

# Brussels Development Briefing No. 47

On February 3rd 2017, CTA organised the 47th Brussels Development Briefing – part of a series of bi-monthly development briefings on ACP-EU rural and agricultural issues. Around 200 participants gathered in Brussels to discuss the major developments in regional trade in Africa, the key drivers for integration and opportunities for the agricultural sector.

#### Regional Trade in Africa: Drivers, Trends and Opportunities

This Briefing sought to provide an overview of the key trends in inter and intra-regional trade in Africa and the main drivers of successful trade, policy and integration. Specific examples of successes in the implementation of regional trade agreements were provided, representing various perspectives, including the private sector, farmer's organisations and public-private partnerships. The Briefing also saw the launch of the joint IFPRI-CTA publication "African Agricultural Trade Status Report 2017". with the leading trade experts and agricultural researchers providing insight on the prospects for intra-African trade in the future.

#### Partners in the Briefing:

- CTA
- European Commission (DG DEVCO)
- ACP Secretariat
- CONCORD
- International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI)

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Isolina Boto



Viwanou Gnassounou

Isolina Boto, Manager of the CTA Brussels Office and coordinator of the Brussels Briefings provided introductory remarks on the importance of the topic in the context of the tripartite and continental free trade areas, which will bring new market opportunities in fresh and value-added processed food, including to growing urban markets. In this context, the research done with IFPRI on Agricultural trade in Africa brings data to inform the policy debate and the various stakeholders in the field. She introduced the two panels, which will move from cover an overview on trends in regional trade in Africa and specific examples of successes in the implementation of regional trade agreements bringing various perspectives, including the private sector one. She welcomed Dr. Mukhisa Kituyi, Secretary-General of UNCTAD, in joining the Briefing to share his insights on Future prospects for Africa in global trade.

The Briefing was opened by **Viwanou Gnassounou**, Assistant-Secretary-General, ACP Secretariat, who highlighted the importance

of this issue for the ACP Group. He noted that agriculture is really the backbone of Africa's economy and its value towards trade, which is why it is an area that the ACP Secretariat is engaged in with the support of CTA. Mr Gnassounou also discussed the ACPs new approach towards commodities and value chains, building on the latest developments and gains, including the Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) negotiated with the EU and intra-ACP trade. Central to this approach is identifying the opportunities that ACP countries have to trade. This is why the Secretariat has established a closer engagement with UNCTAD to create a map of the key trade and value chain opportunities, which can then be backed up with the necessary political will and dialogue. He also noted the ACP Group's custom agreement with the EU, which enables ACP regions to trade among each other without too many obstacles, including in exporting to the EU. It is critical for stakeholders to be able to see opportunities in trade through practical examples, in the context of a supportive framework by policymakers.









Michael Hailu



Dr. Mukhisa Kituyi

#### Axel Pougin de la Maisonneuve,

Deputy Head of Unit, Private Framework Development, Trade and Regional Integration, DG DEVCO, European Commission argued that the time could not have been better to have a discussion on the topic of regional trade in Africa, and noted that it was well placed in the context of key developments. These include, the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. the EU's new framework for development cooperation, which focuses on breaking silos, giving a central role to the private sector and trade, and seeks to use ODA (Official Development Assistance) as a way to leverage large-scale private sector investment. Finally, the framework of EU-Africa trade which includes Everything but Arms (EBAs), in respect to the Generalised System of Preferences, and the EPAs, which are gradually moving towards implementation. Mr Pougin de la Maisonneuve added that agriculture and agribusiness lie at the heart of Africa-EU trade.

Rounding of the concluding remarks was **Michael Hailu, CTA's Director**, who commented on the exceptional turnout for the Briefing, as an indicator of the importance of the topic of regional trade in Africa, and the valuable partnership between CTA and IFPRI in the organisation of the Briefing. A key outcome of this partnership is a joint report on AASTR, which was produced using African expertise and technical capabilities. Mr Hailu highlighted the value of regional trade for

agriculture in a number of areas, namely in enhancing agricultural productivity and transformation and creating job opportunities, particularly for youth to get them interested in the sector. He argued that it is needed to move towards more agribusiness and entrepreneurship, using ICT and other technologies across the whole value chain. This transition is also tied into the debate around rural development and the transformation of rural areas and economies, with a view towards ensuring young people can find gainful opportunities and livelihoods in rural areas. CTA has been working with regional farmer and producer organisations to help create these opportunities. The second issue raised by Mr Hailu is Africa's significant food import bill, which essentially means jobs are being exported, so there is a need to develop more value chain processing to make sure these jobs and wealth remain in Africa.

