



COUNTRY FACT SHEET ON FOOD AND AGRICULTURE POLICY TRENDS

Socio-economic context and role of agriculture

Burundi is a small, landlocked country in central Africa with the second densest population in the region. The country has gone through a decade of civil war (1993-2003) which had severe effects on economic and social conditions of the population, with 90 percent of the population still currently living on less than US\$ 2 per day. Since early 2000, Burundi has committed to revitalize its economy and national unity, however the very recent political crisis that followed a failed coup in May 2015 could undermine this process.¹

Following a decade of economic stagnation, Burundi's

GDP growth rate has improved considerably since 2006. If political stability is maintained, projections indicate that real GDP growth can reach an average of 4.7 percent per year in 2015-16, mostly driven by agriculture and construction.²

Burundi has the potential to be self-sufficient in food production, counting on assets like abundant rainfall, a large farming population, an extensive network of lakes and rivers, and the possible market expansion within the context of the East African Community (EAC).³ Nevertheless, food and nutrition security is alarmingly under threat and over 50

Selected indicators		2007	2009	2011	2013	
SOCIO-ECONOMIC	GDP (current billion US\$) *	1.3	1.7	2.3	2.7	
	GDP per capita (US\$) *	162.8	194.9	246.9	267.1	
	Agricultural value added (% of GDP) *	37.3	40.5	40.3	39.8	
	Agricultural value added (annual % growth) *	(average 2007-2013)		0.97		
		[2013]		1		
	Total population (thousand)	8 328	8 927	9 540	10 163	
	Rural population (% of total)	90.1	89.6	89	88.5	
	Agricultural labour force (% of total labour force)	89.6	89.3	89	88.7	
Human Development Index **	[2013]		0.389 [rank 180]			
AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION & TRADE	Per capita cultivated land (ha)	0.15	NA	NA	0.14 [2012]	
	Area equipped for irrigation (ha)	23 000 [2012]				
	Value of total agriculture production (constant gross value 2004-2006, billion US\$)	1 489	1 789	2 074	1491 [2012]	
	Value of cereals production (constant gross value 2004-2006, billion US\$)	93	121	138	98 [2012]	
	Yield for cereals (hg/ha)	13 454	12 959	13 091	11 759	
	Cereal import dependency ratio (%)	[2009-2011]		21.7		
	Top 3 commodities	Production quantity	Cassava; Bananas; Sweet potatoes [2012]			
		Production value	Bananas; Cassava; Beans, dry [2012]			
		Import quantity	Malt; Maize; Sugar refined [2011]			
		Import value	Malt; Sugar refined; Sugar raw centrifugal [2011]			
		Export quantity	Coffee, green; Beer of barley; Tea [2011]			
		Export value	Coffee, green; Tea; Beer of barley [2011]			
Top 3 trade partners	Import value ^^	Italy; Saudi Arabia; Belgium [2012]				
	Export value ^^	Unspecified; United Araba Emirates; France [2012]				
FOOD SECURITY & NUTRITION	Top 3 commodities available for consumption (2011)	NA				
	Per capita food supply (kcal/capita/day)	NA	NA	NA	NA	
	General (g) and Food (f) CPI (2000=100)	161 (g), 151.6 (f)	221.5 (g), 220 (f)	260.6 (g), 259.8 (f)	331.7 (g), 326.3 (f)	
	People undernourished (million)	[2008-2010]	NA			
		[2011-2013]	NA			
	Proportion of undernourished (%)	[2008-2010]	NA			
		[2011-2013]	NA			
	Prevalence of underweight children under 5 years of age (%)	NA	NA	29.1 [2010]	NA	
	Prevalence of stunting among children under 5 years of age (%)	NA	NA	57.5 [2010]	NA	
	Prevalence of wasting among children under 5 years of age (%)	NA	NA	6.1 [2010]	NA	
Global Hunger Index ^	[2014]	35.6 [extremely alarming]				
Access to improved water sources (% of population) *	74	74	75	75 [2012]		

Source: FAOSTAT; *Source: WB; **Source: UNDP; ^ Source: IFPRI; ^^Source: WITS. [accessed on 21 July 2015]

1 As of the end of June 2015, nearly 144 000 people have fled Burundi to neighboring countries. According to humanitarian agencies, the Burundian refugee population could reach 250 000 by September 2015. FEWS NET, *Burundi remote monitoring report*, 2015, available at: <http://goo.gl/u0UWvZ>.

