

## Nexus Between Climate Change, Peace and Security

First phase validation of studies concluded

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Participants attending the validation workshop on climate change, peace and security.

COMESA has concluded the validation of the study on Climate Change, Peace and Security for the Northern Cluster under the Africa Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) IV European Union (EU) programme.

The validation is aligned with the Decision of the 18th Meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs which "called on the Member States to support the conclusion of cluster specific studies on the nexus between climate change, peace and security through validation exercises and provide practical recommendations to enhance preparedness and address effects of climate change".

Three years ago, in 2021, COMESA Secretariat conducted a regional mapping study to understand the nexus between climate change, peace and security. Considering the dynamics within the region, the study recommended an approach that would

cluster the region into five fairly homogeneous clusters namely Northern, Southern, Tropics, Horn and the Islands. The clustering would ensure an in-depth study and understanding of the region.

The cluster studies were concluded in 2023 and four of them validated including for the Horn, Tropics, Southern and Island clusters. The validation meetings took place in Entebbe, Uganda and Harare, Zimbabwe. The validations are meant to get inputs from subject area experts in the region to enrich the reports.

The remaining Northern Cluster study was validated on 30 – 31 January 2024 in Kenya. Experts that participated were drawn from the region including from the Cairo International Center for Conflict Resolution, Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding (CCCCPA), Sahara and Sahel Observatory (OSS), United Nations World Food Programme (WFP), United Nations International Organisation on Migration (IOM), Center

for the Study of Conflict and Violence (CSV), Save The Children International, Horn of Africa Youth Network, academia and COMESA Staff from the Climate Change and Governance, Peace and Security units.

With the validation of the Northern Africa cluster study, COMESA is now in a good position to proceed to the next step of consolidating the five cluster studies into one regional policy document. This will be further validated by government experts from the Member States. Thereafter, the regional policy document will be presented to COMESA's Policy Organs for adoption to guide its work on climate security.



## Political will: A key ingredient in developing regional agriculture value chains

COMESA in partnership with the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) are collaborating to enhance political will and strengthen the capacity of Member States to apply the African Union Guidelines for the Development of Regional Agricultural Value Chains (RAVCs) in Africa.

This is being done under a project: Strengthening Member State capacity to develop Regional Agricultural Value Chains to promote Diversification and Intra-African Trade.

Currently, the project is being piloted in the COMESA region to promote regional value chains of two strategic commodities; maize and dairy in Zambia and Zimbabwe. The aim is to foster agro-processing and support the actualization of the Common Agro Industrial Park (CAIP) initiative which was mooted under the Joint Industrialisation Cooperation Programme between Zimbabwe and Zambia.

Towards this goal, COMESA and UNECA conducted a validation workshop on January 22, 2024, to discuss the Recommendation Report for Strengthening Maize and Dairy Value Chains. The report was based on the review of the policy, regulatory and institutional frameworks in Zambia and Zimbabwe and the industrialization and export strategy for maize and dairy products in the two countries.

The workshop was one in a series to be conducted in Zambia and Zimbabwe aimed at providing stakeholders in the maize and dairy value chain

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an opportunity to review and provide feedback on the two reports. This is in addition to training stakeholders in the two value chains to strengthen their capacities to mainstream regional value chain development in agricultural policies and strategies.

The validation workshop, specifically, aimed at reviewing the draft recommendation report for strengthened maize and dairy value chains based on review of the policy, regulatory and institutional frameworks in Zambia and Zimbabwe. It was also intended to garner feedback from stakeholders on the industrialization and export strategy for maize and dairy products in the two countries and to generate consensus from stakeholders on the next steps to actualize the contents of the two documents.

“The present project is in line with COMESA's Industrialisation Strategy and the two study reports will act as an input into the feasibility

study of the proposed CAIP between Zambia and Zimbabwe,” said COMESA's Value Chain Expert, Mr. Pardon Njerere. He stressed the importance of securing strong collaboration between the two countries to realize the desire for cross-border trade expansion and advancing agro-processing.

UNECA's representative Mr. Medhat El-Helepi said an appropriately structured regional agricultural commodity value chains will not only promote cross-border trade and the envisaged Common Agro Industrial Park but also improve food security.

