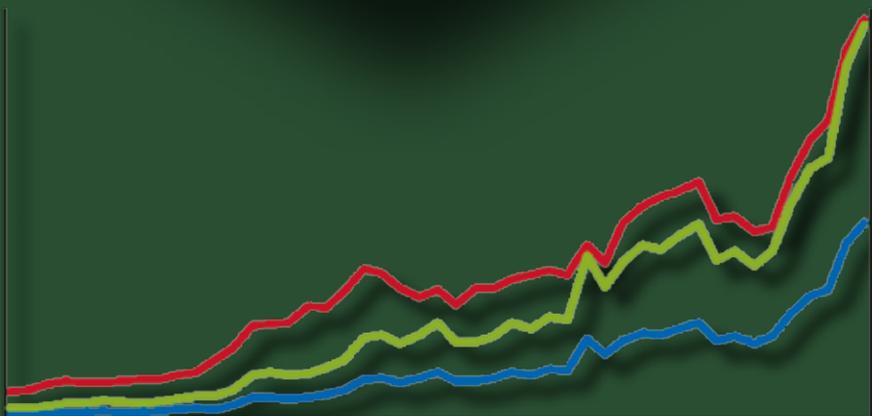




Networking Support Function 3  
Regional Policies and Markets  
*Strategy for 2009-2012*



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**Networking Support Function 3:**  
**Regional Policies and Markets Strategy**  
**2009-2012**

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# Executive Summary

Increasing concerns about food insecurity and poverty in many African countries have prompted many governments to engage in the process of agricultural policy reforms that aim to increase agricultural productivity, promote access to markets and increase the incomes of smallholder agricultural/pastoral producers. Major institutional reforms are also being initiated to support policy change processes. Policy makers (public and private) are in constant need of evidence to inform the policies they formulate and decisions they make. Government representatives in international organizations also need information for informed decision-making and to negotiate trade and environmental agreements with partners. This process of policy and institutional change which necessitates evidence-based information is putting increasing pressure on the demand for policy and market analyses, making it incumbent upon African policy research institutions to position themselves to better deliver the information to the end users. African policy institutions are thus faced with the challenge of providing policy makers with timely and sound analysis of the critical issues facing agriculture.

The role and function assigned to Networking Support Function (NSF) 3 in the Strategic Plan for 2007–2016 is to contribute to the specific objective of the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) of broad-based agricultural productivity, competitiveness and sustainable improvement of markets by developing strategic decision-making options for policy, institutions and markets. FARA's Medium Term Operational Plan (MTO) for 2008–2012 also calls upon NSF3 to:

- maintain a knowledge hub for supporting strategic agricultural policy formulation and improving the performance of agricultural markets; and
- strengthen the advocacy and negotiating competencies of African trade policy negotiators and other key stakeholders.

To effectively perform these functions, the MTO states that NSF3 will cooperate with policy institutions to address stakeholder-identified priorities for policy and market analyses needed to inform policy decisions. NSF will therefore play a facilitative and supportive role to ensure that research-based policy and market analyses of alternative policy options is undertaken by different institutions based on their comparative advantages. To maximise their collective utility and impact, NSF3 will focus on promoting and facilitating evidence-based research on policy and market issues that span the different sub-regions and on which the sub-regions interact. This will allow lessons to be drawn from best practices and from the outcomes of alternative policies adopted in the different sub-regions for up- and out-scaling.

The process of developing this strategic plan has been informed by two important documents: FARA's Strategic Plan 2007–2016 and its MTO 2008–2012. It has also been guided by the

recommendations of the FARA Executive Board Programme Sub-Committee meeting of March 2008 as well as inputs from the Regional Policies and Markets Stakeholder Consultation Workshop organized at the FARA Secretariat in October 2008.

Based on the issues identified by stakeholders for FARA to address, the strategy focuses on six thematic areas of intervention for the period 2009–2012. It proposes to develop tools and approaches for policy formulation and decision making by:

- Facilitating the development of policy frameworks and guidelines to support policy-making processes
- Linking policymakers with policy and market analyses through a platform for promoting policy dialogue, debates, advocacy, information sharing and awareness creation
- Producing and disseminating policy-relevant information documents and briefs
- Providing a database of national and regional agricultural and trade policy experts and institutions
- Strengthening partnerships between national and regional policy institutions and agricultural market information systems

It also proposes to facilitate capacity strengthening for international trade negotiations by empowering trade negotiators with the tools, skills and information to allow them participate effectively alongside larger negotiating teams and contribute to equitable negotiating processes. It also intends to facilitate capacity strengthening of agricultural education and training institutions in policy and market analyses and mainstream gender issues into policy options to support innovation systems and value chain approaches. Finally, it proposes to create awareness on modern biotechnology and to promote policies that effectively and efficiently harness the benefits of modern biotechnology.

