



AUC and CGIAR Consortium agree to enhance collaboration in advancing a Science and Technology Agenda for African Agriculture



H.E. Rhoda Peace Tumusiime (R) & Dr. Frank Rijsberman

In an event that highlights continued progress towards African agricultural sustainability, African Union Commission (AUC) Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture, H.E. Rhoda Peace Tumusiime and Chief Executive Officer of the Consortium of International Agricultural Research Centers (CGIAR Consortium), Dr. Frank Rijsberman signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on behalf of the two organizations.

The MoU describes a strategic partnership under the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) of the AUC and CGIAR Consortium to facilitate, “enhanced coordination, collaboration, and alignment between CGIAR Consortium members and initiatives and those of African agricultural research and development organizations at the country, sub-regional, and continental levels with regard to their respective priorities, objectives, and programs for increased agricultural productivity in Africa.”

In her welcome remarks during the signing ceremony, held at the AUC Headquarters, on January 15, 2012, H.E. Tumusiime stated that, “The signing of this MoU with CGIAR Consortium has a special significance, for it comes at a time when global attention has focused on Africa's resolve to shoulder its responsibilities of making hunger and destitution history.” She further stated that, “The AUC recognizes that feeding Africa's population and enabling agriculture play a critical economic transformation role in much of Africa needs to be supported by tried and tested technologies and home-grown policy initiatives.”

Mrs. Tumusiime also expressed her confidence that the CGIAR Consortium would prove to be a significant partner in the AU Commission's quest for science-based agricultural transformation in Africa.

Dr. Rijsberman stated that “through better alignment with CAADP, CGIAR can help

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ensure that we are providing the right science for real impact on the ground.” He also noted that more than 50% of CGIAR funding goes towards projects on the African continent, and that “more effective research-to-practice alignment is a fundamental pillar of CGIAR's work.”

The MoU calls for joint actions to guide implementation of alignment of programs and support activities for CAADP, including: a research alignment plan that coordinates research programs with CAADP National Investment Plans; a Science and Technology Agenda for African Agriculture; a joint plan to support regional and sub-regional research activities; the development of joint African and CGIAR technology platforms; technical support; and joint sharing of information and knowledge.



The AUC, through the Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture (DREA), has been implementing CAADP, which addresses policy and capacity issues across the entire agricultural sector and African continent. CAADP is entirely African-led and African-owned and represents African leaders' collective vision for agriculture in Africa. This ambitious and comprehensive vision for agricultural reform in Africa aims for an average annual growth rate of 6 percent in agriculture by 2015.

CGIAR is a global agricultural research partnership for development that includes 15 of the world's leading agriculture research centers and leads 16 comprehensive global agricultural research programs. Its goals are to conduct research that contributes to reduced poverty, improved food security, improved nutrition and health, and sustainable management of natural resources.

AUC Chairperson calls for enhanced efforts to fight hunger and malnutrition

African Union Commission (AUC) Chairperson, H.E. Dr. Nkhosazana Dlamini-Zuma on the commemoration of the African Day for Food and Nutrition Security (ADFNS), called for enhanced efforts in Africa to fight hunger and malnutrition.

Dr. Dlamini-Zuma, represented by AUC Deputy Chairperson, H.E. Erastus Mwencha, said the realisation that Africa was unlikely to meet the first of the Millennium Development Goals (to halve hunger and poverty by 2015), was alarming.

Dr. Dlamini-Zuma was speaking during the 3rd commemoration of the ADFNS, attended by high-level leaders from global, regional and national agriculture associations, African and other

governments, the civil society and farmers' organizations, the private sector, the scientific and research institutions, farmer organizations and development partners.

“This should be a crude awakening to all policy makers and implementers,” she said. Food and Nutrition Security underlie all our developmental efforts in Africa. It defines the depth and breadth of our strategies as continental organisations, as regional bodies, as countries and as civil society. It determines the seriousness of

any government and system of governance. It simply draws the line between responsible and irresponsible leadership. It is a challenge we have to face head on.”

Dr. Dlamini-Zuma, however, noted that under the guidance of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Programme (CAADP), some Member States had started to score marked progress in terms of economic development indicators due to investment in and resourcing of the broader agricultural sector.

Officially opening the commemoration ceremony, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia's Minister of State in the Ministry of Agriculture, Hon. Mitiku Kassa advised that agriculture should play a greater role in improving food nutrition and security by promoting the growing of nutritious crops and food.

“Now is the time to look for solutions that will not only make agriculture profitable but also for the maximum benefit of human beings. Let us concentrate our energies to reduce and eradicate hunger and malnutrition,” he said.

H.E. Mrs. Tumusiime Rhoda Peace, AUC's Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture stated that the main expected outcome of the event was to get political commitment and adoption of food and nutrition security priorities based on continent, regional and national frameworks.

Meanwhile, in a live video address beamed to the audience, David Nabarro, Coordinator of United Nations High Level Task Force (UNHTFL) on Global Food Crisis highlighted the importance of Agriculture in Food and Nutrition Security and creating stability in the continent. “There is a clear need to expand agriculture to involve smallholders in the food system and create earning opportunities particularly within Sub-Saharan Africa.

Within this region, 330 million young people will enter the job market over the next 15 years. Two hundred million will live in rural areas; “they will depend on Agriculture for their employment” he said.

He, however, commended the progress of CAADP implementation in Africa and the efforts of governments to further its agenda.

The objectives of the commemoration include the creation of a platform in which food and nutrition security stakeholders discuss solutions and make recommendations on Food and Nutrition Security issues in Africa.

The commemoration also aims to strengthen momentum towards achieving the MDGs, and what could follow the MDGs after 2015. This year's event was commemorated under the theme “Ensuring access to safe and nutritious foods.”