2 Economist Intelligence Unit, *Burundi Country Report*, 2015. Available at: <http://country.eiu.com/burundi>

3 The country was traditionally self-sufficient in food production. IFAD, *Enabling poor rural people to overcome poverty in Burundi*, 2012, available at: www.ifad.org/operations/projects/regions/Pf/factsheets/burundi.pdf

percent of children are chronically malnourished. According to the Global Hunger Index, in 2014 the country had the highest level of hunger out of 76 countries worldwide.⁴

Burundi's economy is dominated by subsistence agriculture (90 percent of total population). The main staple crops grown are banana, cassava, sweet potato and beans. Coffee is the main export, accounting for more than 60 percent of export revenues, but national production is in decline since ageing coffee orchards

produce only every two years. Other cash crops include tea, cotton, and sugar.

Compared to the pre-war period, average per capita agricultural production has more than halved, being among the lowest in the EAC region. Land fragmentation, declining yields, falling soil fertility, and low level of input utilization and of technical knowledge are major issues contributing to this decline.

1. Government objectives in agriculture, food and nutrition security

"**Vision Burundi 2025**", approved in 2011, is the government long-term framework for the country's comprehensive economic and social development. The Vision foresees the installation of good governance, the development of a strong and competitive economy, and the improvement of living conditions of Burundian people. It is based on eight inter-connected pillars: good governance and capacity-building of the state; human capital; economic growth and the fight against poverty; regional integration; demographics; social cohesion; regional planning and urbanization; and partnership.⁵

In 2012, the Government launched its second **Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (Cadre Stratégique de Croissance et de Lutte Contre la Pauvreté - CSLP II)**, as a continuation of the first CSLP of 2006, which places the challenges of growth and job creation at the centre of governmental programmes. With regards to the agriculture sector, the objective is to reduce its vulnerability to shocks and to boost its profitability. Agriculture development priorities include improving access to inputs, restoring forest cover, rebuilding livestock herds, introducing drought-tolerant crop varieties and supporting agricultural research and extension activities. The document also highlights the importance of improving roads, providing market intelligence, creating strong national cooperatives, and diversifying production by growing new export crops such as fruits and vegetables.⁶

On January 2009, the government launched the **Programme National de Sécurité Alimentaire (PNSA 2009-2015)** in order to address increasing food insecurity and promote better coordination among different public actors (such as the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Environment, etc.). The programme aims to restore food self-sufficiency and reduce vulnerability in the country, with the target of reducing hunger and malnutrition by at least 50 percent by 2015, especially among rural and peri-urban households.⁷

In April 2011, the government adopted a **National Policy of Social Welfare (Politique Nationale de Protection Sociale)** that seeks to gradually extend sufficient social welfare in health, education, water and sanitation to the entire population. The main interventions foreseen in the plan are the strengthening of non-contributory key programmes such as cash transfers and high labour intensive public works, and building capacity and systems for the effective implementation of all the programmes with better coordination.

The "**Stratégie Agricole Nationale**" 2008-2015 and the "**Plan National d'Investissement Agricole**" (PNIA) 2012-2017 constitute the references for strategic prioritization and investment planning in the agricultural sector. Their end goal is to enable the transformation from subsistence farming to commercial agriculture through structural changes and the promotion of high technical qualifications among all farmers.