Implementation of this strategy will be guided by the strategic direction and principles embodied in FARA's Strategic Plan and its MTOP, particularly the principle of *subsidiarity*. This means allowing the sub-regional research organizations (SROs), national agricultural research systems (NARS), policy institutions, advanced research institutes, universities and other stakeholders and partners involved in African agricultural research and development (ARD) to apply their comparative advantages to undertake the activities outlined in this strategy to the best of their abilities. FARA's oversight role will involve advocacy, facilitation, networking and information sharing.

To track progress towards the achievement of results, the strategy will use the FARA monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework, for which a number of performance indicators have been developed for each intervention. Aligning FARA's activities to those of the SROs and other sub-regional policy institutions allows these stakeholders to monitor and evaluate their activities using the same indicators. Continuous monitoring, together with mid-term evaluation using this M&E system, will provide information, data and analysis for amending the strategy in the light of what works and what does not.

The interventions identified in this strategy constitute NSF3's essential continuing functions. Funding for these interventions will come from FARA's core funding through the MDTF. Funding for complementary time-bound initiatives will be secured through specific projects. Resource mobilisation efforts will continue to secure funding for non-MDTF activities.



# 1. Background and Context

Agriculture is the sector that can transform Africa's economic future. Growth in agriculture, however, has not been high enough to ensure rapid economic transformation. Agriculture needs to grow by at least 6% per year and total factor productivity by 4.4% per year if Africa is to reduce poverty and ensure food security.<sup>1</sup> New technologies are needed to support traditional practices to meet the food production and poverty reduction challenges. Agricultural research, technology dissemination and adoption are critical for sustainable agricultural productivity growth. Equally critical are appropriate policies, institutions and markets.

FARA is a continent-wide forum of stakeholders involved in ARD.

- FARA's **Vision** is to reduce poverty in Africa as a result of sustainable broad-based agricultural growth and improved livelihoods, particularly of smallholder and pastoral enterprises.
- Its **Mission** is to create broad-based improvements in agricultural productivity, competitiveness and markets by supporting Africa's sub-regional organizations in strengthening capacity for agricultural innovation.
- Based on these vision and mission statements, FARA's **Value Proposition** is to provide a strategic platform to foster continental and global networking that reinforces the capacities of Africa's national agricultural research systems and sub-regional organizations.

To implement its vision and mission, FARA has developed a 10-year Strategic Plan (2007–2016) and a 5-year MTOP (2008–2012) that define FARA's strategic objectives, key result areas and the implementation modalities for all of its core operations and time-bound initiatives. The general objective is to contribute to sustainable achievement of high broad-based agricultural growth in Africa while the specific objective is to contribute to sustainable improvement of broad-based agricultural productivity, competitiveness and markets in Africa. These objectives are built around Pillar IV of the Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP), an initiative of the African Union's New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). Pillar IV focuses on agricultural research, technology dissemination and adoption; for which FARA has been given the mandate by both the African Union Commission (AUC) and NEPAD to lead its implementation. FARA, the SROs and the NARS are the critical building blocks that facilitate and catalyse CAADP Pillar IV implementation at various levels of the African ARD continuum in collaboration with a range of stakeholders that include development partners both within and outside Africa.

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1. Framework for African Agricultural Productivity (FAAP), FARA, June 2006.

FARA has defined five main results to be accomplished and has established five networking support functions (NSFs) for this purpose. The five results and corresponding NSFs are summarised in Table 1. The result expected to be accomplished by NSF3 is *strategic decision-making options for policy, institutions and markets developed*. This document outlines the strategy to achieve this result. It provides the rationale for regional policies and markets in FARA, defines FARA's facilitative role in regional policies and markets, identifies the thematic areas of intervention, and shows how monitoring and evaluation will be conducted.

