms**

Appropriate regional legislation will help ensure implementation of the EAC FNSP. Legislation that spurs EAC Partner States to invest in initiatives that contribute towards enhancing food and nutrition status through implementation of food and nutrition security related initiatives such as the Scaling up Nutrition movement and CAADP will advance the objectives of the FNSP.

The successful implementation of the regional FNSP will depend on how well activities of various sectors and actors are well coordinated and hence the need for an effective coordination structure. Given the multisectoral nature of the FNS policy, the coordination of the FNS issues will be facilitated through multisectoral council which consists of the Permanent Secretaries responsible for regional cooperation in each Partner State and other relevant Permanent Secretaries/Principal Secretaries of the Partner States as each Partner State will determine. Its agriculture and food Security Council that will provide leadership to multisectoral council but will work with council of health ministers in convening the multisectoral council on food and nutrition security policy. It's however the full council of ministers that will give directions on coordination with clear guidance from both agriculture and food security and health ministry's within EAC. A functional secretariat with technical expertise in food and nutrition security and funding budget will be earmarked to facilitate operations of the FNS.

According to the EAC protocol, the Coordination Committee of the EAC, "Submits from time to time, reports and recommendations to the Council either on its own initiative or upon the request of the Council, on the implementation of the Treaty". In the same way, the FNS coordination committee will report to the Council of Ministers together with other issues discussed in the 'regular coordination' fora or as a special FNS item.

It's important to note that the successful implementation of the food and nutrition security policy will be guided by an effective coordination mechanism at the regional level. This will include putting in place measures for institutional frameworks across the line ministries involved with food and nutrition security, relevant actors/stakeholders/institutions and development partners. Laws and regulations guiding coordination will be stipulated for purposes of accountability. Without proper coordination, it will be difficult to determine how each component of the policy will be implemented.

#### ***3.1.2.1 Role of Lead sector ministries in food and nutrition security***

Stating the roles of stakeholders is critical to the effective implementation of the policy. Apart from the lead Sectors, the roles of all other relevant sectors should be clearly defined in the implementation plans.

#### ***3.1.2.2 Academic and Research Institutions:***

Collaboration with academic and research institutions will be strengthened and roles identified for the implementation of the policy. This includes research on innovative approaches such as biofortification, development of appropriate monitoring tools on dietary consumption practices; determining trends on regional food security status.



### ***3.1.2.3 Private Sector:***

The role of private sector in ensuring food and nutrition security will be recognized during the policy implementation. Private sector involvement will comprise of food processing industries, agribusiness industries, agri-nutrition related business enterprises. The critical role of private sector in the food security value chain e.g. food production, processing, and marketing will be recognized through strengthened public private partnerships. Also notable will be private sector participation in extension training and employment creation on food and nutrition security.

### ***3.1.2.4 Civil Society Organizations***

The CSOs will provide relevant complimentary interventions for food and nutrition security. They will be expected to align their activities in line with the FNS Policy.

### ***3.1.2.5 Regional Associations***

Regional organizations that support food and nutrition security in the region will be identified and their roles established for policy implementation. The policy will be implemented in consonance with the regional and continental bodies.

### ***3.1.2.6 Development Partners***

Their roles in provision of resources and technical assistance to achieve regional set objectives and to support regional programs are critical considerations for the implementation process.

### ***3.1.2.7 Local Communities***

As the beneficiaries of the FNSP, their role in the uptake and ownership are key to sustainable policy outcomes

## **3.1.3 Financing of FNSP**

Food security and nutrition funding gaps exist for each of the Partner States and substantial amount of resources will be required for the implementation of the food and nutrition security policy. Partner States shall raise the core funding while Development Partners will provide resources to fill the existing gaps. Thus while countries have the responsibility to raise funds for national priority policies and strategies, the EAC Partner States will play a vital role in supplementing these efforts. The funding gaps shall be presented in special coordination meetings in which donor attention will be required

## **3.1.4 Capacity development for FNSP**

Human, technical and logistical capacity is a critical determinant of effective policy implementation. Presently, human resource capacity gaps exist, at all the levels in EAC Partner States, especially for food and nutrition security service delivery at national and sub national levels. Effectiveness of the EAC FNSP policy will require that in addition to increasing the quality and quantity of professionals trained on food and nutrition security, linkages with agriculture, health and nutrition will need to be well understood by professionals involved in the food and nutrition security. This will involve more trained human resource personnel to fill up these multisectoral requirements.

### **3.1.5 Information and Research**

Within the EAC, collaborative research on food and nutrition security is neither integrated nor well funded. This has resulted in lack of relevant technologies, limited knowledge and insufficient human capacity to deal with food and nutrition security related issues. In addition, information systems for quality and timely data collection for early warning and M&E have not been well developed at regional levels on food and nutrition security.

Through the information and research, a suitable food and nutrition security information system will be established at the regional level with the broad objective of providing timely and accurate evidence based data to inform regional level food and nutrition security policies.

### **3.1.6 Policy advocacy and communication**

There is need to raise awareness on the importance of focusing efforts in food security and nutrition at regional, national and sub-national levels. A wide section of regional level policymakers have inadequate information of the human and economic benefits of improving food and nutrition security, and this has implications on increasing resource allocation and considerations for food security and nutrition. Partner States have to date not prioritized resource allocation to food and nutrition security issues. To this end, there is critical need for regional and national decision-makers to understand the critical role of food and nutrition security for socio-economic development in the region. Creating awareness among decision makers in the EAC region on the critical role of Food and Nutrition security in social, economic and political development is imperative to effective implementation of the food and nutrition security policy.

## **4 MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

Putting in place sound, rigorous and systematic monitoring and evaluation systems to track and evaluate impacts of the food and nutrition security policy are important policy considerations. The M&E system for nutrition and food security will offer information on how policy implementation will address benchmarks for progress and how future policies on food and nutrition security will be best informed for best practice. The M&E system will further inform both national and regional level decision-making in ascertaining that planned activities are implemented and targets are achieved within the established timeframe.

In this regard, monitoring and evaluating the policy will be a continuous systematic process of data collection on specified indicators for achievements on the food and nutrition security objectives in the region. M&E will be developed during the strategic plan and will guide the entire policy life cycle to determine whether the policy is on track towards achieving intended results and evaluate implementation of the policy actions. Monitoring and evaluation will as a consequence provide valuable lessons to be learnt, determine cost effectiveness of policy interventions, set targets and establish greater impact of food and nutrition security outcomes in the region. Development of an M&E plan will be undertaken collaboratively between the Agriculture and food security and nutrition sections of the EAC

as well as Health. It will set clearly defined indicators including process, output and outcome indicators as important policy considerations.