With the current statistics showing that 216 million Africans are chronically malnourished (representing 30% of population); 5 million die of hunger annually; 126 million children are underweight and about 50% children are stunted more needs to be done and platforms such as the Africa Day for Food and Nutrition Security provide an opportunity to come up with solutions.

AU Ministers of agriculture and Ministers of trade keen to advance agriculture through trade

The Meeting of the AU Ministers of Agriculture of the Joint Conference of African Ministers of Agriculture and Ministers of Trade took place at the AU Commission in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 29-30 November 2012. The theme of the Joint Conference was, 'Boosting Intra-African Trade: A key to agricultural transformation, and ensuring food and nutrition security.'

The joint meeting was officially opened by AUC Deputy Chairperson, H.E. Mr. Erastus Mwencha. It was also attended by the Deputy Executive Secretary of the UN Economic Commission for Africa, Dr. Abdalla Hamdook and Ethiopian State Minister for Agriculture, Mr. Wondirad Mandefro.

The objective of the two-day Conference was to review progress on the

implementation of continental agriculture and trade development initiatives and specifically revisit efforts from the two sectors that impact on intra-African trade, agricultural transformation and achievement of food security on the continent. It was further intended to review and agree on a short and medium-term action-oriented strategy towards realizing the AU vision of promoting intra-African trade and its impact on attaining agricultural transformation as well as a food and nutrition secure Africa.

Within this context, the Agricultural Ministerial Parallel Session was held and deliberated on broader issues of significance to the advancement of Africa's agricultural sector as a lever for facilitating intra-regional trade and attaining food and nutrition security.

The Agriculture Minister's session among other priorities, highlighted the need to sustain the momentum by renewing Africa's political commitment and drive to the CAADP agenda to ensure more action that would provide incentives for smallholder farmers and the private sector linked to wealth creation as a primary driver of the Agriculture sector.

The African Union has made significant strides in addressing some of the challenges facing agriculture. The January Summit AU Heads of State of 2012 adopted an action plan on boosting intra African trade and also decided to establish a continental free trade area (CFTA) by 2017. The CFTA is expected to deepen continental market integration, while enhancement of agricultural production is centered mainly on CAADP principles.

For the resolutions of the Ministers of Agriculture Session, please contact:

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African Parliamentarians committed to championing CAADP

A Retreat for Chairpersons and representatives of agriculture, food security and environmental affairs committees of national parliaments convened by the African Union Commission (AUC), and co-organised with the Pan African Parliament and the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency (NEPAD Agency), took place at the Pan African Parliament, in the Republic of South Africa, from 21st to 22nd November 2012.



The Retreat, at which the parliamentarians pledged their support to CAADP and its principles, was held to discuss sustaining the CAADP momentum and to advance political ownership, championing and facilitating faster compliance and adoption of key continental decisions aimed at advancing the agricultural transformation agenda for CAADP's effective management.

During the retreat, the parliamentarians reviewed how political and technical leaders at country level could be more effectively engaged and mobilized to ensure compliance with the key principles and targets of CAADP.

The Parliamentarians also noted the progress being made in the implementation of CAADP and the significant role being played by the AU

Commission and the NEPAD Agency in ensuring that CAADP is implemented taking due cognizance of the enduring principles of national ownership, inclusiveness and outcome orientation.

The Retreat also recognized the current drive towards designing a long-term strategy for enabling CAADP consolidate the gains made so far and meet new challenges affecting agriculture and natural resources in Africa.

The Parliamentarians also appreciated the critical role CAADP would play in promoting AU's regional integration agenda. In this respect, the meeting reiterated the added value of national actions in the advancement of regional integration and underlined the need for ensuring complementarities between regional processes and national priorities.

For the detailed communiqué issued by the Parliamentarians please contact

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Mozambique volunteers to champion Sustaining the CAADP Initiative

The Republic of Mozambique through its Chairperson for the Committee on Agriculture, Rural Development and Economic Activities, Francisco Mucanheia, has offered to be the next CAADP country champion to spearhead activities in the Sustaining the CAADP Initiative.

In an interview, Hon. Mucanheia said Mozambique continues to champion the causes of CAADP through implementing agricultural programmes that are aligned with CAADP's cardinal values and principles.

He further underlined the MPs efforts to push for redoubling of efforts to help CAADP achieve its goals of agricultural transformation.

“The commitments that gave birth to CAADP were taken in Maputo, so we believe we have the custody of CAADP; the spirit of CAADP is inextricably linked with Mozambique,” he said.

And commenting on the last ten years of CAADP, Hon. Mucanheia, “The past years have been years of adaptation and learning and in the next 10 years, we would like to see our continent being self sufficient in food, particularly healthy food.”

He said it was essential for African countries to improve legal frameworks and policies around agriculture so as to enhance alignment of country agricultural priorities with the CAADP agenda.

Hon. Mucanheia said CAADP should continue to be the element of convergence among parliamentarians, governments, development partners, civil society and farmers especially women farmers.

“We would like to see an agricultural transformation in the next ten years where farmers thrive and prosper; we would like to see agriculture becoming an activity that attracts people from urban areas with ideas and other resources as well as creates jobs even to some of the unemployed in urban areas.”

In 2013, CAADP will be celebrating 10 years of existence, since its launch in 2003, in Maputo, Mozambique.

Happy New Year!



Upcoming events

Coalition for African Rice Development (CARD 5th) General Meeting, 5-6 February, Senegal

AUC/RECs Consultation with RECs to finalize Concept Note on implementation of CAADP Joint Action Group, 25-28 February, South Africa

CAADP Nutrition capacity Development Workshop 25 Feb 1st March, Tanzania

CAADP Partnership Platform, March 26-28 Ethiopia,