**Table 1: FARA's Networking Support Functions: objectives and results**

NSF	Objectives	Results
NSF1: Advocacy and resource mobilisation	To support forum members (SROs, NARS, and other regional and continental ARD stakeholders) in establishing appropriate institutional and organizational arrangements for regional ARD. Specifically, to: (i) support the inclusion of Pillar IV issues in CAADP Compacts; (ii) provide assistance and support to the evolution and reform of national agricultural research systems, and (iii) guide governance reform and change management in the FARA and SRO secretariats.	Appropriate institutional and organizational arrangements for regional agricultural research established
NSF2: Access to knowledge and technologies	To develop mechanisms for information and technology-based innovation exchange between sub-regions that draw on emerging technologies, notably ICT, and application of decision-making tools that transform information into knowledge for innovation.	Broad-based stakeholders have access to the knowledge and technology necessary for agricultural innovation
NSF3: Regional policies and markets	To enhance strategic agricultural policy formulation by: (i) providing policy makers with evidence-based options and tools; (ii) empowering and equipping Africa's delegates in international trade and environmental treaty negotiations with the necessary skills and information; and (iii) improving broad-based inter- and intra-regional markets.	Strategic decision-making options for agricultural policy, institutions and markets developed
NSF4: Capacity strengthening	To ensure Africa has the requisite human and institutional capacity in public, private and civil society organizations (CSOs) and institutions for agricultural innovation for improved and broad-based agricultural productivity, competitiveness and markets.	Human and institutional capacity for agricultural innovation developed
NSF5: Partnerships and strategic alliances	To facilitate the establishment of partnerships that bring together the range of expertise and capacities needed to achieve FARA's stated goals and objectives. These partnerships will serve as platforms for enhancing agricultural innovation.	Platforms for agricultural innovation supported

## 1.1 Process of developing the strategy

The process of developing this strategy has been informed by two important documents: FARA's Strategic Plan (2007–2016) and its MTOP 2008–2012. It has also been guided by the recommendations of the FARA Executive Board Program Committee Meeting of March 2008 as well as inputs from the Regional Policies and Markets Stakeholder Consultation Workshop organized at the FARA Secretariat in October 2008.

The Strategic Plan describes how FARA, as lead institution for CAADP Pillar IV, will contribute to achievement of the goals and objectives of CAADP. The plan defines FARA's objective to achieve sustainable improvements in broad-based agricultural productivity, competitiveness and markets and outlines how FARA will accomplish this by harnessing continental and global efforts through five NSF's. It describes how each NSF will contribute to the objective through the support it provides to SROs, NARS and other stakeholders.



**Figure 1. Stakeholder consultations to develop content for NSF3.**

The contribution of NSF3 is to promote and facilitate policy analysis and market research so as to provide policymakers with research-based evidence for policy formulation and informed decision making.

The five-year MTOP explains how FARA will achieve the objectives of the Strategic Plan by fostering effective networking among stakeholders engaged in agricultural research, technology development, dissemination and adoption in Africa. The MTOP defines the specific objective and results for each NSF. For NSF3, the specific objective is to achieve *sustainable improvements in broad-based agricultural productivity, competitiveness and markets through appropriate regional policies and markets.*

During the FARA annual planning and review week in March 2008, the FARA Executive Board Program Committee, which has oversight responsibility to steer and guide the implementation of NSF's, projects and initiatives, recommended that NSF3 should organize stakeholder consultations to determine the content and extent of the issues that NSF3 should focus on at the regional level. Based on the recommendation, a stakeholder consultative workshop was organized at the FARA Secretariat in October 2008. Stakeholders agreed on the priority agricultural policy and market issues that would add value to the programs and activities of SROs, NARS and other FARA stakeholder institutions to enable them to effectively develop strategic decision-making options for policy, institutions and markets. They identified six thematic areas of regional importance in which NSF3 should work with SROs, NARS and other stakeholder institutions to address. This document outlines the strategy for addressing these thematic areas.





## 2. The Need for Regional Policies and Markets in FARA

### 2.1 Theoretical underpinnings

Policy is a deliberate plan of action designed to define issues, influence decision making and achieve rational outcomes. Policies are intended to implement political and/or private commitments towards agreed goals, objectives and strategies. Policy development is the process by which society makes decisions, selects goals and the best means for reaching them, handles conflicting views about what should be done and allocates resources to address needs. Policies can originate from the public sector or the private sector. Together however, they have a significant and long-lasting impact on both the individual and the community. Policies and their development depend on partnerships between many stakeholders, including: governmental and private agencies, CSOs, research institutions, farmers and farmer organizations, etc. Policy making is not always a rational and orderly process; rather, it is a political process, which is propelled by dynamic negotiations between groups with competing priorities and conflicting social ideologies.