Government officials including Mr. Rich Kaitano, Director of Business Development, Markets & Trade in the Zimbabwe's Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Water, Fisheries and Rural Development and Mr. Brian Ngandu, Director of Policy Planning in Zambia's Ministry of Agriculture addressed the meeting.

Thirty experts representing a broad stakeholders' base, including government, academia, and the private sector attended the workshop.

Going forward, UNECA and COMESA Secretariat will engage Zimbabwe to identify policies and regulations that are in need for amendment in support of maize and dairy value chains across the two countries, and to develop action plan to develop and adopt the validated draft export strategy.





## Eight states benefit from macroeconomic analysis training

Representatives from eight Central Banks of COMESA Member States, namely Burundi, Egypt, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Zambia, and Zimbabwe, have participated in a training on Macroeconomic Linkages and Economic Policy Analysis organized by the COMESA Monetary Institute (CMI).

The training which was held in Nairobi, Kenya, from 5th to 9th February 2024, aimed at enhancing participants' comprehension of key macroeconomic accounts and their interconnections, emphasizing the policy implications stemming from changes in each account's parameters.

It provided participants with skills to grasp macroeconomic accounting principles and establish connections between various accounts, interpret the behavioral relationships among macroeconomic accounts and create a platform for participants to exchange knowledge and experiences related to macroeconomic policy analysis.

Director of the CMI Dr. Lucas Njoroge, said the training was a hands-on exploration of the four main macroeconomic accounts including real, fiscal, external, and monetary sectors and their intricate linkages. Hence, it involved scenarios for the economy, the introduction of policy shocks, analysis of alternative policy mixes, and the projection/forecasting of economic outcomes.

The forum was also intended to empower bankers with skills to assess the economic consequences of policy actions, compare the current economic situation with various policy alternatives, and forecast key macroeconomic variables, thereby facilitating evidence-based decision-making.

## Horticultural accelerator project rolls-out

Implementation of a new project known as the COMESA- EAC Horticultural Accelerator (CEHA) has just begun and is expected to enhance policy coordination, value chain development, financing, and research and development in the horticulture industry.

Established in 2022 through public and private sector partnerships, and launched in June 2023, the project covers five countries in the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa – COMESA and the East African Community – EAC. These are Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda.

CEHA targets avocado, onion, and Irish potatoes development. Its initial activities are supported by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation with USD 5 million, and the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office providing a total of GBP 500,000.

The CEHA Secretariat is based at the COMESA Secretariat in Lusaka under the coordination of the Alliance for Commodity Trade for Eastern and

Southern Africa, (ACTESA,) a Specialized Agency of COMESA.

It will facilitate the modernization of regional horticulture value chains by coordinating private sector-led investments, improving policies and standards, and providing access to finance and technical assistance for accelerated growth.

The CEHA Board includes representatives from COMESA, EAC, and private sector entities, with support from various development partners and observers.

On January 25, 2024, the CEHA team led by Dr. John Mukuka, Chief Executive Officer of ACTESA, paid a courtesy call on the EAC Secretariat. Receiving the team, EAC Secretary General Dr. Peter Mathuki acknowledged the significant potential of the CEHA initiative in the horticulture sector.

The EAC leadership expressed interest in aligning regional efforts to address critical issues in the horticulture sector, fostering increased incomes and

employment opportunities across the COMESA and EAC regions. The meeting focused on formalizing collaborations and partnerships to ensure the effective implementation of the CEHA program.

Key outcomes of the meeting included the EAC assuming co-chairing responsibilities within the CEHA Board. The EAC leadership also highlighted the importance of advancing climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies within CEHA, with a focus on ensuring food security in the region.

The parties discussed establishing a formal communication channel and the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for efficient project activity management.

At the meeting were EAC Deputy Secretary-General, Mr. Andrea Aguer Ariik Malueth, EAC Director of Planning Mr. Aime Uwase, CEHA Coordinator, Mr. Apollo Owuor and Mr. John Patrick Mwesigye of the German Corporation for International Cooperation (GFA/GIZ).



An Artist performs during the Generation Culture Event in Mauritius

## COMESA, IOC close ranks to promote culture and arts

COMESA and the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) have come together to promote culture and creative industries (CCI) in a project focusing on the review of existing legal and policy frameworks for the two. The goal is to develop a people-centered cultural policy to foster the equitable development of diverse cultures and heritages.