Dr. Mukhisa Kituyi presented the keynote address for the Briefing. expressing appreciation for the relationship between UNCTAD and the ACP Group in their shared endeavours to support the countries for which the Agenda 2030 is most relevant. Dr Kituyi reminded the audience that Africa's share of international trade was modest - Africa's primary exports are agriculture and raw commodities, which he argued firstly contributes to limited value addition and creation of sustainable jobs, and secondly makes African economies

especially vulnerable to commodity busts. Dr Kituyi contrasted this with the situation for intra-African trade, where there is greater value added compared to exports to the rest of the world, leading to greater resilience. He added that value addition is both easier and more quantifiably predominant in intra-African trade. Dr Kituyi was keen to emphasise the added benefits from intra-African trade, which creates more jobs, is more resilient, and notably encouraged intra-African investment - intra-Africa FDI tops that from Europe or North America. The biggest challenges for Africa remain within the continent, particularly given that the next phase for Africa's industrialisation is intra-African trade, investment and regional integration. This could lead to opportunities also for infrastructure, given the proximity of markets within regions, but the situation is more challenging where trade between regions is concerned. Despite the challenges, intra-Africa trade moved from 9% to 20% in the past decade, and this figure is even more significant if looking at intra-Sub-Sahara Africa trade. Dr Kituyi illustrated the varied pace of intra-regional trade among the different regional communities. In terms of trends, there is a growth of interest in trade agreements because of intra-African FDI flows, but this is hampered by some significant issues. First, the fact that African countries apply higher tariff barriers to each other's goods than they apply to non-African countries. Second, there are many







Ousmane Badiane



Josephine Mwangi

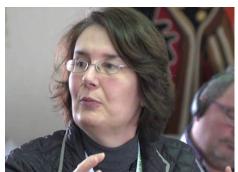
non-tariff barriers including SPS and TBT measures, presenting a big challenge for small producers. Lastly, infrastructure and payment systems lag behind, requiring the setting up of internal financial systems to deliver easy and cheaper transactions. In concluding, Dr Kituyi noted the clear commitment to the Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA) and Agenda 2063. Addressing agriculture, he added that the largest potential market for African producers is within Africa. To enable this, he stressed that small-scale farmers and border communities absolutely must be engaged as part of market access and trade negotiations. Finally, Dr Kituyi encouraged the use of ICTs for agriculture, which has already transformed the regional economic landscape in East Africa. Mobile banking for example has improved women producers' equality as they can receive personal payments, irrespective of whether they hold title to land. Increasingly the growth in broadband coverage has led to the development of market intelligence and information resources, which had been sorely lacking for agriculture in Africa, thus strengthened the position of producers in the value chain.

The first panel provided an overview of Africa regional trade, and was moderated by **H.E. Mr Tadeous Tafirenyika Chifamba** 

**Ousmane Badiane**, Director for Africa, International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) opened this panel with a discussion about Trends in African regional trade. In terms of Africa's trade composition, raw commodities continue to be dominant, but over the last ten years, there have been some changes in the profile of these commodities. Dr Badiane pointed out the recent entry of meat into the table because of growing incomes. African countries are the destination of 20% of Africa's exports, but agricultural trade has changed in profile, with the EU's lead as the largest partner for imports and exports slowly being advanced upon by emerging markets, notably Asia. Africa's share in the global agricultural market has shrunk, playing a smaller role in trade, and has been massively overtaken by other sectors, such as mining. However, the importance of agriculture remains because of its potential for value addition, and the fact that it can create incomes for the most vulnerable. Dr Badiane was keen to point out the trade balance data, which show Africa's agriculture exports have tripled in the last fifteen years, abut this has been overshadowed by a five-fold rise in imports. The result is that Africa has moved from being a net exporter in the early 2000's to being a net importer. This results from Africa transitioning towards higher demand off the back of a growing population, matched with the increased capacity of countries to purchase this food. Generally, competitiveness levels in African countries and regions are either maintaining or doing

well. In terms of the evolution of intra-African trade, Dr Badiane presented a wealth of data, which showed a doubling from 10% to 20%, with average growths of 10% a year. Looking at the future projections, regional trade would grow significantly over the decade but only if countries continue to deal with impediments to regional trade e.g. high trade costs, cross border harassments (e.g. numbers of checkpoints, bribes and delays), and low yields.

