BRIEF REPORT ON SCIENCE AGENDA FOR AGRICULTURE IN AFRICA SIDE EVENT AT CAADP PARTNERSHIP PLATFORM

1. Background

The Science Agenda for Agriculture in Africa (S3A) outlines the guiding principles to help Africa take charge of the science to transform its agriculture. It refers to the science, technology, extension, innovations, policy and social learning Africa needs to apply in order to meet its evolving agricultural development goals. The Science Agenda responds to Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa (STISA 2024) Priority Area 2.1 and CAADP Priority 1.

The implementation of the Science Agenda is premised on its incorporation into ongoing continental, regional and national processes, NAIP, RAIP etc. In April 2017, FARA, AFAAS, and Sub Regional Organisations started a series of consultations, at Regional, National and Continental level to defined a country-driven development strategy of the implementation of the Science Agenda. 39 out of 54 countries in Africa, together with CGIARS, NGOs, Universities and Farmer Organisations participated in the consultations. Proposals for a country engagement process, a theory of change and results framework, tools on knowledge management, policy-practice etc., have emerged.

Purpose of the Side Event on the Science Agenda

The Science Agenda Side Event is aimed at sharing the emerging implementation strategies for the S3A also linked to CAADP Partnership Platform Pillar 1 and 2.

2. Proceedings

36 participants from Ministries of Agriculture, Research Organisations, CGIAR, Civil Society, Universities, Farmer Organisations and farmer groups attended the Workshop. The Science Agenda Document was shared with 181 participants.

The key tools, strategies, flagship programmes emanating from the Regional Consultations on the rolling out of the Science Agenda were presented by FARA. The presentation also includes the report on the Total Factor Productivity studies undertaken by FARA in 2016 in eight countries. This provide baselines on the target for doubling productivity as in Malabo.

Countries are at different levels of achievement of CAADP target of doubling productivity, based on their growth trajectories, capital deepening, changes in sectoral share of labour/GDP as well as labour productivity.

From the study, only one country out of eight will meet the target the Malabo target of doubling productivity. Increasing investments in Research, Technology and Innovation is one of opportunity with a high return on investment.

6. Key recommendations

The following recommendations were made:

1. The studies on Total Factor Productivity shows that doing business as usual, only a few countries will meet the target of doubling productivity by 2025 (baselines being 2013).
2. The studies on Total Factor should be complimented by follow up studies on what investments are required and which commodities to priorities as well as the growth trajectories that economies should aim to achieve.
3. The model of co-creation and commercialization of innovation as modelled in the UNIBRAIN model should be promoted as a means to increase technology uptake and commercialization
4. The Science Agenda should also be used as an active way of enhancing participation of young people especially in agribusiness
5. The success of tracking the implementation of the Science agenda is premised on availability of credible data. There should be a deliberate attempt to capture, analyse and use data/ Information
6. The Science Agenda use the Innovation Platform as a means to ensure that science gets to the smallholder; demand driven research, adoption of technology etc
7. The Science Agenda should build on capacities and use of science, research, innovation and technology across priority commodity value chains and also including the science of reducing post-harvest loses.