



Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture

Briefing Note:

on

2014 Year of Agriculture and Food Security in Africa, Marking 10th Anniversary of the Adoption of CAADP.

A. Background

1. The African Union Assembly of Heads of State and Government, during its 19th Ordinary Session, held from 15-16 July 2012 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, had declared 2014 to be the Year of Agriculture and Food Security in Africa, marking 10th Anniversary of the adoption of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) [(Assembly/AU/Dec.449 (XIX)]. The Concept Note that outlines the rationale, objectives and expected outcomes of Africa's Year of Agriculture and Food Security is available on the AU Website <http://pages.au.int/caadpyoa>.
2. The major objectives are to facilitate:
 - a. broad-based and inclusive consultations, and dialogue among all relevant stakeholders;
 - b. mutual learning and experience sharing among countries;
 - c. political dialogue on collective actions and commitment to results, and
 - d. dialogue with Africa's strategic partners to alignment, harmonization, coordination and mutual accountability for results.
3. It is expected that the year-long series of activities by all stakeholders inspires and re-energizes Member States and RECs as well as all stakeholders and our partners to accelerate efforts towards sustaining the momentum of agricultural growth and transformation and eliminating hunger from the continent by 2025.

B. Theme and Sub-themes

4. The Year of Agriculture and Food Security is organised around the following theme and sub-themes, which are intended to capture key messages of transformation, impact, inclusiveness and opportunities:

Theme:

- Transforming Africa's Agriculture for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods, through Harnessing Opportunities for Inclusive Growth and Sustainable Development.

Sub-themes:

- Increased agriculture production, productivity and value addition
- Functioning agricultural markets (regional markets & trade)
- Increased investment financing (public & private) along the agriculture value chains
- Towards ending hunger in Africa by 2025:
- Building resilience to vulnerability and Managing Risks

C. Approach:

5. The African Year of Agriculture and Food Security will be commemorated across Africa, in Member States, Regional Economic Communities, Continental organisations, and of course at the AU Headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in a manner that gives opportunities to communities, state and non-state actors in Africa to interact, express their voices on what works better for them and how. The process should facilitate for these voices to contribute towards setting the agenda for sustaining the momentum of inclusive agricultural growth and transformation for shared prosperity and improved livelihoods. This is expected to form the basis for African leadership to recommit itself towards realizing the vision of inclusive growth, shared prosperity and sustainable development.
6. At the AUC, this will be serving as an overarching theme for the year and as a lens through which all departments' work will be focussed on. Mechanisms have been worked out to facilitate such an interactive process and synergy.

D. Major activities and events

7. During the first half of the year, efforts are mainly focussed on articulation of the key messages through a process of stakeholders' consultations, and deepening engagement for high level political commitment.

- (a) A formal launch of the Theme to kick-start the process was achieved during the 22nd Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government, on 30th of January 2014 held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.
- (b) The AU Assembly Debate on the Theme is scheduled to take place during the 23rd Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly Heads of State and Government in June 2014, possibly leading towards adoption of a declaration on “*agricultural transformation and inclusive growth for shared prosperity and improved livelihoods*”. The debate will be framed to facilitate an interactive dialogue focussing on the strategic issues, goals, targets, commitments and actions.
- (c) In the run up to the AU June 2014 Summit, the following meetings and conferences have been scheduled. The major purpose of these meetings and conferences is to contribute and inform the debate and its outcomes:
- The 10th CAADP Partnership Platform Meeting, organised by AUC and NPCA, was held from 18-22 March 2014 in Durban, South Africa, brought together representatives from Member States, RECs, key African Institutions and partners to review progress, and synthesise lessons for way forward. Work streams, defined by the Steering Committee of the Year of Agriculture and Food Security to inform the issues, goals, targets and actions under each sub-theme, were discussed and key messages have been formulated. These will contribute to the deliberations of the Joint Ministerial Conference.
 - The Joint AU Conference of Ministers responsible for Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Aquaculture, and Rural Development, to be held from 28 April to 02 May 2014 at the AUCC in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia – will deliberate on the theme and sub-themes and make resolutions for consideration by the AU Policy organs. Invitations have been sent out to relevant ministers as well as to Chairs/Presidents of other AU STCs/sector ministerial bodies.
 - The African Agribusiness Forum planned for June 2014 on the margins of the AU Summit in Malabo – which among others is expected to explore business opportunities in the context of agricultural transformation and inclusive growth. An interdepartmental taskforce is being set-up to make successful preparations.
8. In addition to these the continental level events, other fora are expected to be organised by RECs, Member States and other stakeholders. At regional level, RECs are encouraged to take lead to organise events on the theme. Member States are being sensitised to organise events on 2014 Year of Agriculture and Food Security. In addition, forums and organisations with stakeholders’ representation (women groups, youth groups, farmers’ organisations, etc.) are encouraged and will be facilitated to organise events relevant to their respective concerns.

E. Making it Happen – Steering the Process:

9. A steering committee chaired by the Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture of the AU Commission and the CEO of NPCA, has been established to provide overall guidance and oversight on planning and implementation. It is composed of representatives from various AUC departments, NPCA, technical partners and relevant agencies with prominent presence in Africa. The Steering Committee has three committees working under it on respective areas of competence – (a) technical committee chaired by the Director of AUC Rural Economy and Agriculture; (b) Communication Committee chaired the Director of AUC Information and Communication, and (c) Operations Committee chaired by the AUC CAADP Senior Advisor. A dedicated operational Secretariat is established at the AUC.

F. Progress made thus far:

10. The Theme of the Year of Agriculture and Food Security has been launched on 30th January 2014 at the 22nd Session of the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government.
11. Budgetary provisions to support implementation have been earmarked as part of 2014 approved AU budget; financial and technical resources have also been mobilised from partners.
12. Working documents under the relevant sub-thematic workstreams¹ have been developed that guided the deliberations at the 10th CAADP PP, which was conducted successfully from 18-22 March 2014 in Durban, South Africa. Its outcomes will inform and contribute to the deliberations of the Joint Ministerial conference.
13. Communication and advocacy work has been launched. A Website link <http://pages.au.int/caadpyoa> has been created to facilitate information availability and interaction. A booklet featuring the theme has been produced; and a 2nd issue containing evidence based articles from Member States and specialised CAADP support institutions is being prepared.
14. Preparation for organising the Joint AU Ministerial Conference is in progress (to be held from 28 April to 02 May 2012 at the AUCC, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia).
15. Briefing sessions with Member States at different levels, RECs and other stakeholders have been taking place and will continue.

¹ These include: Agriculture science agenda; agricultural inputs, land and land policy; rural infrastructure; fisheries and aquaculture; ending hunger and malnutrition; commodity value chains; investment financing; agriculture and climate change, policies and institutional reform, and data and information systems. Gender, youth, smallholder farmers and the environment are to be treated as cross-cutting issues in all the topics.