LONG TERM DEVELOPMENT POLICIES AND VISIONS IN EAC COUNTRIES: A COMPARATIVE STUDY

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1. Context and justification

For countries or regions to grow sustainably, there is a need for strong and rigorous planning and development policies thoroughly prepared in order to achieve the targets/goals set in their long- term visions.

According to Ikeanyibe Okey Marcellus (2009), Planning is one of the basic principles of administration and about the most critical of its functions since it permeates all others. Development planning therefore becomes a necessary tool used by many governments and organizations to set their visions, missions, goals, and effective means of realizing development through effective direction and control.

It is commonly agreed that the ultimate aim of governments worldwide is to achieve certain major goals in order to have their citizenry better off with an improved quality of life. Achieving such goals of life development improvement requires that deliberate plan of action be set out to guide Government throughout the whole development process.

Therefore, National Plans are set up as pure guides amenable to review (or re-direction) as dictated by the operating environment, and its absence can spell doom for the country. Moti Ukertor Gabriel (2008) has stated that Development planning therefore becomes a necessary tool used by many governments and organizations to set their visions, missions, goals, and effective means of realizing development through effective direction and control.

Most of the African countries have gone through periods of deep crisis in both or some of the political, economic and/or social areas. The long-lived crisis have resulted in far-reaching dependence upon and interference from external forces, notably multilateral and bilateral donors, as these nations attempt to set out their plans for sustainable development. These countries are presently undergoing managed adjustment processes with profound implications for all sectors of the economy.

Burundi's development planning experience predates the independence days in 1962. However, in-spite of these various plans – whether short term, medium term or long term (or perspective plan) – its underdevelopment status leaves more questions than answers. It's obvious that one can question the efficacy and efficiency of the various development plans that has pervaded Burundi's developmental landscape.

Since 2007, Burundi has acceded to the EAC, thus becoming one of the Partner States compositing that regional body initiative.

But for this regional economic integration to be beneficial and plausible for Burundi, the State needs to strengthen and improve its (economic) development plans/visions learning from best practices around the world and more specifically from the EAC region.

The re-established and enlarged East African Community (EAC) is an ambitious regional integration initiative that is aimed at a full economic and political integration within the area. The entrance point of EAC was the Customs Union and since the 1st of July 2010, the EAC states have embarked on a common market stage. It is envisaged that EAC also embraces a Monetary Union phase which is its one but last pillar (its third pillar) by 2024 after a convergence period of 10 years as the Protocol for EAC Monetary Union was signed on the 30th November 2013 and is under ratification process in the various Partner States.

Since the early 1980s, the importance of ideological differences in the EAC region have receded, and following the collapse of socialism and the adoption of stabilization and structural adjustment programmes, and subsequently the formulation of Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (hereinafter referred to as PRSPs), all the countries have followed broadly similar policies without any central co-ordination. The governments have remained committed to the maintenance of a stable macroeconomic environment, which is conducive to private savings and investment; and the belief in market forces has become entrenched in the policy frameworks of individual EAC countries.

The pursuit of debt-reduction (both domestic and foreign) initiatives, the creation of sustainable fiscal and current account positions, and the creation of robust and well functioning financial system are integral components of economic policy in individual countries. Financial sector liberalization is also ongoing in all the EAC countries and these countries remain committed to participatory poverty reduction processes.

In addition, Buigut Steven (2011) argues that macroeconomic convergence of member countries, mainly exhibited in similarity of inflation and interest rates amongst other indicators, is crucial and necessary to ensure a single monetary policy is optimal for all the union members, and to ensure the sustainability of a monetary union over the long run.

All these statements show how the production and implementation of coherent and solid long- term visions and development plans must be given all required priority.

2. Objectives of the Study

The purpose of this paper is to investigate what are the existing tools and instruments for long- term and medium-term economic planning within the East African Community (EAC). The objective of the study is to examine development plans/visions of EAC Partner States with a view to ascertaining whether they serve as a strategy for sustainable development of the countries.

The specific goals of this research are:

- to establish what are the different timelines of the various visions for economic development of EAC Partner States;
- to asses the main macroeconomic performances of the EAC Partner States against the targets established within some international or regional visions for economic development such as MDGs, EAC Common Market protocol, etc.

3. Methodology used

In order to gauge the economic development targets through the long-term visions within EAC Partner States, we go through a comparative analysis of the existing long-term visions for economic development within EAC Partner States.

The methodology steps followed in this study consist of a desk study with more stress on the literature review. We also dealt with some data collection and cleaning and descriptive analysis and interpretation.

Data collection has been carried from the EAC Secretariat Publications (EAC Database, EAC Facts and Figures), the World Bank Databases, the United Nations Databases, Reports and Publications of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), etc…

The softwares used are Microsoft Word for typing and Microsoft Excel for spreadsheet and descriptive analyses.

The past, the Present and the Future of EAC

The East Africa has a long history of regional integration. WTO (2006) reports that Kenya and Uganda first formed a customs union in 1917, which the then Tanganyika (Tanzania without Zanzibar) joined in 1927. Subsequently, the three countries had close economic relationships in the East African High Commission (1948-61); the East African Common Services Organization (1961-67); the East African Community (1967-77); and the East African Cooperation (1993-99). Then, since the end of 2006 and effectively the mid – 2007, Burundi and Rwanda joined the Community and a lot of advancements are being made.

The (current) Treaty for the Establishment of the East African Community (EAC) was signed on 30 November 1999, and entered into force on 7 July 2000. The present EAC has its origins in the Mediation Agreement for Division of Assets and Liabilities of the original EAC, which collapsed for a variety of political and economic reasons in 1977. In that Mediation Agreement, signed on 14 May 1984, Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda agreed to explore areas of future cooperation, and to make concrete arrangements for such cooperation. Subsequent meetings of the three Heads of State led to the signing of the Agreement for the Establishment of the Permanent Tripartite Commission (PTC) for East African Cooperation on 30 November 1993. Full fledged cooperation started on 14 March 1996 when the Secretariat of the PTC was launched at the headquarters of the EAC in Arusha, Tanzania.

The key objective of the EAC is to develop policies aimed at widening and deepening cooperation in all fields for the mutual benefit of its members (Article 5 of the EAC Treaty). The EAC is thus to be an economic area (including customs and monetary unions, with harmonized macroeconomic policies, and ultimately a political federation), although the established timetable/schedule is subject to profound changes upon success in implementation of the stages/phases so far reached or ratified: Customs Union and Common Market Protocols which are already being implemented and has been established and the Monetary Union protocol yet to be ratified by all Partner States.

Again, this reflects a call for rigorous development planning and reform agenda on both sides: national and regional as well. Before going in detailed analysis of the content and achievements of the development visions within EAC Partner States, we need to conduct a synthetic conceptual analysis in order to understand well what is embedded in the concepts of development planning and visions and also establish the linkages between development plans, regional integration and growth on a theoretical ground.

5. Conceptual Analysis: Development versus Development Planning

In order to have a better appreciation of the topic under review, it becomes pertinent for the following key concepts to be clarified: Development and Development Planning.

Development simply means improvement of one's well-being, becoming more transformed, more organized, more advanced, more mature, more complete, etc.

Todaro Michael P. (1982) defines development as a *"multi-dimensional process involving the reorganization and reorientation of the entire economic and social system"*. This involves in addition to improvement of income and output, radical changes in institutional, social and administrative structures as well as in popular attitudes, customs and belief. The definition of development given by Todaro Michael P. (1982) is a process that reflects an improvement of income and output, an increase in living standards, improvement in self-esteem needs and freedom, radical changes in institutional, social and administrative structures, all leading to better well-being with a greater range of choices.

Ibezim E. O. (1999) further explains that, economic development does not only involve physical and financial progress but also improvements in the political and social aspects of society.

Development was, and is, seen as a national, systemic and planned programme of intervention and improvement.

Development should be understood as a process instead of being considered as a product. Societies are always changing. Some improve, while others fail. Development theory therefore aims at explaining both processes. Therefore, development theory would allow identifying key factors to success, or failure bottlenecks to be avoided in the decisional and implementation process for economic and social policy.

In summary, reasoning in the sense of Ibezim E. O. (1999), it is allowed to conclude that development in a nut shell is Government's ability to improve the welfare of the citizenry by moving them from a state of less desirability to a state of higher desirability through deliberate, conscious and strategically focused designed and implementable programmes, and projects.

Following Moti Ukertor Gabriel (2008), development cannot take place haphazardly. It must be planned. We therefore need to understand deeper what development planning reflects.

Jhingan M. L. (2005: page 489) says that development planning implies *"deliberate control and direction of the economy by a central authority for the purpose of achieving definite targets and objectives within a specified period of time"*. Furthermore, he notes that the essence of planning is to increase the rate of economic development by increasing the rate of capital formation through raising the levels of income, saving and investment.

Most of the time, more emphasis has been put on purely economic factors in development planning. But we all know that economic factors, although being fundamental for development planning to be successful, are not enough per se.