2. Trends in key policy decisions (2007 to 2014)

2.1 Producer-oriented policy decisions

With an economy dependent on agriculture, investment in the sector is crucial. The government has made agriculture a priority, committing to increase spending on agriculture to at least 10 percent of the national budget as per the Maputo Declaration.⁸ Spending in the sector has increased, however low

rates of productivity persist. The main policy trends in the field of agricultural production in the country are as follows.

State involvement in domestic market decreasing recently

Notwithstanding a process of liberalization partly implemented since the beginning of the 1990s, State involvement in the market remains significant. Semi-public enterprises and entities

4 IFPRI, *Global Hunger Index*, 2014, available at: <http://ebrary.ifpri.org/utils/getfile/collection/p15738coll2/id/128360/filename/128571.pdf>

5 UNDP, *Vision Burundi 2015*, 2011, available at: www.undp.org/content/dam/burundi/docs/publications/UNDP-bi-vision-burundi-2015_complete_EN.pdf

6 *Cadre Stratégique de Croissance et de Lutte Contre la Pauvreté (CSLP II)*, available at: www.burundiconference.gov.bi/IMG/pdf/CSLP2_fr_web.pdf

7 *Programme National de Sécurité Alimentaire (PNSA 2009-2015)*, available at: http://coin.fao.org/coin-static/cms/media/10/13231815575630/pnsa-complet-_definitif.pdf

8 *Plan National d'Investissement Agricole (PNIA) 2012-2017*. Available at: www.gafspfund.org/sites/gafspfund.org/files/Documents/Annex%203-Investment%20Plan%20PNIA%20final%20-%20French.pdf

are present in most branches of commercial agriculture with a dominant position in processing and marketing activities, particularly through the fixing of producer prices for coffee, tea, and cotton, among others. The *Office du Thé du Burundi* (OTB), *Sociétés de Gestion des Stations de Lavage du Café* (SOGESTAL)⁹, and *Compagnie de Gérance du Coton* (COGERCO) are examples of these semi-public enterprises. These interventions have led to market inefficiencies, as the presence of numerous intermediaries inflates post-production prices above international market prices, while farmers still receive low prices for their products and are excluded from the decision process.¹⁰ Timid reforms have been implemented recently under guidance from the World Bank, allowing the partial entrance of private operators in value chains, for coffee in particular.¹¹

Introduction of input subsidy programme

In 2012, the Government launched the National Fertilizer Subsidy Programme (*Programme National de Subvention des Engrais au Burundi* -PNSEB), with the aim to increase agricultural productivity through greater input utilization in the country. The programme benefits from financial aid from the cooperation agencies from Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium and Japan, as well as from the World Bank.¹² A total of US\$ 5.7 million expenditure was foreseen in the 2014 budget law for subsidizing the purchase of 18 500 tonnes of fertilizers for 300 000 farmers of all crops (farmers paying about 10 percent of the fertilizer market price). The target is to benefit 600 000 households annually, with up to 60 000 tons of fertilizers supplied. Before the institution of the PNSEB, input distributions were implemented in the country on an ad hoc and non-systematic basis. However, it appears that more robust impact assessments are needed to evaluate the effectiveness of the programme.

Budget increases in support to agriculture and livestock

According to official data, Burundi is among the countries which reached the target set by the Maputo Declaration to allocate at least 10 percent of national budget to agriculture. During the review period, the level of budget support to agriculture and livestock was maintained high, from 11 percent in 2009 to 11.3 percent for fiscal year 2015.¹³ According to other



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Burundi cultivated land. The country has the potential to be self-sufficient in food production, counting on assets like abundant rainfall and a large farming population, among others. Nevertheless, land fragmentation, declining yields and falling soil fertility are among the major issues contributing to agricultural productivity's decline.

analyses, however, national budget dedicated to agriculture and livestock sector has been significantly lower: the World Bank Public Expenditure review of 2013 attests a level of agricultural expenditure averaging 4.5 percent from 2009 to 2013.¹⁴