In agriculture, policy encompasses the collective efforts of governments to influence the decision-making environment of agricultural and food producers, marketing agents, consumers and all those who have a stake in agriculture in order to foster social objectives. Agricultural policies therefore create the enabling environment for all the relevant actors to operate in their efforts to achieve their goals. A conducive policy environment for agriculture to thrive is one in which there is macro-economic stability, political stability, and security of rule of law. These conditions form the prerequisite for farmers and marketing agents to effectively produce and sell agricultural and food products. Developing agricultural and food policies is a complex undertaking that requires consensus on the needs and aspirations of different actors and stakeholders with conflicting expectations. Broad-based stakeholder consultation is therefore critical for effective agricultural policy development.

### 2.2 Rationale

Africa is the continent with the lowest growth in agricultural productivity. It is also the region with the lowest level of investment in agriculture. As a result, African agriculture is unable to spur the rapid economic growth required to lift millions of people out of poverty and food insecurity. One reason for this is the absence of evidence-based strategic planning and decision-making. African governments and regional economic communities have to deal with a wide range of national and regional issues, including:

- financing for agriculture, particularly for agricultural research, science and technology;
- delivery of agricultural extension and advisory services;
- input and output market access;

- agricultural subsidies;
- tariff and non-tariff barriers;
- bio-fuels;
- modern biotechnology and biosafety; and
- sanitary and phyto-sanitary (SPS) measures, including food quality and safety standards.

Identifying the right mix of interventions to address these issues presents a whole range of complex policy and planning challenges to policy makers at national and regional levels.

Throughout Africa, many countries are engaging in policy reform processes intended to address some of the abovementioned issues. Major institutional reforms are also being initiated to support policy change processes. At national level, some governments are beginning to revisit more proactive, farmer-friendly, productivity-enhancing policies hitherto condemned by the Breton Woods institutions. Others are sitting on the fence, not knowing whether or not they should follow suit. In either case, countries need strategic policy decision-making options.

In 2006, AU-NEPAD launched the CAADP national and regional roundtable and compact development processes to bring together all key actors and stakeholders (including development partners) involved in agricultural and rural development to identify gaps and areas to be addressed, define the resource requirements, set the critical targets to be achieved, and define the modalities for achieving them. The CAADP processes will no doubt be driven by the need for national and regional policy change, an endeavour that calls for evidence-based policy advice supported by rigorous and robust policy analyses, peer review, monitoring and evaluation. Enabling policies are therefore required to promote rapid and sustainable agricultural growth in Africa.

Currently, many African trade negotiators do not have the skills required for effective trade negotiations. Those who negotiate trade and treaty agreements on behalf of African countries and institutions do not have the appropriate evidence-based information and tools to support their arguments and positions. This leaves African countries with ineffective policies, weak negotiating positions, limited bargaining power and vulnerability to exploitation by trading partners. For smallholder agricultural producers in Africa to benefit from opportunities available in regional and international agricultural markets, Africa's capacity for trade needs to be enhanced. Africa needs people with excellent trade negotiating skills – people who understand how the World Trade Organization (WTO) system operates and how international trade regulations (including SPS requirements and intellectual property rights) are formulated and applied. There is need also for people who understand the economic partnership agreements (EPAs) as well as Africa Caribbean Pacific (ACP)-EU trade regimes and the issues involved. African trade negotiators also need to be equipped with the relevant technical and scientific evidence to enable them engage in effective negotiations.



## 3. The Regional Policies and Markets Strategy

### 3.1 The Role and Function of NSF3 in FARA

The particular role and function assigned to NSF3 in FARA's Strategic Plan is to contribute to FARA's specific objective of broad-based agricultural productivity, competitiveness and sustainable improvement of markets in Africa by *developing strategic decision-making options for policy, institutions and markets*. The MTOP also calls upon NSF3 to:

- maintain a knowledge hub for supporting strategic agricultural policy formulation and improving the performance of agricultural markets, and
- strengthen the advocacy and negotiating competencies of African trade policy negotiators and other key stakeholders.