Briefly speaking, against the foregoing, one can conclude that, Development planning comprehensively involves predetermining a nation's visions, missions, policies and programmes in all facets of life such as social, human, political, environmental, technological factors, etc. and the means of achieving them (Moti Ukertor Gabriel, 2008).

Economic visions and programmes cannot be realized without looking at developmental issues holistically, which entails improvement in all human endeavours. Development planning presupposes a formally predetermined rather than a sporadic action towards achieving specific developmental results. More importantly, it entails direction and control towards achieving planned targets.

6. Types and goals of National Development Plans

Diejomaoh V. P. (2008) posits that National Development Planning in the modern era, dates as far back as 1917. This is one of the extreme side which appeared with the establishment of Communism in the Soviet Union, when the Soviet Government introduced centralized planning, in which the state through its various **centralized 5-year plans** determined what was to be produced, by whom and at what prices.

On the other extreme side, the Capitalist system in the West, where the Government operated essentially **annual plans or budgets**, which had to do with what current and capital expenditures the state, had to execute.

In-between the two extreme sides or systems of development planning, were the so-called **"Mixed Economies"** in both the developed countries of the West and the developing countries. In the mixed economies of the developed world, especially in Western Europe, after the Second World War and up to the mid-1980s, **governments played a major role** in the provision of social services and there were varying degrees of national planning in these states, ranging from **public sector plans, sectoral plans, to national "indicative" plans,** notably in France.

In the developing countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America, **national development planning** was the order of the day.

7. National Development Plans in Africa

Development planning has a long history in Africa. Since the early independence days, Africa's development trajectory has been influenced by various approaches to development planning. We can therefore summarize and categorize these approaches into five different phases:

Phase 1: 1960s - 1970s with centralized planning with three-seven year planning

Franz Heidhues and Gideon Obare (2011) posited that at independence days early 1960s, African countries had high hopes for rapid growth and development. New energies were released and African leaders' minds were focused on catching up with the developed world. "Africans must run while the others walk" captures the spirit of those early years. The donor community shared this optimism and provided substantial support.

The first generation of development plans in Africa was characterized by centralized planning on a rolling basis of three, four, five or seven year plan. At least 32 African States had adopted national development plans and this continued to the 1980s. These plans promoted state- engineered economies with resources allocated by governments. It was notably the time of state- owned enterprises operating in most of the productive sectors. These ambitious development plans had however limited success and these failures were explained by a variety of reasons: deficiencies in the plan documents surely, but also failure to implement them; ambitious formulation of targets; institutional and bureaucratic weaknesses; exogenous shocks; and political factors. Initially, much was achieved with this approach. However, in the early 1970s the growth engine in African countries began to slow down and by the mid-1970s, Sub-Saharan African countries were facing fundamental problems.

In reacting to the crisis, African leaders and the major international financial institutions recommended different remedies to reverse the negative trends of the late 1970s.

In the first phase, a set of domestic solutions were applied: the Lagos Plan of Action (LPA) emphasizing continuation of state driven development through Import Substitution Industries and the Regional Food Plan for Africa (AFPLAN). Countries that tried to pursue the LPA and AFPLAN strategies ran into numerous difficulties in implementing these plans. The crisis was now primarily due to institutional weaknesses of African states, as well as the rejection by the World Bank (WB), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and western donors of any calls for an adjustment of the international economic order, outside of the capitalist system, to meet the development needs of developing countries.

In a second phase, Bretton Woods Institution led by the World Bank were recommending governments to refrain from intervention in their economies and to liberate market forces by freeing foreign trade and currency exchange from controls. This is was the birth of the famous so-called Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs).

Phase 2: 1980s –1990s with neoliberal Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs)

This period 1980-1990 was marked by a wholesale abandonment of planning under neoliberal Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs), which emerged in the 1980s-1990s with the support of the Bretton Woods Institutions. Starting from the late 1970s, and most predominantly in the 1980s and 1990s, Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) were introduced in most developing countries, which needed financial assistance from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank to enable them reschedule their foreign debts, reduce external debt repayments and have access to international credit for their international trading operations, upon which their development so critically depended. SAPs aimed to reduce the role of the State in production and service delivery and placed emphasis on macroeconomic stability, downsizing of public sector institutions, privatization and reducing government spending and budget deficits. As a conditionality, countries who introduced World Bank and IMF assisted SAPS often had to adopt draconian economic policies, cutting back on public expenditures and reducing their budget deficits to under 5% of their national incomes (GDP), introducing monetary and fiscal policies to reduce the inflation rate to under 10% and liberalizing prices – letting the market determine prices – "getting the prices right" and letting the private sector take control of the production processes, and hence privatizing state owned enterprises. However, the application of the SAPs policies resulted in considerable economic hardship and deterioration in many social indicators in developing countries. The social cost of SAPs is a sad story. The downsizing of the public sector institutions, the massive and speedy privatizations led to net job losses; the budget restrictions compromised social service delivery and human capital development. On overall, the SAPs failed to yield the envisaged growth outcomes as the annual economic growth for Africa over the 1990s averaged only 2.1% according to Carlos Lopes (2013).

These past experiences in planning alerted policymakers and decision-makers to the need to broaden the agenda of public sector reforms and to the importance of good institutions in the development process, especially in the new context of globalization.

Phase 3: Mid 1990s - 2000s with a pro-MDGs development planning

The hue and cries resulting against the SAPs in the 1980s and 1990s led to the **World Summit on Social Development** held in Copenhagen in March 1995, which enthroned Poverty Eradication, Employment creation, Enhanced expenditures on education (basic education for all by year 2015), health and other social indicators, and Gender Equality (Beijing Conference on Women), which set a minimum target of 33% for women participation in all spheres ofhuman endeavour.

A global review of progress in the implementation of the Copenhagen Declaration after 5 years in 2000, led to the birth of the **Millenium Development Goals (MDGs),** after the Millennium Summit of World Heads of States and Government in New York in September 2000. Another World Summit to review global progress with MDGs was held in September

2005. That particular summit strengthened the MDGs Declaration by specifically emphasizing employment creation and the implementation of the International Labour Organization (ILO) Supported Decent Work Agenda.

Furthermore, in the early 2000s, SAPs were replaced by Poverty Reduction Strategies, which aimed at reversing the negative effects of a decade of Structural Adjustment on welfare and social conditions, and the World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) led the development agenda on poverty reduction and eradication and human development as a surrogate and summary index for social development. **Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPS)** were introduced as the new conditionality for writing off external debts, through the Highly Poor Indebted Countries (HIPC) Initiative. Further thinking on the development process, led to the conclusion that too much emphasis was being put on poverty reduction and that there was need to place more emphasis on enhancing economic growth, creating wealth, and empowering people to take greater control of their own lives. Many African countries embarked on at least two generations of PRSPs. Notwithstanding the principle of ownership and consultations that underpinned PRSPs, they lacked credibility because of the externally driven nature of the process.

Phase 4: End 2000s – up to now with predominantly long-term development visions and planning frameworks

More comprehensive development plans that go beyond short-sighted PRSPs have been produced and implemented by most of the African countries by adopting long-term development visions and planning frameworks with far more ambitious growth and social development objectives.

National Development Strategies (NDS) have now gone beyond the narrow objective of poverty reduction to encompass objectives such as accelerated growth, employment creation, structural transformation and sustainable development. **Many African countries have therefore developed Long Term Visions to guide their steps towards these ambitious objectives.** These long-term visions are characterized by stronger ownership from African actors and a more consultative and participatory process involving a broad spectrum of stakeholders, including Civil Society, the Private Sector, decentralized constituencies and development partners.

These broader national development plans often take into consideration various global and continental development goals and frameworks such as NEPAD for continental level; regional development strategies such as the one for EAC which is in its 4th edition now running for the period 2012-2016.

In their development planning process, African countries are still facing tremendous challenges ranging from ensuring credible consultation processes, prioritizing funding in line with development aspirations, coordinating donors, strengthening capacities to implement projects and programmes, and developing effective monitoring and evaluation systems that feed back into the policy-making process. Most of the African countries still need to improve their planning frameworks such that they can translate development aspirations and priorities into concrete results. Besides, there is much to be done in order to ensure mainstreaming of cross-cutting issues such as gender, climate change, regional integration into national development plans and visions frameworks even those reputed to function well and bearing fruits. In order to grant integral and sustainable development, new development plans and/or visions or revised ones at mid-term evaluation should take into account the post 2015 Development Agenda.

8. National Visions

Visioning is a generic term for the process of identifying, developing and documenting vision and values, leading towards strategy and tactics. It is based on a hypothetical future, mainly in medium and long terms, with a great participatory and inspirational potential for radical changes. National visions are defined as policy statements, government programmes, official goals and formal statements for sustainable development. Visions are a very useful element any national planning process needs. Agenda 21 strongly recommends that all components of a society define what the people would like to see around them in 5 years or 10 years or 20 years. They include specific, measurable things that everyone can strive for.