2.2 Consumer-oriented policy decisions

The population is still suffering from the consequences of the long period of conflict (1993-2003). The healthcare system was almost entirely destroyed during the war, while disability, death from malaria, HIV/AIDS and other diseases increased. Notwithstanding timid improvements, the level of food vulnerability remains extremely high, with more than 60 percent of the population being at risk of food insecurity, particularly in the eastern and northern regions.¹⁵

Attempts to launch a national school feeding programme

No governmental school feeding programme is in place in the country, and only some donors or NGO's projects are implemented in specific areas (the most important being the WFP School Feeding Programme, which, as of 2013, covered 10 percent of school-attending children in primary school)¹⁶, constituting a major policy gap. The government recently showed interest in developing and implementing a home-grown school feeding programme, and asked for technical and financial support from main donors and partners in early 2015.¹⁷

9 After the reforms, SOGESTAL is now one player among several others in the Burundi coffee value chain, and the Office du Café du Burundi (OCIBU) has been dismantled in 2010. Information on SOGESTAL available at: www.biodiv.be/burundi/implementation/programmes-thematiques/biodiversite-agricole-1/institutions-agricoles-au-burundi/institutions-etatiques/societe-de-gestion-des-stations-de-lavage-sogestal

10 WTO, *East African Community (EAC) Trade Policy Review: Burundi*, 2012, available at: www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/tpr_e/tp371_e.htm

11 The government began to liberalize and privatize the coffee sector and sold 13 coffee washing stations to a reputable international investor; more recently, 28 additional coffee washing stations (out of the 104 stations remaining to be privatized) were sold mostly to local investors. World Bank, *Republic of Burundi Public Expenditure Review - Policy Note Series*, 2012, available at: <http://goo.gl/Rxscjz>

12 www.vicepresidence2.gov.bi/spip.php?article138

13 Data from national Budget Laws.

14 World Bank, *Burundi Public Expenditure Review*, 2013. Available at: http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2014/12/23/000333037_20141223231343/Rendered/PDF/ACS53930REVISION012032013.pdf

15 IFAD, 2012, *Ibidem*.

16 WFP, *State of school feeding worldwide*, 2013. Available at: <http://documents.wfp.org/stellent/groups/public/documents/communications/wfp257481.pdf>

17 www.vicepresidence2.gov.bi/spip.php?article386

Commitment to scale up nutrition

On February 2013, Burundi joined the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement committing to tackle the alarming levels of malnutrition in the country.¹⁸ Subsequently, the Multi-sectoral Food and Nutritional Security Platform (PMSAN) was established with the intent of promoting commitment and accountability among all national stakeholders (including public and private sector and the international community). Information on governmental nutrition-specific programmes is lacking. Notwithstanding recent political commitment, infant feeding practices are still poor in the country, undernutrition and health diseases continue to be high, and access to nutrition remains limited.¹⁹

Adjustment of taxes

As a response to the food price crisis of 2007/08, the government temporarily removed taxes on fuel for transport of goods with the objective to contain soaring food prices and revitalize the agricultural sector. In July 2009, such taxes were reinstated, along with the creation of the *Office Burundais des Recettes - OBR*²⁰ and subsequent introduction of VAT for a wide range of goods and products including energy, water and food. VAT on food products was then temporarily removed in May 2012 for a period of six months, and taxes on fuel were reduced in October 2012. Lastly, in August 2014, the government issued an amended Budget Law N° 1/23 which increased both income and indirect taxes, as well as repealed tax exemptions and tax credits.

2.3 Trade- and market-oriented policy decisions

Government has implemented a relatively open trade policy during the reference period, in line with principles of trade liberalization, greater private sector involvement, and regional and

global economic integration foreseen in the CSLP II, with some exceptions as mentioned below.