The project targets 13 Member States: Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia, Sudan, Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritius, and Seychelles. COMESA oversees the project in nine countries, while the IOC takes the lead in the remaining four Island countries.

Funding for this project is provided through a grant from the ACP-EU Culture Programme, managed by the HEVA Fund LLP and the British Council Kenya. Project activities have been underway since last year with the highlight being a three-day training workshop on the UNESCO Culture 2030 Indicators conducted in Mauritius on 11 - 13 December 2023. Stakeholders considered this event a significant collaborative effort to enhance the measurement and monitoring of culture's role in sustainable development.

Recognizing culture as a potent force for transformation, driving innovation, social cohesion, and economic growth, the workshop aimed at empowering participants in effectively utilizing the UNESCO Indicators 2023. The

indicators provide a comprehensive framework for measuring the impact of culture across various dimensions, including education, employment, cultural participation, and cultural heritage.

The workshop was officially opened by Ms. Alice N'Diaye, the Director General of the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC). COMESA was represented by Mrs. Beatrice Hamusonde, the Director of Gender and Social Affairs.

Alongside the workshop was a showcase of generational culture hosted at the House of Arts in Port Louis. A diverse array of expressive and performing artists from Mauritius and neighboring Island States was showcased.

The event, held on December 13, 2023, showcased a diverse array of expressive and performing

artists from Mauritius and neighboring Island States. It was organized within the framework of the Duly Mandated Regional Organisations and supported by the European Union through the European Development Fund.

The COMESA-IOC culture project was a focal point of the event, aiming to underscore the significance of cultural initiatives in the broader context of economic development and regional unity.

The Secretary General of COMESA, Chileshe Mpundu Kapwepwe, represented by Director of Gender, urged Member States to implement the COMESA Intellectual Property Policy within their countries to unlock the sector's potential as a key contributor to the economic development of the region.



Participants to the Training on UNESCO Culture 2030 Indicators





Participants to EGEE-ICT Programme Steering Committee Meeting in Vic Falls

## Studies on roaming and development frameworks among key accomplishments of the EGEE-ICT programme

Five crucial activities were initiated by the programme on Enhancement of Governance and Enabling Environment in the ICT sector (EGEE-ICT) in the Eastern Africa, Southern Africa, and Indian Ocean region in 2023.

They included two studies on roaming and interconnection and optical fiber infrastructures,

along with the development of three policy and regulatory frameworks associated with these studies.

This was part of the report presented at the 4th meeting of the Programme Steering Committee (PTSC) that took place at the end of the year, 2023 in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe.

Participants in the two-day meeting on 5 – 8 December 2023 included Information and Communications Technology experts from partner Regional Economic Communities such as EAC, IGAD, IOC, and SADC. The Project Implementation Unit (PMU) members and staff from the COMESA Secretariat actively contributed to the discussions.

The meeting acknowledged significant advancements in program implementation, with an increase in overall budget utilization from 11% in previous years to the current 27%.

The Guest of Honour, Mrs. Georgina Chingonzo, Director of Strategic Planning & Monitoring and Evaluation at the Ministry of ICT Postal & Courier Services in Zimbabwe, officially opened the meeting.

Representatives from the COMESA Secretariat included Dr. Benard Dzawanda, the Director of Infrastructure and Logistics, and Mr. Joseph Chibwe, the EGEE-ICT project manager at the EU delegation in Zambia. Their presence emphasized the collaborative and multi-stakeholder nature of the EGEE-ICT program.



### PHOTO FOCUS

Her Excellency Evelyn Butoyi, (L) the newly appointed Burundian Ambassador to Zambia, presents her letters of credence to Secretary General Chileshe Mpundu Kapwepwe at the COMESA Secretariat, February 12, 2024. This marks her official representation of Burundi within the regional organization. Burundi is set to host the 23rd COMESA Summit later this year.



The United Nations Development Programme - UNDP Resident Representative in Zambia, Mr James Wakiaga (R) pays a courtesy call on COMESA Secretariat Secretary General Chileshe Kapwepwe, February 12, 2024. Their discussions centred on partnerships in line with regional integration and development.



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