National visions are therefore, a commitment to sustainable development and require firm, clearly stated and practical statements. These statements are critical to the unity of effort throughout the nation. Successful planning for sustainable development begins with considering what the end goal should be. Based on the end goal, the key to formulating a workable vision, plan of action is the process of integration and harmonization of the components. Visions cascade from a simple and direct political statement from the Executive level of government to increasingly more specialized planning and implementation statements.

According to Barry Dalal-Clayton and Stephen Bass (2000), the literature indicates that there are two basic types of visions. These are Top Down and Bottom up Visions. Top down Visions are produced in the form of national plans by planning offices or by various collections of government bodies. These are then implemented as government policy. Bottom up Visions come from lower level of hierarchy in government, local government communities, and Non- Governmental organizations. Whether a top down or bottom up approach is preferred, depends on the country. East Asian countries often opt for top down approach whereas South Asia is more oriented to top bottom approaches. The types and effects of these visions, however, differ significantly from one country/region to another.

Visions for sustainable development and growth are now being put in place in most countries/regions. It has been assessed that some established visions/plans fail whereas some others do succeed. The review of literature has revealed that some factors of failure are in common, and some factors are also in common for successful visions/plans.

On one side, failures to achieve the set targets have been attributed to some of the following problems: (1) lack of action, lack of integration and lack of coordinating bodies/leadership; (2) discrepancies between overall policy and planning; (3) discrepancies between planning and implementation due to constraints such as financial and human resources; (4) conflict of interest among agents at planning and implementation stages ; (5) lack of effectiveness of visions in terms of enforceable actions and lack of political commitment for implementation; (6) donor- dependence syndrome, a dependent and defeatist development mindset and ineffective implementation syndrome; (7) a weak economy and low capacity for economic management on the one hand, and failure in governance & organization for development on the other hand.

On another side, it is generally agreed that successful visions consistently have clear directions and benefits that are easy to understand by all. In most cases, we can draw the following lessons, amongst many others, about visions and their chances to succeed or not: (1) the whole difference resides in a powerful and dynamic leadership as it provides the cornerstone for vision, whether top down or bottom up; (2) visions must break down in concrete actions (well-defined programmes at local and sectoral levels) and define the strategies that are clearly needed to reach the objective; (3) planning process needs to take enough time in order to avoid weakened implementation; (4) visions need to be focused and prioritized in accordance to greatest need and impact; (5) for the visions to succeed, governments need to be flexible and establish transparent systems and promote trust by others whereas NGOs need to show professionalism and build trust; (6) communications strategies are highly recommended for governments to promoting sustainable development, partnerships with media are important and if not vital; (7) establish linkages between national visions and regional, continental or international visions at least to the goals we share in common with national development plans.

In addition, following Northern Ireland (2003), we can summarize ten features of good policy- making as follows: (1) forward looking; (2) outward looking; (3) innovative, flexible and creative;

(4) evidence-based; (5) inclusive; (6) joined up; (7) learning lessons; (8) communication; (9) evaluation; and (10) review.

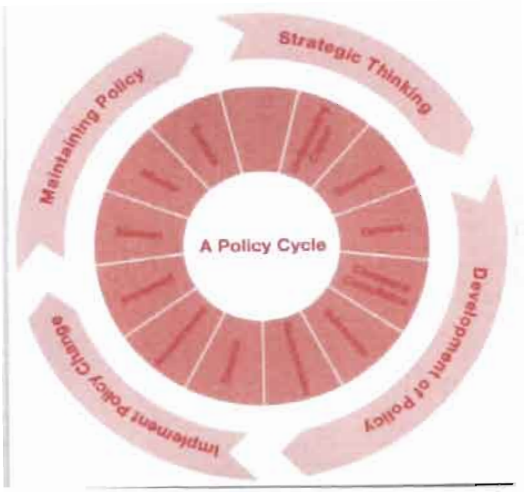
In figure 1, we present a detailed policy cycle illustration as proposed by Northern Ireland (2003; page 8).

As displayed in figure 1 here below, a good policy cycle has four main components or phases:

1. Strategic thinking;
2. Development of Policy;
3. Implementation of the Policy change;
4. Maintaining the Policy.

All the twelve sub-components or areas of the policy cycle need to be given their importance and role in the policy formulation

Figure 1: A Policy Cycle Illustration

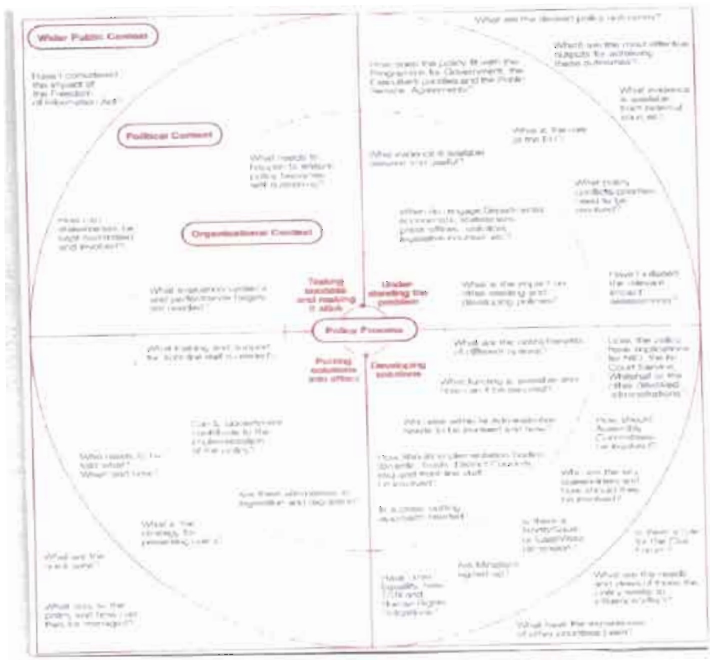


process if one wants his policy to be successfully implemented and bear fruits as expected.

Furthermore, we need to put the policy formulation in context (figure 2 here below) and plan how best we will deal with various audiences we will be involving in the whole process at different stages.

The above being said, we need to strengthen our understanding on our need for an integrated framework on the linkages between growth policies and regional integration.

Figure 2: The Policy Formulation Process in context



9. Regional Integration and Growth Policies: why do we need an integrated framework

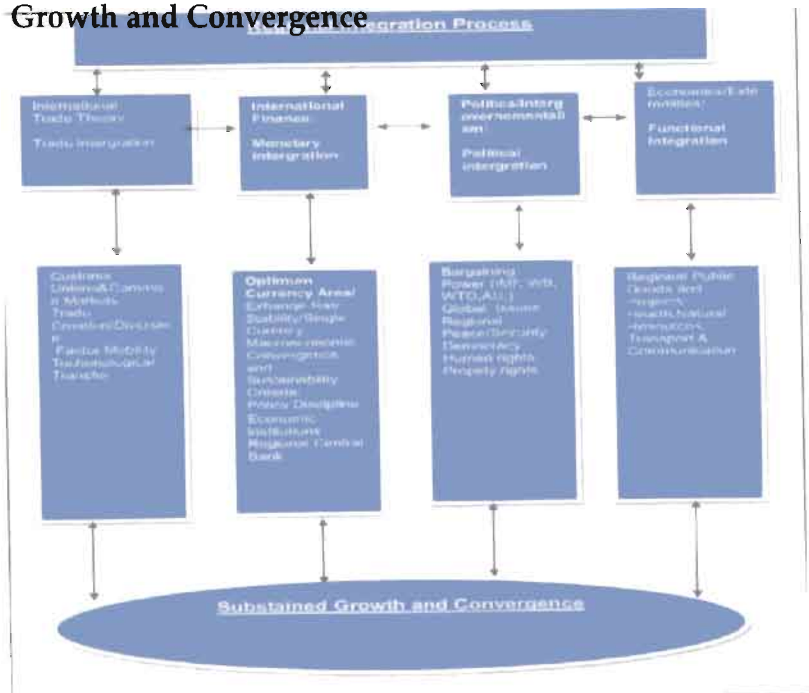
The growth models provide insight into the relationship between regional integration, growth and convergence (Kabananiye Alphonse; 2011; page 27).

Regional integration affects growth and convergence through several channels: dynamic output, productivity effects, economies of scale, competition, attractivity to foreign investment, free movements of capital and labour, technology transfer, etc.

Even though many authors have attempted to address the effects of trade and finance on growth and poverty, there is still a lack of an integrated framework aimed at mapping the inter-links and relationship between regional integration and growth on the one hand, and convergence.

Kabananiye Alphonse (2011) has provided with such a framework reflecting these relationship (see Figure 3).

Figure 3: Integrated Framework for Regional Integration, Growth and Convergence



10. Comparison of Development Plans and Visions in the EAC

We detail hereafter the five Visions of the EAC Partner States in a comparative table where we display name of the vision, the launch date, the vision statement, the key priority/emphases, the pillars of the implementation strategy. We therefore tried to draw some key observations on the main assumptions underlying the implementation strategy of these visions.