Regional trade agreements are in place but bottlenecks persist

Being a landlocked country, regional trade and integration is essential for ensuring access to affordable and timely-available food. Burundi is thus part of an articulated system of regional agreements aimed, among others, at fostering trade within members. The country acceded to the East African Community (EAC) in July 2007 and to EAC Customs Union in 2009. As a result, the government reduced tariffs on wheat flour imported from the EAC from 60 to 35 percent in July 2010. Burundi also belongs to the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), to the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), and the Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries (ECGLC). Nevertheless, several non-tariff barriers (NTBs) are still in place in the country. Burundi could position itself as a trans-shipment hub for the region, however NTBs remain a serious obstacle, especially regarding customs and administrative procedures, the length of clearance formalities and the large number of institutions involved in control operations at the port of Bujumbura.²¹

Tariffs temporarily lifted in order to curb prices

From February to December 2008, the government lifted tariffs on selected staples (i.e. groundnuts, cassava flour, fruits and vegetables, fish, potatoes, fresh meat, maize, maize flour, beans and peas, fresh or dried cassava, sweet potato, onion and banana) in order to smooth soaring food prices. From May to December 2012, staple food imported from EAC countries was temporarily zero-rated in order to curb high food prices as well.

3. Emerging issues and challenges

As mentioned, the government has implemented a number of reforms during the review period, with a view to open the market and reduce the fiscal deficit. The sustainable and effective implementation of such reforms remains a major challenge for Burundi, whose institutional and human resource capacities are still limited. If not adequately addressed, these limitations could undermine the entire reform process.

Rural credit and extension services need to be improved

Major constraints to smallholder farm production in the country include inadequate extension and research services, as well as

poor access to credit.²² Low credit dedicated to agriculture is a mayor bottleneck for development: the government budget has not financed agricultural credit for several years while commercial banks' lending to agriculture is extremely low, only around 1 percent of total lending. In this regard, the government has recently approved a fund for agricultural micro-credit with an initial Burundian Franc (BIF) 2 billion, for providing loan guarantees. Regarding agricultural research and extension services, although such activities are financed by the government (8.6 and 7.6 percent of government agricultural budget in 2011 respectively), they are generally of poor quality.²³ Furthermore, there are few

18 REACH, *Commitment by Burundi to improve nutrition governance*, 2013, available at: www.reachpartnership.org/documents/312104/4e332927-577b-410a-9fa3-83c568820a60

19 World Bank, *Nutrition at a glance – Burundi*, 2010. Available at: <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/NUTRITION/Resources/281846-1271963823772/Burundi.pdf>

20 OBR was created in July 2009 with the stated objective to overcome the weaknesses of the old tax administration, to provide the state with more revenue, and to harmonize the Burundian tax administration with EAC tax structures. This new tax authority replaced the former Departments of Taxes, Customs and Administrative Revenue and Portfolio capped by the General Directorate of Revenue into one single entity.

21 World Bank, 2012, *Ibidem*.

22 Africa-Adapt, *Improving African agriculture spending*, 2013, available at: www.africa-adapt.net/media/resources/872/improving-african-agriculture-spending.pdf

23 *Ibidem*

linkages between research services and extension, preventing farmers from getting the latest outcomes of research.