Josephine Mwangi who manages the Department for Agriculture & Agro-Industry at the African Development Bank provided an overview of the approach the bank is taking towards financing agricultural transformation, with an emphasis on innovation and partnerships with other African institutions. Agriculture lies at the heart of the "Feed Africa" (Strategy for Agricultural Transformation in Africa) pillar of the AFDB's current "High 5" priority areas, which will be implemented from 2016-2025. Ms Mwangi explained that the reasons for the underperformance of agriculture in Africa, which needed to be addressed, were: (1) under-performing value chains; (2) insufficient infrastructure; (3) limited access to agricultural finance; (4) adverse agribusiness environment; and (5) limited inclusivity, sustainability and nutrition. The Feed Africa pillar will therefore seek to achieve four overarching goals: (1) reducing extreme poverty; (2) eliminating hunger and malnutrition; (3) to support Africa in becoming a







Dominique Njinkeu



net export of agricultural products; and (4) move Africa to the top of important agricultural value chains. According to Ms Mwangi, the strategy of the AFDB to achieve this will see a focused approach on integrated commodity value chains, in order to transform 18 key agricultural commodity value chains, with investments spread across the chain from inputs through to distribution and marketing. In terms of the costs and financing of the Feed Africa strategy, Ms Mwangi explained that the AFDB has estimated between \$ 315-400 billion over the next ten years, based on an annual average of \$32-40 billion, which it projects could unlock an annual revenue of \$85 billion from the year 2025. Commercial banks will also be encouraged to increase their lending, as well as investments from sovereign wealth funds, pension funds and private equity funds. Central to this drive will be mobilisation of private sector and institutional funding, which the AFDB will promote through creating an enabling environment, using innovative de-risking tools and blending, and demonstrating that agriculture has a potential to provide risk adjusted returns.

The opportunities for regional trade within the EPAs implementation were discussed by **Sandra Gallina**, Director for Sustainable Development, DG Trade at the European Commission who began by making clear the Commission's priority in this context is to feed

Africa, create jobs and growth that is not just commodity given. Ms Gallina recognised that implementing the EPAs has been a challenge, but she stressed that there are nevertheless some positive areas. First, is that Africa has an overall trade surplus with the EU in agricultural products, and the Commission is keen to support Africa to improve the quality of those exports and to enhance value addition, which will lead to job creation. Second, the national EPA implementation plans present an opportunity, according to Ms Gallina, for African countries to develop value chains either within EPA regions or between EPA regions through cumulation. Africa can also take advantage of its big labour pool, but in order to move up the value chain, for which argued Ms Gallina, DG Trade is very encouraged to support EuropeAid. Additionally, she stressed that protecting local production was very important, as it promotes the development of regional value addition if services, such as stocking and processing, are done in neighbouring countries. In this respect, Ms Gallina lauded the example of Ethiopia's virtual stock exchange, which ensures fair prices for small-scale producers. Therefore, regional preference are perhaps the most important contribution of the intra-regional EPA. Horticulture, fruit, vegetable sand preserves are an area where Ms Gallina saw immense potential in regional trade, particularly in taking a more practical approach and working more with investors, including

those supported by the European Investment Bank. Lastly, Ms Gallina added that it was encouraging to see a strong participation of the private sector in the Briefing, as they are critical to the success of regional trade, and proposed some examples where the EPA framework had encouraged European investment into Africa.