In Burundi, with a view to ensuring a longer strategic horizon for the consolidation of security and socio-political stability, sustainable economic growth and job promotion, food security and poverty reduction, the Government adopted its forward-looking national Vision "Burundi 2025" in October2010.

It's a planning instrument for long-term economic and social development which will guide national policies in the area of sustainable development, with a view to satisfying the needs of present and future generations; realizing a **GDP per capita of USD 720** in 2025.

The Vision is anchored on eight key wheels or pillars which are designed to ensure reversing all the negative trends and side effects of the past.

As development plans to implement the Vision, the Government of Burundi adopted its first growth and poverty reduction strategy paper (CSLP-I) in September 2006. A second generation of the growth and poverty reduction strategy paper was then adopted on January 2012 aiming at creating an environment conducive to sustainable development in Burundi with a view to achieving the Vision "Burundi 2025" in compliance with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and all other major goals and targets set in the Vision.

In Kenya, with the view to implementing its broad over-arching long-term development framework, Kenya Vision 2030, aimed at setting the country towards the path of sustained high levels of inclusive economic growth and attainment of middle income country (MIC) status by year 2030. The Vision is anchored on three main "pillars" (Economic, Social and Political) themselves founded on six key enablers (infrastructure; science technology and innovation; land reform; human resource development; security and public service reform).

The implementation plan of the Vision 2030 is set up through successive five-year Medium-Term Plans with the first FYMTP that covered the period 2008–2012 while the second one currently in place is covering the period 2013-2017.

In Rwanda, long-term development goals are guided by the *"Vision 2020"* document which is based on six pillars, altogether aiming to transform Rwanda from a predominantly low-income agriculture-based economy to a knowledge-based, service-orientated economy by 2020.

In May 2012, Cabinet adopted revised targets for the Vision 2020 requiring an average GDP growth of 11.5 per cent and GDP per capita from US$900 to **US$ 1,240** by 2020.

The implementation plan of the Vision 2020 is currently done through the medium term planning framework of the Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy, of which a first generation (EDPRS-I) covered the period 2008-2012, and currently an EDPRS-II has been elaborated and it has been launched in order to implement the new strategies for the realization of Rwanda's national development objectives and maintain the momentum already achieved as highlighted in the revised version of Vision 2020.

Tanzania has developed a coherent long-term vision with medium-term strategy derived from the vision. Tanzania's Development Vision 2025 aspires on a high and shared growth, high quality livelihood, peace, stability & unity, high quality education, good governance and international competitiveness and which aims at transforming Tanzania into a middle income country (MIC) with a **per capita income of USD 3,000** by 2025.

The implementation plan consists in a series of five-year development plans (FYDP) with the first one currently running covering the period 2011/12-2015/16.

In the same sense, MKUKUTA II is the Second National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty II which is a continuation of the government and national commitments to accelerating economic growth and fighting poverty. It is a successor to the first National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty (NSGRP-I) which was under implementation in the period 2005/2006-2009/2010. MKUKUTA II is committed to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and strives to create wider space for country ownership and effective participation of the private sector, civil society and fruitful local and external partnerships in development. Furthermore, MKUKUTA II also commits to regional and other international initiatives for social and economic development.

In Uganda, the tradition of development plans embedded in long-term visions has emerged in the 2000s. This started explicitly in 1997 with the first generation of the Uganda's Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) which set development targets that were country-specific, but broadly in line with the MDGs, and identifies a results-based approach for their achievement.

In that process of development planning, since 2010, Uganda replaced its medium-term planning framework of Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) with the National Development Plan – NDP (under the theme of "*Growth, Employment and Social Economic Transformation for Prosperity*") as to guide policy formulation and implementation for all sectors and stipulates medium-term strategic directions, development priorities and implementation strategies for Uganda.

Government approved the Comprehensive National Development Planning Frame-work policy (CNDPF) which provides for the development of a 30 year Vision (Uganda Vision 2040) developed by the National Planning Authority (NPA) in consultations with all other Stakeholders. Uganda Vision 2040 has the following vision statement *"A Transformed*

Ugandan Society from a Peasant to a Modern and Prosperous Country within 30 years" with a **per capita income of USD 9,500** by 2040.

The Uganda Vision 2040 is to be implemented through: three 10-year plans; six 5-year National Development Plans (NDPs); Sector Investment Plans (SIPs); Local Government Development Plans (LGDPs), Annual work plans and Budgets.

These instruments respectively articulate Uganda's medium-term and long-term vision to achieve social, economic and political transformation. It is also expected that all Government ministries, departments and autonomous and semi-autonomous entities will realign their development priorities with the Vision 2040.

A detailed comparison of targets and implementation plans of these various Visions for the five EAC Partner States is displayed here below in the table 1.

We detailed the launch date and the period covered by the vision, the vision statement and objectives, the implementation plans, the pillars or implementation strategy or pillars of the vision, the consideration given to regional integration aspects in the vision. We also formulated some few crucial observations and comments in order to draw lessons from existing effects.

Table 1: Comparative Analysis of Development Visions in the EAC Partner States

Country/ Title	*Launch Date* ------- *Covered period*	*Vision Statement*	*Implementation Plans*	*Pillars/implementation strategy*	*Regional Integration taken into account*	*Observations and comments*
Burundi "Vision Burundi 2025"	October 2010 ------------- 2010-2025	Vision Burundi 2025 projects an image that reflects a shared future that the people of Burundi wish to embrace: a nation that is united, cohesive and at peace on the one hand, with a prosperous economy at the service of the socio- economic wellbeing of the people of Burundi on the other hand. The country is predicated on the rule of law, and it is a society that takes pride in its rich and diverse cultural heritage. The ultimate objective is to redress the negative trends in GDP per capita that the country has	The effective Implementation of Vision Burundi 2025 is integrated in the process of national planning for the short- term, medium-term and long-term and, for this reason, the Poverty Reduction and Strategy Paper (CSLP) constitutes the policy instrument. Thus, the formulation of the CSLP-II has integrated the political and strategic approaches of Vision Burundi 2025. The strategies are translated into priority programs and actions which will constitute the Priority Action Plan for the medium term (PAP) accompanied by a Medium Term	Vision relies on eight pillars that are closely inter- connected: (1) Good Governance and Capacity- Building of the State; (2) Human Capital; (3) Economic Growth and the Fight against Poverty; (4) Regional Integration; (5) Demographics; (6) Social Cohesion; (7) Regional Planning Urbanization;	From land-locked to land-linked situation, the Vision intends *to benefit from regional integration to increase and diversify the Burundian economy.* The economic growth of Burundi depends on its integration to the regional and sub- regional market. Burundi should take part fully in the EAC which offers real opportunities	There is no explicit discussion of t availability No mid-term review has been produced in order to adjust and fix once again realistic targets for the Vision.

Country/ Title	*Launch Date* ---------- *Covered period*	*Vision Statement*	*Implementation Plans*	*Pillars/implementation strategy*	*Regional Integration taken into account*	*Observations and comments*
		experienced for more than a decade since the crisis of 1993, ensuring that this goes up from ***USD137 in 2008 to USD 720 in 2025*** with a ***GDP growth rate of10%in2025***.	Sectoral Expenditure Framework (MTSEF) at a rolling basis for three years. The PAP and the MTSEFs are integrated in the Priority Investment Programme		to ensure better integration into the world economy.	

Kenya "Vision 2030"	July/Augu st 2007. -------------- 2008-2030	A national long-term development blue- print	**Implementation of the Vision: consecutive Five Year Medium Term Plans (MTP)** First MTP had been running from 2008 to 2012. Second MTP (2013- 2017) under the theme *"Transforming Kenya: pathway to devolution, socio-economic development, equity and national unity"*.	Kenya Vision 2030 is anchored on three main pillars that are (1) the economic	Given that Kenya is a coastal State, with no surprise, regional integration is not explicitly mentioned as a pillar, a priority sector or a key target per se even though it is plainly recognized that Kenya economy has to maintain and improve its competitiveness in a more globalized world and in a wide range of	Review and Evaluation of Performance are being done a regular basis. The targets are likely to be attained even though some of them are judged to be beyond realistic expectations. The oil discovery will

Country/ Title of Document	*Launch Date* ------------ *Covered period*	*Vision Statement*	*Implementation Plans*	*Pillars/implementation strategy*	*Regional Integration taken into account*	*Observations and comments*
			Third MTP (2018-2022). Fourth MTP (2023-2027). Fifth MTP (2028-2032).		Regional integration schemes.	important implications.