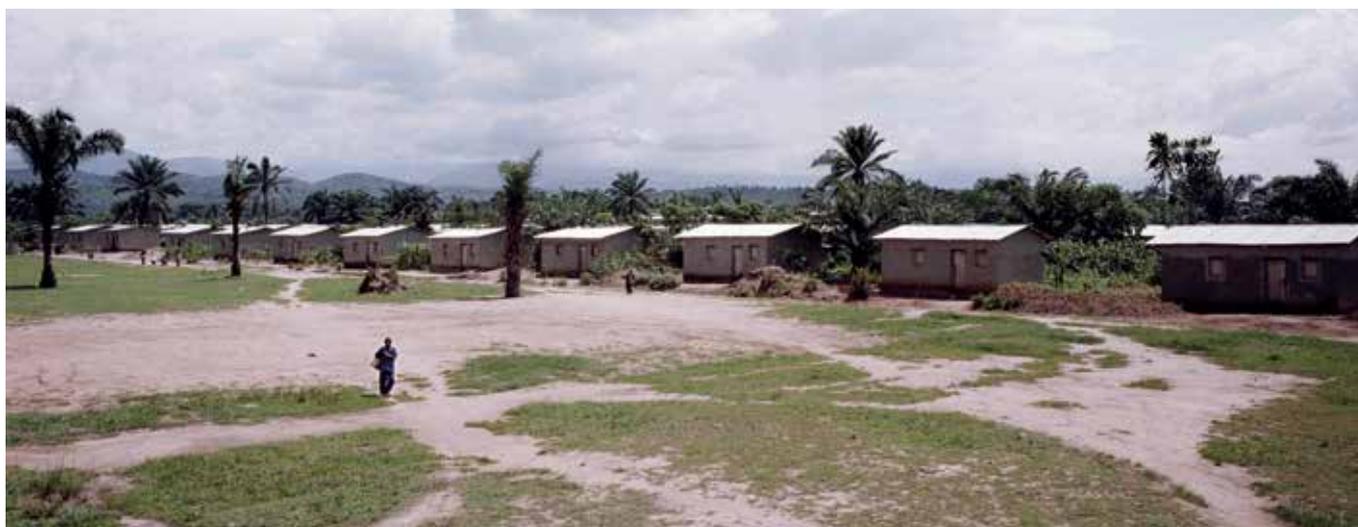
Land management issues

More than 300 000 displaced people have returned to their original villages in Burundi since 2002. Issues of land ownership and lack of land complicate their reinsertion into the economy. Soil fertility is declining because land is over-exploited, and marginal lands are being used without leaving fields fallow. In addition, farm sizes are shrinking, forcing people to clear forested land and drain wetlands (forest cover declined from 8.2 percent cover in 1992 to 6.3 percent in 2006).

In 2011 a new Code of Land Tenure²⁴ replaced the previous one in place since 1986. The Government has reviewed the code to facilitate its application and help revitalize the agricultural sector through the consolidation of agricultural holdings and the establishment of a genuine land market through greater respect for tenure rights, in order to encourage rural lending. According to other sources, a vast land reform should be encouraged instead of a simple revision of the Land Tenure Code, in order to grant a more equal access to land which is still lacking in the country.²⁵

Efforts to improve regional infrastructure need to be stepped up

Transport and marketing infrastructure is inadequate in the country: roads are in poor condition and links to neighbouring countries and international markets are still underdeveloped. Budget allocated by the government to public works between 2009 and 2013 averaged 2.6 percent of total budget, further decreasing in 2012 and 2013.²⁶ Poor rural infrastructure is among the main causes of low agricultural productivity in the country, and prevents improvements in agriculture-related-value chains, among others.²⁷ Burundi has recently joined a multi-national railway project together with Rwanda and Tanzania, within EAC regional integration process. The new railway network will connect Isaka in Tanzania to Kigali in Rwanda, and Keza and Gitega in Tanzania to Musongati in Burundi. The three governments will collectively fund the development of the new regional railway line and its link to the Central Corridor Railway network that connects to the Port of Dar es Salaam.



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Daily life in the Villages Ruraux Intégrées (VRI). The houses seen in the background were built by the government to house the internally displaced persons returning to Burundi.