Dominique Njinkeu, the executive director of African Trade and Sustainable Development (AFTSD) spoke to the matter of implementing regional trade agreements, based in part on the discussions around the African Trade Week that took place in 2016. Dr Niinkeu stressed that the opportunities on Africa are hampered by the borders, and so countries should be looking for solutions that improve cross border transactions, through trade facilitation, complementing the focus on agriculture with the services that are part of the agricultural value chain, and finally, to mobilise stakeholders around an agricultural revolution in Africa. In relation to trade facilitation. infrastructure is important, but Dr Njinkeu also warned against the piecemeal approach to addressing issues. For the private sector, the customs driven approach to trade facilitation is important, but other trade dimensions such as transportation. The policy side of trade facilitation is also important, as the focus has often been on hard infrastructure - the emphasis therefore really has to be on using







H.E. Mr Ousmane Sylla

Annette Mutaawe

policy to unlock the potential of infrastructure, argued Dr Njinkeu. However, it is still necessary to look at each country's local circumstances, and for countries to work with more coherency, around a single approach such as the trade facilitation cluster of the Boosting Intra-African Trade programme. Dr Njinkeu also encouraged governments to take an economywide approach to trade facilitation, and stressed the need to unpack and develop all the service related areas that are part of the agricultural value chain, with a view to ensuring that any policy action is actually able to deliver benefits for the bottom line of the private sector, Lastly, Dr Njinkeu made clear that stakeholder empowerment was also part of the solution, and must take account of the political economy, promote research and training, which is more strategic, and build coalitions.

The question and answers addressed the issue of the application of EPAs to value added goods, and its role in helping to develop infant industries in African economies, as well as the link between EPAs and other trade related instruments such as the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement. Further questions addressed the opportunity to involve youth in agriculture and the use of mechanisation, and the implications of the CFA zone (Communauté Financière Africaine) for regional integration. Some points were also addressed on the distribution of value from trade, as primary producers do not get fair share.

Lastly, climate smart agriculture and the need for multistakeholder agreements were raised. On youth, the African Development Bank has a pillar of Enable Youth, which supports graduates to get skilled up to start businesses that range across the value chain, from inputs to transformation through to marketing. On the EPAs, Ms Gallina was very keen to express that the EPAs in the context of accumulation of trade agreements, and EPAs should not replicate systems. EPAs provide full duty and quota free access, but the standards and quality provisions to export to Europe remain a challenge. However, the customs unions within Africa are what are ultimately most important for trade, as access to neighbouring markets is the main enabler to attracting investment.

The second panel, which addressed the successes and opportunities from the implementation of regional trade agenda, was chaired by **H.E. Dr Ousmane Sylla**, Ambassador of Guinea to the EU.

TradeMark East Africa's Deputy
Chief Executive Officer, Ms Annette
Mutaawe, began this panel with
a discussion of how the private
sector has benefited from regional
integration in East Africa. TMEA
provides support for trade enabling
innovation and technology. One
such intervention has been a mobile
service platform developed by a
female entrepreneur to enable other
female producers, entrepreneurs
and small business owners to find

and link up with available lorry transportation for their goods. Ms Mutaawe noted this was especially important for small-scale producers, for example, traders having a consignment of less than \$500 do not have to go through all the formal customs procedures. Because of the perishable nature of agricultural goods, it is critical for them to be transported across borders as quickly as possible. This platform is very important to achieve inclusiveness, which is a priority for TMEA. Farmers have also been able to access new opportunities using the iShamba platform that won the TMEA challenge fund. Subscribers to iShamba receive information on the price of inputs; best farming practices, weather patterns, farm gate prices and so forth, and covers a significant number of commodities. TMEA is now looking to scale up the platform and for it to address new areas. Another business that TMEA has put through the pipeline is LOGISA, an online logistics and supply chain platform offering solutions for transport requirements. It enables shippers to use the platform to get quotes on transport, warehousing, handling, insurance, through a closed network users (user group). A further technology based solution that TMEA has is the NTB (non-tariff barrier) reporting tool, which allows traders to notify NTB's by way of mobile messages. Ms Mutaawe explained how TMEA was working with the World Bank to identify the most economically viable locations across trade corridors, known as







Ishmael Sunga



Nana Osei-Bonsu

"Growth Hubs". Examples of key sectors in agribusiness included maize and fisheries in the Kisumu area, honey in Rwanda, and shea butter in South Sudan.