Rwanda "Vision 2020"	July 2000 ----------- 2000-2020	The Vision 2020 emphasises on the spirit of social cohesion and equity, underpinned by a capable state – at the core of the Nation's principal asset – its people. The Vision 2020 aims at transforming Rwanda i	The vision is being implemented through the medium term planning framework that began in 2002with the first Poverty Reduction Strategic Plan (PRSP-I). This has since been followed by the Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS) which covered the period of2008-2012. In this linethe Government of Rwanda has embarked on the	The vision 2020 is articulated on six pillars: (1) Good governance and a capable state; (2) human resource development and a knowledge-based economy; (3) private sector-led development; (4) infrastructure development; (5) high- value and market-oriented agriculture; and (6) regional and international integration. Three cross-cuttingissues: gender equality, natural resources and the environment, and science, technology and ICT are also integrated and have a central role in all developments policies envisaged in the Vision	Vision 2020 envisages Rwanda taking advantage of its regional integration opportunities, with the necessary investments in infrastructure and the development of its productive capacities. Regional integration is explicitlymentionedas a key target imbedded in pillar6.	Explicit macroeconomic assumptions projections for financing the vision are made. Review had been produced in 2012 and

Country/ Title	*Launch Date* ------------ *Covered period*	*Vision Statement*	*Implementation Plans*	*Pillars/implementation strategy*	*Regional Integration taken into account*	*Observations and comments*
			Which is being Implemented from 2013/2014 2017/2018.	2020. The Vision was accompanied by a detailed implementation roadmap.		

Tanzania "Vision 2025"	1999 ---- 2000-2025	The overall aim of the National Vision 2025 is to transfer Tanzania from aleast developing economic opportunities, public sector performance and environmental management taking into account the principle of sustainable development.	**Implementation of the Vision: Five Year Development Plans** First FYDP (2011/12-2015/16): Unleasing the Growth Potential. Second FYDP (2016/17-2020/21): Nurturing an Industrial Economy. Third FYDP (2021/22-2025/26): Realizing Competitiveness–Export-Led Growth.	**Summary of five attributes or Visions Statements of "Vision 2025"**: (1) High Quality Livelihood; (2) Peace, Stability and Unity; (3) Good Governance; (4) A Well Educated and Learning Society; (5) A Competitive Economy Capable of Producing Sustainable Growth. **Specific three Major Targets for Vision 2025 (Expected Achievements)**: (1) High Quality Livelihood; (2) Good Governance; (3) A Strong and Competitive Economy.	Regional integration is not explicitly mentioned as a key target per se. Nevertheless, the aimed competitive economy also refers to the environment of regional integration schemes, especially from the second FYDP to be run from the Tanzania Development Vision 2025 includes projects and programmes for exploiting regional markets by establishing transport to enable a good flow of traffic and thereby promoting national and regional integration.	Vision 2025 is accompanied by a matrix of roles for implementation, but this matrix has few quantifiable items. Mid-term Review was done in 2010 and tremendous recommendations have been produced and integrated.

Country/ Title	*Launch Date* ———— *Covered period*	*Vision Statement*	*Implementation Plans*	*Pillars/implementation strategy*	*Regional Integration taken into account*	*Observations and comments*
Uganda "Vision 2040"	April 2013 ------------ 2013-2040	A transformed Ugandan society from a peasant to a modern Transform country into a competitive upper middle-income country with ***per capita income of about US$ 9,500.***	The Government of Uganda has proposed six National Development Plans (NDP's) each taking a period of five years up to 2040. The first National Development Plan (NDPI) was implemented in July 2010 and is due to expire on June 30, 2015. This was aimed at setting stage for future economic growth through wealth creation.	Exploit country's enormous opportunities; oil and gas, tourism, minerals, ICT business, youthful labour force, geographical location, fresh water resources, industry and agriculture. Strengthen infrastructure, science and technology, engineering	Vision states that it will be implemented in accordance	Although it may seem to be too much ambitious, the Vision 2040 for Uganda discusses important roles for the government. The midterm review noted lack of privatization for better focus and lack of alignment of the budget system to national plan as key hindrances to NDPI implementation.

Source: Author's own compilation from Vision Burundi 2025; Vision 2030 for Kenya; Vision 2020 for Rwanda; Tanzania Development Vision 2025; Vision 2040 for Uganda.

If these Development Visions (as displayed in the summary comparison in table 1 here above) are fully and successfully implemented, one would expect to reap achievement of the eight MDGs and it would also result into better and improved macroeconomic environment with convergence and improvement on some key indicators.

The paper presents a comparative on some selected indicators of MDGs attainment and on macroeconomic convergence in the five EAC Partner States.

11. Comparison of selected MDGs performance related indicators and macroeconomic convergence indicators

11.1. Selected Indicators related MDGs performance within EAC Countries

MDG 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

Eradicating extreme poverty and hunger are seen as the best ingredients for sustainable growth and more equitable society. We analyze two indicators of attainment of MDG1 namely: progress in fighting, reducing and eliminating poverty (table 2) and the progress made in reducing hunger (table 3) in the EAC region.

Table 2: Progress in combating poverty

Country (period)	Progress in combating poverty
Burundi (1992-2006)	-5
Kenya (1992-2005)	15
Rwanda (2000-2001)	-15
Tanzania (1992-2007)	-8
Uganda (1992-2009)	-49

Source: Author's computations based on World Bank (2014).

With regards to the progress made in fighting poverty, we can see that the ranking is as follows: Uganda has recorded the best score in the EAC region, followed by Rwanda and then Tanzania. The worst performer in the region is Kenya preceded by Burundi.

Table 3: Progress in reducing hunger (Global Hunger Index), 1990-2013

Country	Status	Global Hunger Index (%)
Burundi	Experienced setback	14,79
Kenya	Marginal to moderate progress	-15,89
Rwanda	Achieved or close to achieving target	-50,32
Tanzania	Marginal to moderate progress	-11,97
Uganda	Marginal to moderate progress	-10,28

Source: Author's computations based on IFPRI et al. (2013).

As displayed in table 3 here abov[2]e, we can see that in our sample of the five EAC Partner States, against reducing hunger, Rwanda has recorded the best performance, followed by Kenya and then Tanzania and Uganda come after respectively in the third and fourth positions whereas the worst performer in the region has revealed to be Burundi . Only Rwanda in the EAC region is identified as having achieved or close to achieving target whereas Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda are classified as having recorded marginal to moderate progress; and Burundi has recorded seriously bad results and has the status of having experienced setback.

In general, sector-specific policies and programs that improve rural lives and create employment opportunities in more productive and labor-intensive activities are crucial to enhance welfare and living conditions in the region. Successful countries in achieving MDG 1 seem to be countries which have been able to properly tackle inequality through social protection which makes growth more inclusive, and builds a more cohesive society, and promotes a harmonious citizen-state relationship. When inequality is very high, the impact of high growth in reducing poverty is weakened. It is established that countries which have been able to address inequality have also succeeded in accelerating growth and reducing poverty.

MDG 2: Achieve universal primary education

Having well educated people is a key determinant in human capital development and for sustainable growth. In table 4 hereafter, we the net enrolment rate in primary education in the EAC region.

Table 4: Net enrolment rate in primary education

Country	Net enrolment rate in primary education
Burundi (2010)	94.1
Kenya (2009)	83
Rwanda (2012)	98.7
Tanzania (2008)	97.8
Uganda (2011)	91

Source: Author's computations based on United Nations Statistics Division (2013).

With regard to the net enrolment rate in primary school, it seems that all the five EAC Partner States have performed very well and are on track to achieving the MDG targets.

It is observed that Rwanda followed by Tanzania is leading the EAC cluster and Burundi, Uganda and Kenya are following respectively with also very high records. The poorest record is the one of Kenya which still lagging behind even though records are not too bad (beyond 80%).

Rwanda increased its net enrolment ratio in primary education to 98.7 percent in 2013 and this high record is believed to have been a result of the fee-free education for the first nine years of basic schooling in the 2000s, which was later extended to the first 12 years. The country's commitment to continuous and increased investment in education infrastructure and the number of qualified teachers have also been instrumental.

Such good achievements have been recorded thanks to sustainable public investment to increase participation while implementing retention-oriented actions (school feeding programmes, cash transfers, etc.) for girls and disadvantaged children.

MDG 3: Promote gender equality and empower women

Empowering women and eradicating inequality between male and female gender is instrumental to attaining sustainable growth and development. In table 5 presented hereafter, we analyze the level of improvement on primary school parity between female and male students for the period 1990-2011.

Table 5: Level of improvement on primary school parity, 1990-2011

Country	Percentage change
Burundi	25
Kenya	1,03
Rwanda	5,1
Tanzania	3,03
Uganda	27,5

Source: Author's computations based on United Nations Statistics Division (2013).

Uganda has recorded the best performance, followed by Burundi with a parity rate approximately towards the 30% whereas Kenya has recorded the worst results in the same category with Tanzania and Rwanda as well.

MDG 4: Reduce child mortality

Well educated people having equal chances to access opportunities without gender discriminatory regulations or behavior are important factors to attain development and sustainable growth, but none of these is possible if people are dying too young, it would be wastage of resources.

In table 6 hereafter, we analyze the status of EAC Partner States in reducing the under-five- mortality rates.