To effectively perform these functions, the MTOP states that NSF3 will cooperate with policy institutions to address stakeholder-identified priorities for policy and market analyses needed to inform policy decisions. NSF will therefore play a facilitative and supportive role to ensure that research-based policy and market analyses of alternative policy options is undertaken by different institutions based on their comparative advantages. To maximize their collective utility and impact, NSF3 will focus on promoting and facilitating evidence-based research on policy and market issues that span the different sub-regions and on which the sub-regions interact. This will allow lessons to be drawn from best practices and from the outcomes of alternative policies adopted in the different sub-regions for up- and out-scaling.

### 3.2 Stakeholder consultations on policy and market issues

The Strategic Plan identifies the *lack of policy and market analyses needed on Pan-African agricultural issues to respond to the demand of African policy makers and negotiators* as the main problem for NSF3 to address in order to attain the objective of ensuring that strategic decision-making options are developed for policy, institutions and markets. To address this problem, the FARA Executive Board Programme Committee recommended during the annual planning and review week in March 2008 that NSF3 should undertake stakeholder consultations to determine content, strategic approach and implementation framework for NSF3.

During a three-day consultative workshop at the FARA Secretariat in October 2008, stakeholders from a wide range of institutions and disciplines agreed on five key observations:

- i. Decision making by African policy makers was not properly being informed by evidence-based research, due mainly to limited production and dissemination of policy and market research results.

- ii. African countries do not have appropriate policies on science and technology to promote agricultural production and trade and/or have policies with limited science and technology content.
- iii. The lack of competitiveness of African agriculture in both regional and international markets is due partly to a host of supply-side and demand-side constraints.
- iv. Policies are inadequate to enable Africa to harness the benefits of modern biotechnology and biosafety in order to address unprecedented challenges of food security and worsening poverty.
- v. Capacity for trade negotiations is limited.

Based on the identified problems, the workshop agreed on the priority agricultural policy and market interventions of FARA's comparative advantage that will add value to the programmes and activities of SROs, NARS and other stakeholder institutions to enable them to effectively develop strategic decision-making options for policy, institutions and markets (Table 2). It also agreed on the need for NSF3 to support SROs and their constituent NARS, including other stakeholder institutions, to undertake regional studies, document best practices, package the results in user-friendly formats (e.g. policy briefs, discussion papers, position papers) and identify innovative tools and approaches of disseminating them to policy makers for informed decision making. The workshop recommended that NSF3 should focus on promoting networking and facilitation, awareness creation and building partnerships to promote policy and market analyses in Africa.

**Table 2: Agricultural policy and market issues and constraints for NSF3 to address**

Issues	Constraints giving rise to issues	Interventions	Indicators
Poor policy formulation and decision making, and limited policy and market analyses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agricultural policy formulation and decision-making not adequately informed by policy analyses and market research</li> <li>• Limited awareness of policy analyses and market research results that support evidence-based policy formulation, implementation and decision-making</li> <li>• Inadequate production, dissemination and use of the findings of agricultural policy analyses and market research</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop regional policy frameworks and guidelines for promoting intra- and inter-regional trade in agricultural commodities</li> <li>• Synthesize available policy analyses and market research findings and provide evidence to policy makers for informed policy formulation and decision-making</li> <li>• Establish policy platforms and promote policy dialogue among stakeholders on specific agricultural production and trade issues</li> <li>• Review existing national agricultural production and trade policies and develop guidelines for harmonizing them across the region</li> <li>• Identify policies that have succeeded in increasing agricultural production and/or promoting regional trade, facilitate and promote their wider use</li> <li>• Identify and promote policies that have removed supply side constraints, enhanced value-addition and facilitated access to input markets</li> <li>• Mainstream policy analyses and market research results into the other CAADP Pillars and the Compact development process</li> </ul>	<p>Number of tools and approaches synthesized and disseminated</p> <p>Number of regional policies for enhancing agricultural productivity growth and market access recommended and adopted by policy makers</p> <p>Number of countries and stakeholders utilising the tools and approaches generated</p>