Argent Chuula, Chief Executive Officer for the Alliance for Commodity Trade in Eastern and Southern Africa (ACTESA), discussed key opportunities for regional trade in commodities, under the theme of "catalysing the African Green Revolution". His presentation began with an introduction of the main challenges Africa faces in increasing productivity: poor soils, lack of quality seeds, and inadequate farm management. An approach that addresses all three of these challenges is needed in order for Africa to achieve food security, and ACTESA's activities are therefore clustered in three focus areas: (1) the seed trade system; (2) the fertilizer trade system; and (3) agronomic and technical practices. At the heart of this, argued Mr Chuula, is the need to address poverty. Trade therefore plays a role in achieving effective and efficient use of quality seeds, fertiliser and technology that will trigger an African Green Revolution. Although demand is clearly there, and it continues to grow, there are nevertheless many bottlenecks, related to production, promotion, pricing and logistics. Given the growing middle class and the significant imports of value added food into Africa, ensuring more local transformation of agricultural products would present a big gain for producers. COMESA is undertaking infrastructure

development at a very big scale with the support of the public sector, thus helping to enable more cross border trade. This includes airport, rail and road upgrading, but also addressing the "soft infrastructure" issues around research, security, rule of law, of tariff and non-tariff barriers. Additionally, there are efforts to scale up financing for the public sector and public-private partnerships. COMESA launched in 2015 a fertiliser and seed investment platform, where the private sector for each input can meet and transact which has resulted in 112 business contracts. Through this, COMESA realised the private sector needed a platform to transact, and so in 2017 it is being expanded to seeds and agrochemicals.

Ishmael Sunga, CEO of the Southern African Confederation of Agricultural Unions (SACAU), presented the farmer's perspective. Mr Sunga began by giving an overview of the problem, namely that farmers are often at the bottom of the value chain, where they have the highest risk and the lowest return. SACAU developed a Value Chain Initiative (VCI), which reconfigures the relationship between farmers and others in the value chain. According to Mr Sunga, this VCI was developed with two goals: maximising the value for each of the actors, and better sharing of risk across all the different actors. Mr Sunga also argued that fragmentation is at the heart of the problems faced by farmers, particularly for smallholders. PPPs are also a way of mending broken value chains, and reduce the risk for

third parties who want to deal with small-scale farmers. He noted that PPPs can be effective to develop smallholder producers, and there is a lot of scope for their expansion in this context. Furthermore, the reduction of risk is an important element of PPPs and encouraging the sharing of risk is a good way to advance the common needs of the value chain. Farmers have limited experience in negotiating deals and business transactions, and the same goes for developing and maintaining commercial relationships, so models are needed to enhance the strength and capacity of farmers and farmer's organisations in business and commercial contexts. Mr Sunga emphasised the need for mutual trust, accountability and monitoring in PPP arrangements, and for transfer of technology and skills to farmers to be the hallmarks and standards by which PPPs are measured. Finally, a number of recommendations for future PPPs were discussed, such as the possibility to promote equity building for farmers that can generate revenues from investments made further downstream, and assisting farmers and famer organisations to become stronger business and commercial players, especially if the sector is to attract youth in the future.

Nana Osei-Bonsu, CEO of Ghana's Private Enterprise Federation (PEF) concluded the second panel by providing the private sector perspective on opportunities for investment and PPPs. He reminded the audience that although the





Roberto Ridolfi

trade discussions cover international and regional levels, land is still national and local, which is where constraints and challenges have to be addressed. Therefore more efficient land use must be prioritised because land is ultimately the major binding aspect of agriculture. A further constraint to trade which Mr Osei-Bonsu repeated was that African countries do not do enough value addition, and together with standardisation, traceability, are important to enabling countries to trade regionally. This can be further enabled if the countries had more coordinated or harmonised policy frameworks at the regional level, and more policy interaction with stakeholders. He emphasised that skills and capacity needed by producers and smallholder farmers to increase productivity. In addition to lending, private equity and other forms of finance are also necessary to scale up investment into agriculture, and mechanisms to de-risk should be extended to this area of financing. Another area that has to be scaled up is innovative technology and connectivity in rural areas and the need to develop a platform for sharing and coordinating approaches to support agriculture between African countries. At the domestic level, there are a lack of national agribusiness chambers to do the work of facilitating engagement, influencing policies, representing the sector and making sure that there is strong coordination of efforts. Private sector groups such as the PEF must work with each other, to create private -private partnerships,

which the PEF has done with Nigeria's private sector. This enables the private sector to have a stronger position from which to engage with the public sector in order to drive policy in the right direction. More private-private partnerships must be created to complement traditional public-private partnerships.