Table 6: Status of progress in under-five-mortality rates in East African Countries, 2012

Country	Status
Burundi	Insufficient progress
Kenya	Insufficient progress
Rwanda	On track
Tanzania	Achieved
Uganda	On track

Source: Author's calculations based on United Nations Statistics Division (2013).

With regard to the reduction of the under-five-mortality rates, amongst EAC Partner States, only Tanzania has already achieved sufficient progress, whereas Rwanda and Uganda are performing very well and are on track. Kenya and Burundi are recording insufficient progress even though some measures have been initiated.

MDG 5: Improve maternal health

In order to have an active population, one country needs to tackle the problem of maternal health where we sometimes observe big numbers of deaths of mothers during childbirth and this is known to be a result of, amongst others, the lack of skilled health personnel. Thus, the proportion of births that have the chance to be attended by skilled health personnel is a good indicator of maternal health.

Table 7: Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel in EAC, in %.

Country (period)	Births attended by skilled health
Burundi (2010)	60,3
Kenya (2009)	43,8
Rwanda (2010)	69
Tanzania (2010)	48,9
Uganda (2011)	57,4

Source: Author's computations based on United Nations Statistics Division (2013).

With regard to the improvement of maternal health, amongst EAC Partner States, it is still Rwanda that is leading the cluster with 69% of his births attended by skilled health personnel, followed by Burundi and Uganda. The worst performer at this regard is Kenya preceded by Tanzania with less than 50% of births attended by skilled personnel.

MDG 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases

The MDG 6 is also linked to health conditions and it is aimed at the fighting of diseases such as HIV/AIDS; malaria; TB, and others. Here in this paper, we chose to use progress in reducing TB incidence, prevalence and death rates as displayed in table 8 hereafter.

Table 8: Progress in reducing TB incidence, prevalence and death rates (1990-2011)

Country	Prevalence	Incidence	Death Rate
Burundi	-15	-15	-18
Kenya	25	120	-25
Rwanda	-65	-68	-72
Tanzania	-47	-28	-60
Uganda	-58	-70	-70

Source: Calculations based on United Nations Statistics Division (2013).

Again Rwanda is leading the whole cluster of EAC Partner States in combating TB, with TB prevalence that decreased of 65 points, the TB incidence decreased of 68 whereas death rates decreased of 72 points from 1990 up to 2011. Rwanda has made remarkable progress with this indicator and was followed by Uganda and Tanzania. The worst performer at this regard is Burundi preceded by Kenya.

MDG 7: Ensure environmental sustainability

In order to ensure sustainable development and growth, we must ensure that environmental aspects are mainstreamed in all development policies and programs. In order to assess MDG 7, amongst many other indicators, we are using the proportion of people having access to safe drinking water one the one hand,

and those using improved sanitation facilities, with respect to urban/rural areas distinction. The data are displayed hereafter in tables 9 and 10.

Table 9: Proportion of the population with access to safe drinking water, rural and urban, 1990 and 2012

	Urban		Rural		Total	
Country	**1990**	**2012**	**1990**	**2012**	**1990**	**2012**
Burundi	95,3	91,5	67	73,2	68,8	75,3
Kenya	91,7	82,3	32,9	55,1	42,7	61,7
Rwanda	90	80,7	58,6	68,3	60,3	70,7
Tanzania	93,7	77,9	46	44	55	53,2
Uganda	77,4	94,8	37,2	71	41,6	74,8

Source: Author's computations based on WHO and UNICEF (2014).

Compared to other EAC Partner States, Burundi is leading the whole region in terms of proportion of population having access to safe drink water, being in rural or in urban areas. In 2012, Burundi, Uganda and Rwanda have respectively well recorded good performance because they have more than 70% of their population having access to safe drinking water.

Tanzania has poorly performed on this indicator that was 55% in 1990 and has fallen to 53.2% only in 2012. Kenya has recorded a proportion of 61.7% in 2012 from 42.7 in 1990.

Table 10: Proportion of the population using improved sanitation facilities, Urban and rural, 1990 and 2012

	Urban		Rural		Total	
Country	**1990**	**2012**	**1990**	**2012**	**1990**	**2012**
Burundi	31,2	42,7	42,4	48,1	41,7	47,5
Kenya	26,5	31,3	24,2	29,1	24,6	29,6
Rwanda	63,9	61	28,3	64,4	30,2	63,8
Tanzania	8,6	24,9	6,2	7,5	6,6	12,2
Uganda	32,2	32,8	25,5	34,1	26,2	33,9

Source: Author's computations based on WHO and UNICEF (2014).

On the other hand, Rwanda has recorded the best performance in terms of proportion of population using improved sanitation facilities and these records have been tremendous in rural areas. Rwanda did not only record the highest numbers (proportion), but the efforts or change were also the best in the region; the figure has more than doubled over the period (from 30.2% in 1990 up to 63.8 in 2012).

The worst performer with regard to this indicator has revealed to be Tanzania at only 12.2% in 2012.

MDG 8: Develop a global partnership for development

As of the goal to developing a global partnership for development, amongst many other indicators, we chose to use the number of people having access to Internet per 100 inhabitants; the data for this indicator are displayed hereafter in table 11.

Table 11: Internet per 100 inhabitants

Country	Percentage change (2011-2012s)
Burundi	10
Kenya	14.5
Rwanda	15
Tanzania	8
Uganda	13

Source: Author's computations based on United Nations Statistics Division (2013).

Compared to other EAC Partner States, Rwanda is leading the whole EAC region in terms of percentage change of the proportion of population having access to Internet connection from 2011 to 2012 (15%). This is a result of Rwanda policy in targeting to become the IT Hub of the region and transforming its economy through IT revolution.

Tanzania has the least performance in terms of percentage change from 2011 to 2012 because it recorded a change of 8% only.

We can now present a summary analysis of how best EAC partner States have performed in achieving the eight MDGs in terms of ranking within the region.

Table 12: MDGs achievement performance: a summary of comparative analysis of EAC countries ranking

Countr	*MDG*	*MDG*	*MDG*	*MDG*	*MDG*	*MDG*	*MDG*	*MDG*
Burun	4	3	2	4	2	5	2	4
Keny	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	2
Rwan	2	1	3	2	1	1	1	1
Tanz	3	2	4	1	4	3	5	5
Ugan	1	4	1	3	3	2	3	3

Source: Author's own compilation and ranking.

From this summary, we can see that Rwanda has recorded the best performance in the EAC region in achieving the MDGs: Rwanda has recorded the first place on five out of eight MDGs (MDG2; MDG 5; MDG 6; MDG 7 and MDG 8) whereas the second best performer, that is Uganda, has only recorded the first place for only two out of eight MDGs (MDG 1 and MDG 3) followed by Tanzania which recorded the first place only once on MDG 4. Burundi and Kenya have not been able to record the first place in the region.

11.2. Selected Indicators of Macroeconomic Convergence within EAC Countries

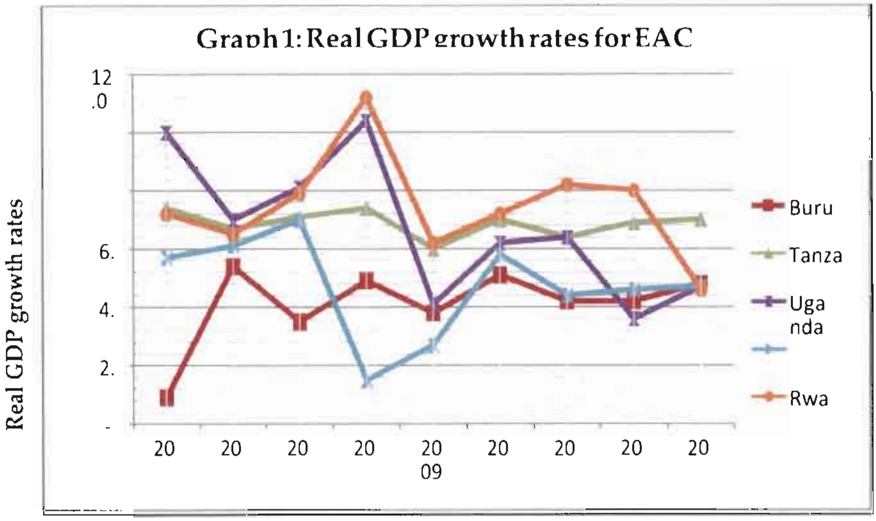
monetary unification as stipulated in article 6 of the Protocol on the Establishment of the East

African Community Monetary Union – EACMU as signed on the November 30^{th} 2013.

Ndereyahaga Richard (2011) concluded, amongst other proposals, that "there is a strong need to increase policy harmonization and coordination within the EAC countries, so as to stimulate macroeconomic convergence and policy environment effectiveness. The national planning strategies should include stability criteria and macroeconomic convergence benchmarks to ensure effective convergence and bring the regional integration process to success."