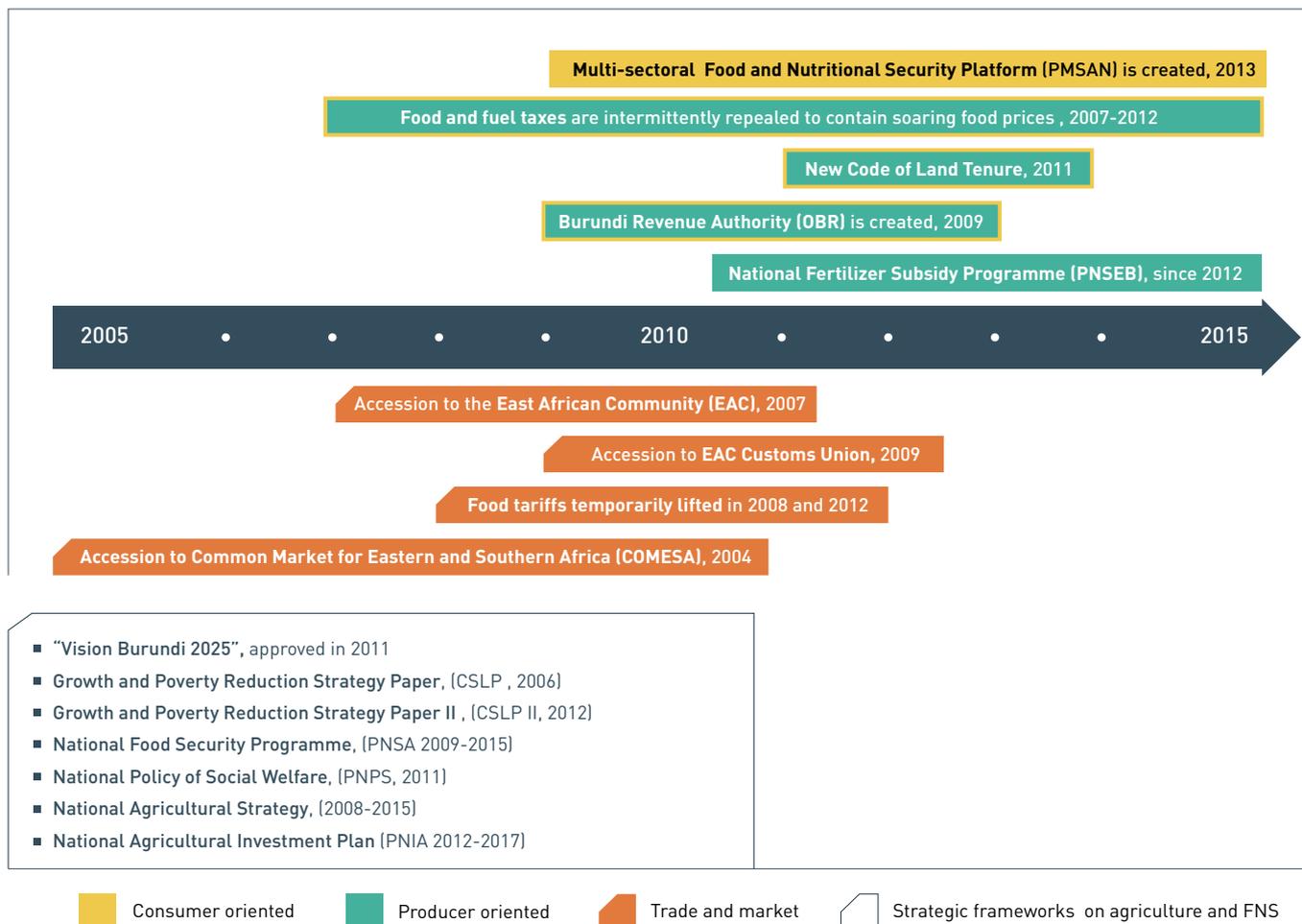
24 Law n. 1/13 of 9 August 2011.

25 International Crisis Group, *Les terres de la discorde: la réforme foncière au Burundi*, 2014. Available at : www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/africa/central-africa/burundi/213-les-terres-de-la-discorde-i-la-reforme-fonciere-au-burundi.pdf

26 WB, 2013. Ibidem.

27 According to the World Bank, improved infrastructure across the continent could increase economic growth by 2 percent a year.

MAIN RECENT STRATEGIES AND POLICIES RELATED TO AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION (FSN)



i The FAPDA initiative promotes evidence-based decision making by collecting and disseminating information on policy decisions through a freely accessible web-based tool. For more information, please visit:

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