The second questions and answers session touched on drought, and its effects on agriculture, for which more action at the continental level is needed. Mr Sunga noted in response that this issue comes down to the fact that producers bear most of the burden when there is a drought, and do not receive similar levels of assistance as consumers, for example, would get. This could be addressed through initiatives such a public facility to subsidise insurance, or having a drought levy for producers. Mr Osei-Bonsu added to this the need to improve irrigation infrastructure, taking advantage of large rivers that exist in the regions.

Roberto Ridolfi. Director for Sustainable Growth and Development at DG EuropeAid (European Commission) concluded the Briefing with highlights of current and future initiatives that the European Commission is undertaking to support regional trade, agricultural development and jobs growth in Africa. Mr Ridolfi argued that access to finance and access to technology will be critical to unlock the economic potential that Africa. Investment into Africa's energy and climate change adaptation is important

to EuropeAid, but more has to be done to push the private sector to free up capital and provide finance. Likewise, for there to be real impact on agriculture in Africa, Mr Ridolfi pressed for the application of research and innovations on a much larger scale, reaching millions of farmers rather than small groups. Agribusiness development will also depend on the necessary governance being in place, in order to promote investment. This is why EC's financing instruments are composed of three pillars, which collectively reduce risk: financial investment, technical assistance and policy dialogue. Mr Ridolfi clarified that this financing instrument provides a quarantee of first loss for investors, and will have two windows, one for renewable energy, and another for sustainable agriculture. The new EU External Investment Plan will use ODA to leverage other sources of investment and financing. Two examples quoted by Mr Ridolfi are ElectriFI, which will finance off-grid solutions in rural areas, and AgriFI. for agribusiness SMEs. The External Investment Plan allocates €4.3 billion of ODA, which must in turn generate or leverage an additional €45-60 billion of investments for Africa and neighbouring countries. Complementing this flagship plan are other initiatives of the EC, notably in partnership with CTA and the Intra-ACP to support SMEs, which will feed into the EU-Africa Summit that will take place in Abidjan in November 2017. As part of this Summit, the private sector aspect will focus on two streams,





namely renewable and accessible energy, and sustainable agriculture. The groundwork will be done at the Africa-EU Private Sector Forum, which will take place during the European Development Days in Brussels in June, with a preparatory exercise in April or May.

Further questions were brought on how to ensure that gains are distributed fairly across the value chain and how the investment plan will address this dimension, and how regional integration will be addressed in this context. The issue of organic farming in Africa was raised, and whether the EC would have any specific support on this. the role of farmers as investors, as well as the eligibility criteria for accessing the funds, and the need to support institutions, which facilitate, coordinate and share information with farmers, who are often unaware of the support and instruments available. Mr Ridolfi stressed that it is important for the gains to be captured by the right actors, so policy measures are directly involved in the lending process, and investigating the potential role of civil society organisations to

monitor and track these investments. Regional trade is an important dimension of this new development agenda and in this respect, the EC is looking at how to reform Aid for Trade in line with this new approach. Part of the External Investment Plan will be the foundation of a "onestop shop" website, which will put together all the relevant information about this new facility. Furthermore, the EC wants to continue to assist farmer's organisations and business chambers to build capacity and be more productive.

Mr Gnassounou added to the concluding remarks the ongoing review of the ACP Group's strategy on the agricultural commodity sector. This will be further addressed during a symposium held in February at the ACP Secretariat to help develop a policy document on this area, which can then inform a strategy to facilitate regional development banks to engage in impact investment in the agricultural sector in ACP countries.

The final remarks by **Mr Hailu** revisited the opportunities that agriculture has in Africa, as reflected

in the discussions and also in the joint CTA and IFPRI report, particularly for job creation and food security. It was further noted that there is a strong common direction by all stakeholders to work towards real impact to transform the sector through innovation, investment and technology. Mr Hailu expressed some of the priorities of CTA in relation to the discussions at the Briefing, particularly to assist in capacity building of famer organisations, co-operatives and SMEs.

#### Further information available online:

- Brussels Briefings: www.brusselsbriefings.net
- African Agricultural Trade Status Report 2017: http://bit.ly/2sxelYR
- Report prepared by Lebo Mofolo, Junior Programme Associate (Policy Briefs) and Isolina Boto, Manager of CTA Brussels Office.