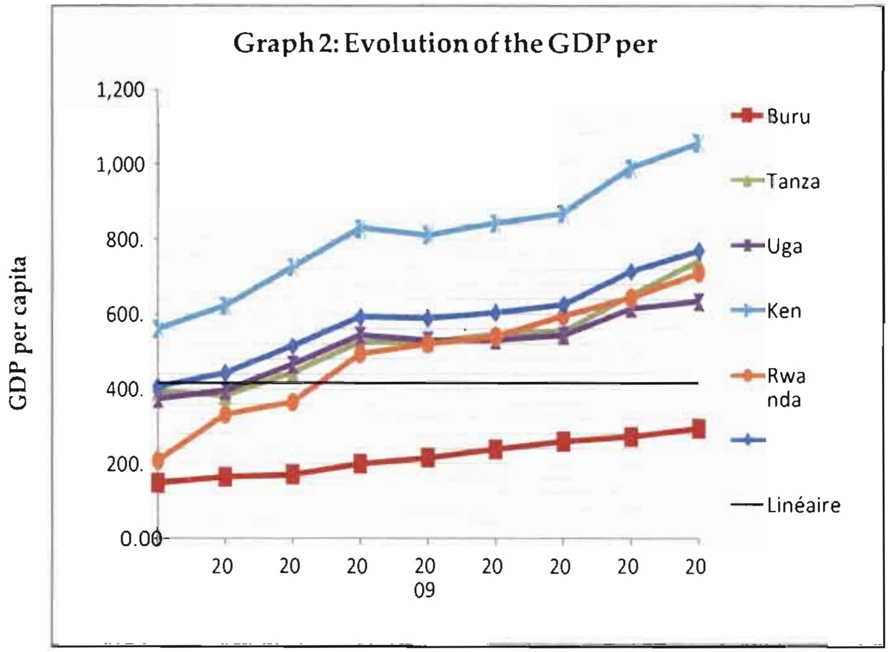
In their respective long-term development plans and visions, EAC Partner States are expected to remain committed to the maintenance of a stable macroeconomic environment, which is conducive to private savings and investment.

In this section, we present some selected key macroeconomic variables and analyse their trends over the past decade and beyond to check if EAC Partner States are tending towards the achievement of the said convergence or not: (1) real GDP growth rates; (2) GDP per capita; (3) Inflation rates (headline and underlying or core inflation); (4) Interbank Interest Rates; (5) Exchange Rates; (6) Index of Economic Freedom.



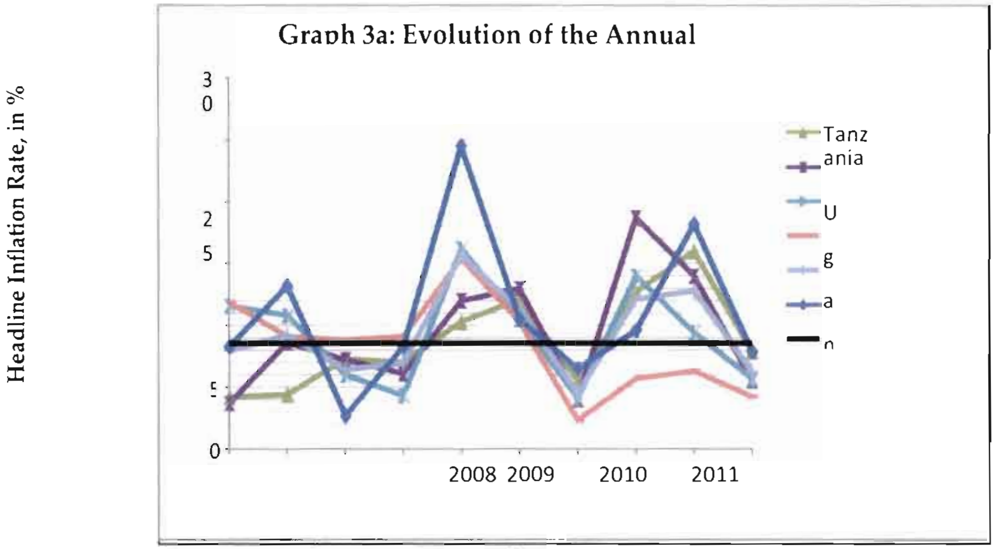
Source: Author's computations with data gathered from EAC (2014), Facts and Figures 2014.

The data displayed on the graph 1 here above show that real GDP growth in the EAC region has been somewhat high given that some developed countries were performing a mere 1-2% of real growth in that period due to international financial crisis that came into game since 2007. On average, except the year 2013, Rwanda has recorded the highest growth of the real GDP compared to the other four Partner States. This can be interpreted as a fruit of the fiscal discipline, the fight against corruption, the rigorous management in all sectors, the deep openness to trade and their commitment to attaining the set goals and targets in regional integration initiatives, the implementation of their ambitious targets set in the Vision 2020, etc.

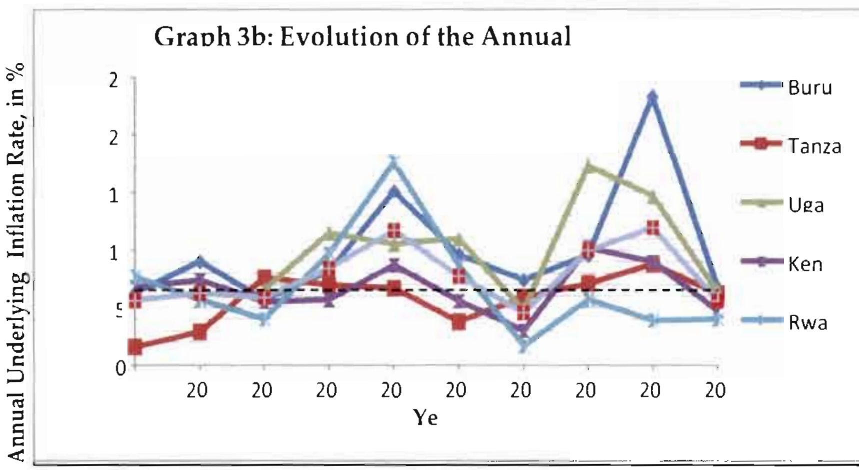


Source: Author's computations with data gathered from EAC (2014), Facts and Figures 2014.

With regard to GDP per capita, Kenya has shown its giant role in the region, it has been leading the whole EAC region along the whole period since 2005. Rwanda seems to be converging if not superseding Uganda and Tanzania with a sustainable ever-increasing GDP per capita. Assuming that these trends remain, the three countries are actually converging towards the level of Kenya. On the contrary, Burundi is lagging far behind with the ever-low GDP per capita and there would be a lot of policy reforms in order to catch up and converge towards the levels of the other Partner States or the EAC average at least.

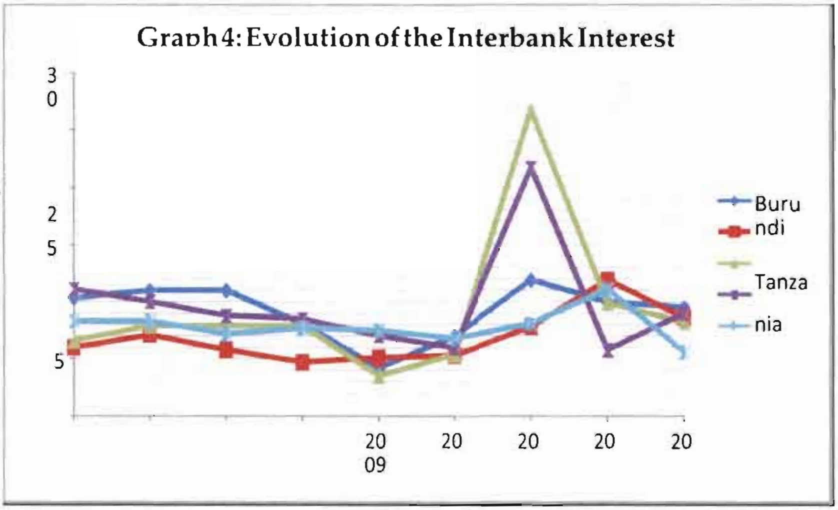


Source: Author's computations with data gathered from EAC (2014), Facts and Figures 2014.



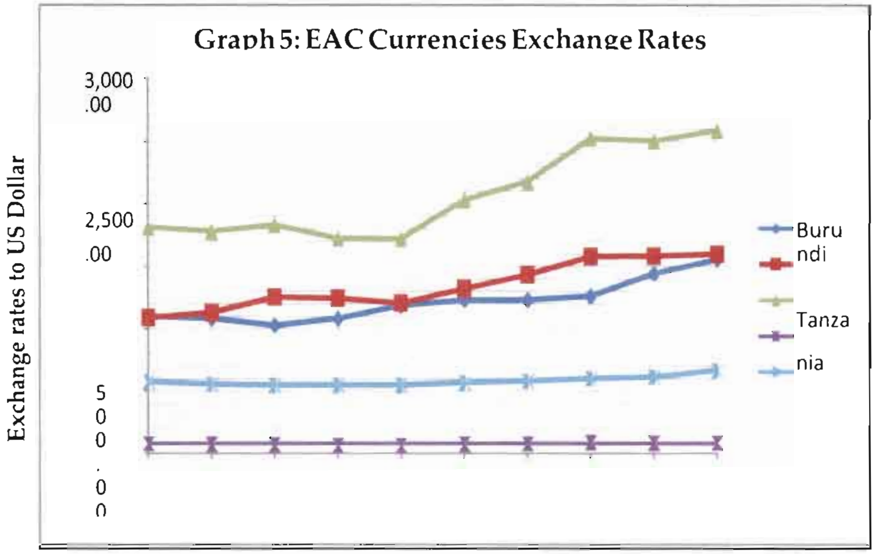
Source: Author's computations with data gathered from EAC (2014), Facts and Figures 2014.

