



EAC

EAC: Conclusion

Du Toit McLachlan

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Chart 38: Policy recommendations

Recommendations

- States must increase investment in WaSH infrastructure, focussing on improved sanitation facilities.
- Governments must implement the EAC's Food and Nutrition Security Action Plan to improve food security and reduce import dependence.
- Governments must increase funding for education, specifically for teacher training, learning materials and improved infrastructure.
- States must align their industrial policies under the EAC Industrialization Policy and Strategy, to create a stronger regional market.
- Governments should implement frameworks which increase trade facilitation, strengthen competition policy and counter dumping.
- Member states must increase member-to-member investment by improving tax collecting and increasing control over illicit financial flows.
- Governments must adhere to the East African Community Integrity and Anti-Corruption Bill to foster a more stable business environment.
- States must improve gender equality outcomes, specifically related to violence against women, through public awareness campaigns, gender-sensitive teaching material and strong implementation of legal frameworks.
- Governments must refrain from silencing civil society organisations and must allow citizens to meaningfully participate in democratic processes.

Chart 38 summarizes the policy recommendations for the EAC.

The EAC is a Regional Economic Community comprised of eight member states including recently new members (DR Congo and Somalia) who differ significantly on various fronts. Additionally, the organisation must confront the challenges new opinions, priorities and development shortfalls the members bring. Aligning development plans and trajectories will remain a obstacle to regional growth as countries battle with unique challenges. Nevertheless, the EAC serves as a useful space for convening member states to increase coordination in various sectors, such as energy, infrastructure and migration, as well as agriculture. Full buy in from national governments to capacitate the REC while adopting regional development objectives is a top priority, and promises to spur on shared growth. Crucially, instability concerns in Somalia,

South Sudan and the eastern DR Congo must be addressed at the REC level, with the organisation serving as an important forum to discuss joint responses to security challenges.

The EAC will grow steadily on the Current Path, with DR Congo and Rwanda in particular on their way towards meaningful development. However, the rate of change will not sufficiently address the needs of a rapidly expanding population, and timely interventions are needed to address extreme poverty and income inequality. To this end, a number of key interventions must be pursued to create a region capable of providing for its citizens:

1. Significant investment in WaSH infrastructure is needed, especially for improved sanitation facilities. EAC members must commit to and implement the Principles of Action they laid out at the WaSH Leadership Summit in 2023 to combat the REC's low levels of access. These principles focus on:
 - a. coordinating national budget priorities around improved WaSH
 - b. removing governance bottlenecks
 - c. incentivising sector providers to improve efficiency
 - d. generating increased funding from the private sector and climate finance
 - e. designing WaSH systems which are climate- and disaster-resilient.
2. Governments should prioritise the implementation for the EAC's Food and Nutrition Security Action Plan to improve food security and reduce dependence on food imports to meet demand. Crucial to the plan's success is the harmonisation of regional and national development plans aimed at improving agricultural productivity.
3. Increased funding for education is needed, focusing specifically on the motivation of teachers, provision of teaching and learning materials, creation of sound learning curriculums and improvement in infrastructure. Members should share best practices and adopt strategies aimed at increasing classroom-to-pupil ratios, developing gender-sensitive teaching policies and reducing the distance needed to travel to get to school.
4. States must work to align their industrial policies under the EAC Industrialization Policy and Strategy, as increased harmonisation will lead to a stronger regional market for manufacturing firms to exploit. The EAC should focus, in the short term, on agro-processing industries before diversifying into higher-value products in the medium to long term.
5. Implementing frameworks aimed at increasing trade facilitation, strengthening competition policy and law, and countering the dumping of goods will foster regional trade and improve the level of trade openness in the REC. In addition, all members must be encouraged and aided in the full implementation of the AfCFTA.
6. Promote member-to-member investment by implementing certain reforms that target improved tax collecting, finance sector development and stricter controls over illicit financial flows. To this end, emphasise the implementation of the recommendations set out in the EAC's Sixth Development strategy which clearly set out actionable steps towards improving the REC's investment environment and making the financial sector more efficient.
7. To provide a more stable business environment, the EAC's development strategy has as key targets the promotion of a regional framework of Good Governance and the implementation of cooperation arrangements centring around governance, rule of law and access to justice. Adherence to the East African Community Integrity and Anti-Corruption Bill of 2019 is crucial in this regard.
8. Solving regional instability remains a key target in the REC, with the EAC serving as an important forum for EAC members to address and solve the causes of regional conflicts affecting multiple members. To this end, properly capacitating those forces tasked with maintaining peace while simultaneously addressing the roots causes of instability is crucial.
9. Although some members perform well in governance inclusion, the REC must improve gender equality outcomes, specifically related to violence against women. Public awareness campaigns, gender-sensitive teaching material and

strong implementation of legal frameworks are needed to better protect women from abuse.

Governments must refrain from shrinking the space within which civil society can act and allow citizens to meaningfully participate in democratic processes. Furthermore, the right to association and freedom of expression must be protected to ensure citizens have the ability to positively and constructively voice their opinions and grievances.

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About the authors

Mr Du Toit McLachlan joined the ISS in February 2021. He holds an honour's degree in international relations from the University of Pretoria and is the AFI website manager. His research interests include gender equality, international trade, and international geopolitics.

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