Graphs 3a and 3b display the evolution of headline inflation and underlying (or core inflation) respectively. Again, Rwanda has recorded the lowest inflation rates since 2010 whereas Burundi and Uganda are competing in recording the highest inflation rates on average.



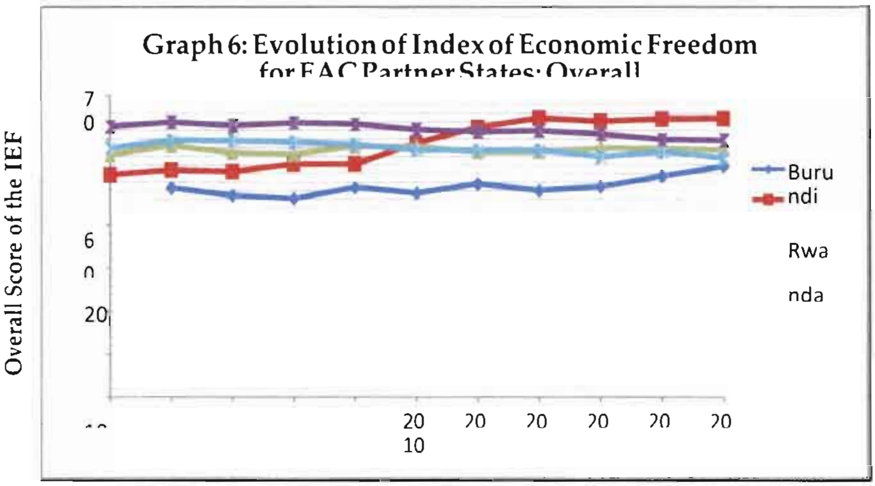
Source: Author's computations with data gathered from EAC (2014), Facts and Figures 2014.

The evolution of the interbank interest rates in the EAC region as displayed on graph 4 here above reveals that the year 2011 has been characterized by very volatile figures. On average, over the period 2005-2013, Tanzania and Rwanda have recorded the lowest interbank rates, with Rwanda now tending to lead in terms of easy access to bank financing as shown on this graph by the lowest level of interbank interest rate achieved in 2013.



Source: Author's computations with data gathered from EAC (2014), Facts and Figures 2014.

Over the period 2004-2013, the graph 5 here above displays a kind of convergence clubs: the first group being formed by Kenya and Rwanda with stable and low exchange rate of their local currency against the American dollar; the second group is composed of Tanzania and Burundi with very similar evolution of the exchange rates of their currency against American dollar and being in the middle-level of currency depreciation; and the last group composed only of Uganda with very depreciated currency evolution. This calls for more fiscal discipline and better management of the foreign reserves for Uganda, Burundi and Tanzania in order to converge towards the levels of Kenya and Rwanda.



Source: Author's own computations using data gathered from The Heritage Foundation (2015).

Table 12: Index of Economic Freedom; Ranking for EAC Countries in 2015

Country	Ranking order in 2015
Burundi	132
Kenya	122
Rwanda	65
Tanzania	109
Uganda	92

Source: Author's own computations using data gathered from The Heritage Foundation (2015).

On the graph 6 and in the table 12 here above, it's obvious that the highest index of economic freedom has been recorded by Rwanda, since 2011 up to date, followed by Uganda which used to record the best performance during the early 2000s (2005-

2010). On the other hand, the lowest index has ever been recorded by Burundi.

Given the composition of this index of economic freedom, we can ascertain that performing the best records for five consecutive years reflects continuous rigorous efforts to commit to maintaining a good economic environment and a secure & clean business environment.

This can in no way a result of the mere chance or simple coincidence; but rather a result of reasoned combined strategic policy choices and long-term targets and sacrifices willingly arranged in order to impulse a business environment conducive to the emergence of a sustainable growth and enabling better business climate.

12. Concluding remarks

We cannot stress too much the importance of development planning for East African Community Partner States in order to help the Community to realize her full potential. As stated by Carlos Lopes (2012; page 7), much of the failures in the area of Africa's development have been blamed on the lost decade when instead of planning and giving a strategic direction to their future, States stepped back from "thinking their own policies", as a result of the Washington Consensus prescriptions.

Following Carlos Lopes (2012), we can indeed argue that, for the African catch-up to happen and to happen fast, there is a need for a new vision as well as modern strategic planning, with strong national, sub-regional and continental dimension.

Regional integration is increasingly being acknowledged as a strategy for addressing development issues. Motives for regional integration include economic, social and political interests. Of course, none should consider regional integration as a substitute for sound national policies, but as a very good impediment that complements well these domestic policies towards achievement of improved growth and development.

The East African Community is at an exciting juncture in its development journey. It can also be asserted that it's likely to become a new pole of African/global growth. To achieve this, however, EAC must continue to plan its development trajectory, increase policy space, and make prudent decisions about the appropriate strategies needed to achieve economic growth and structural transformation.

It is indeed commonly said that failing to plan means planning to fail. Our past and current experiences tell us that most countries in Africa in general, and in East African Community in particular, do have several challenges in the area of development planning. But we also know that there are opportunities for strengthening the design, implementation and monitoring of national development strategies.

For the attainment of some commonly agreed goals such as the MDGs, the EAC development strategy, the NEPAD, etc. and all other convergence criteria agreed on at continental or regional level, we need to assess strengths and weaknesses of existing national development visions and propose the way forward. That is exactly the spirit that gave birth to this study.

The paper presented and analysed what are the long-term development plans and visions within the EAC Partner States. In addition, the paper presented a comparative analysis of the existing national long-term visions within EAC. In order to gauge the effectiveness of the implementation of those visions, we further explored how best have the EAC countries been performing in terms of achieving the MDGs on the one hand; and how converging are some macroeconomic indicators selected for that purpose of this study.

For the EAC Partner States to achieve their integration agenda there is need for an urgent, all inclusive people-centered development plan/vision composed of concrete, realistic and achievable targets through a medium-term strategy framework. This will require a strongly willing national economic leadership that has its overriding goal as the improvement of national welfare and quality of life and will provide shared vision for the national problems. Development plans and National Visions in the EAC Partner States, if not consistently implemented, cannot lead to sustainable development.

The analysis of MDGs attainment revealed the following key observations: Rwanda has recorded the best performance in the EAC region in achieving the MDGs: Rwanda has recorded the first place on five out of eight MDGs (MDG2; MDG 5; MDG 6; MDG 7 and MDG 8) whereas the second best performer, that is Uganda, has only recorded the first place for only two out of eight MDGs (MDG 1 and MDG 3) followed by Tanzania which recorded the first place only once on MDG 4. Burundi and Kenya have not been able to record the first place in the region.

The analysis of some selected indicators of macroeconomic convergence also revealed strongest performance being those of Rwanda on most of the six indicators analyzed. These high performances are attributed to strong and focused leadership of Rwanda on overall, and also to concrete targets set in their Vision 2020 and the political will towards accountable delivery against those targets. Frankly speaking, these high records can be interpreted as a fruit of the fiscal discipline, the fight against corruption, the rigorous management in all sectors, the deep openness to trade and their commitment to attaining the set goals and targets in regional integration initiatives, the implementation of their ambitious targets set in the Vision 2020, etc.

From the analysis above, the paper posits that development planning is not an easy task given its complex and futuristic inclination. However, it is a must do in order to achieve balanced and sustainable development.

Our comparative analysis allowed us to draw the following general recommendations:

(a) There is need for strong and willing leadership, it surely makes the whole difference in effectiveness of visions;
(b) There is need for institutional performance and enthronement of national discipline;
(c) There is need to set more realistic and achievable targets/goals.
(d) There is need to create a *'buffer zone'* for the vulnerable majority;
(e) Refocus on critical infrastructure such as power and transportation;
(f) Genuine and improved stakeholders' involvement is very critical in order to ensure a paradigm shift and wider buy-in;
(g) Taking into account the Post-2015 development Agenda and other commitments subscribed to by the Government such as the various sections and/or annexes of the Protocols of the EAC
(h) Strengthening the human and institutional capacity;
(i) Institute a broad-based and functional plan coordinating unit manned by professionals.

(j) Planning harmonization and planning continuity;

(k) Setting up a performance based contract for all officials/civil servants from Ministers for improved accountability against the set targets in the development plans and visions.

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