<p>Inadequate generation, dissemination and adoption of policy related technologies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many countries either lack an appropriate policy on science and technology to promote agriculture production and trade or have policies with limited science and technology contents</li> <li>• Curricular of many African agricultural training institutions are devoid of science and technology contents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the SROs, NARS and other relevant stakeholders to develop guidelines for incorporating/mainstreaming science and technology elements into national agricultural policies</li> <li>• Work with SROs, NARS and other stakeholders to develop a policy framework that places science and technology at the forefront</li> <li>• Mainstream gender issues into innovation systems of existing agricultural policies</li> <li>• Work with its stakeholders to enhance the capacities of agricultural education institutions through mainstreaming of policy and market analyses in their curricular</li> </ul>
<p>Lack of competitiveness of African agriculture</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supply side constraints on African agricultural competitiveness arising from inadequate policies</li> <li>• Lack of or limited value addition along the supply chain of agriculture and food products traded in regional and international markets</li> <li>• Limited access to input markets and suboptimal use of agricultural inputs due to poor policy application and uninformed decision-making</li> <li>• African agricultural producers unable to fully access regional markets due to the absence of a regional agricultural trade policy framework</li> <li>• Limitations imposed by regional and international policies, rules and regulations such as those of organizations mandated by WTO to set SPS standards (OIE, IPPC, CAC)</li> <li>• Poor bargaining power of African agricultural producers and traders in regional and international markets</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluate the impacts of specific policies on agricultural production and promote policies that remove supply side constraints to agricultural production (e.g. policies that facilitate access to fertilizer, seeds, breeds, credit, etc)</li> <li>• Undertake market studies for specific food and agricultural inputs and analyze their implications on supply</li> <li>• Carry out production and market studies including value chain analyses of strategic agricultural commodities</li> <li>• Assess Africa's ability to comply with SPS and food safety standards for strategic agricultural commodities and determine gaps to be addressed</li> <li>• Review existing health and safety standards for specific agricultural products and proposing standards that are acceptable to both importing and exporting countries</li> <li>• Identify and study functional HACCP systems for possible replication in other countries</li> <li>• Evaluate the impacts of tariff and non-tariff barriers on specific agricultural commodities</li> <li>• Support existing regional market information systems, promote the use of ICT and linking farmers, processors and traders to these information systems and ICTs</li> <li>• Harmonise policies that promote regional agricultural trade</li> <li>• Acquire and disseminate SPS-related information to agricultural producers, processors and traders</li> </ul>

<p>Limited exploitation of existing biotechnology, bio-safety potential</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of or limited evidence on the potential benefits of modern biotechnology to enable Africa to fully exploit its potentials</li> <li>• Absence of a conducive policy environment to promote harnessing of the potentials of biotechnology and biosafety</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct risk assessment and promote evidence-based awareness on biotechnology and bio-safety products;</li> <li>• Undertake <i>ex-post</i> and <i>ex-ante</i> impact assessment of specific modern biotechnology interventions</li> <li>• Provide a platform for facilitating interactions between various actors with a view to promoting harmonized, efficient and safe use of biotechnology by smallholder agricultural producers</li> <li>• Promote the necessary policy dialogues to stimulate local investment in biotechnology to address food security and rural poverty</li> <li>• Build stakeholder consensus on specific biotechnology, bio-safety and quality assurance issues</li> <li>• Facilitate interactions among research and regulatory bodies at regional, sub-regional and national levels</li> <li>• Awareness creation at highest policy level on issues of biotechnology and implications for African countries</li> <li>• Develop a regional policy framework on the movement (importation and exportation) of biotechnology and bio-safety products in Africa</li> <li>• Support the development of policies, guidelines, rules and regulations on the safe use and application of biotechnology and bio-safety products</li> <li>• Develop guidelines for the establishment of an African position on certain biotechnology and bio-safety products (e.g. on certain GMO products)</li> </ul>	
<p>Limited capacity for agricultural trade negotiations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Divergent African voices on regional agricultural and trade issues</li> <li>• Inadequate awareness and weak capacities of African countries on provisions of WTO instruments and standard setting organizations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with SROs, NARS and other stakeholders to develop the necessary evidence-based tools and information to equip policy makers and their representatives mandated to negotiate trade agreements on specific agricultural issues</li> <li>• Facilitate the participation of African policy makers including private agricultural producers in the meetings of organizations mandated by WTO to set SPS standards, notably the OIE, IPPC and CAC and advocating for one voice for Africa</li> <li>• Strengthen the negotiation capacities of African negotiators and promote their effective participation in international treaties and conventions (Meeting of the Parties and Conference of the Parties of the Cartagena Protocol, WTO, WIPO, OIE, IPPC, CAC, etc.)</li> </ul>	<p>Number of African trade negotiators participating in WTO and standard setting meetings</p> <p>Number of African technocrat participating in agricultural trade negotiations</p>

### **3.3 Goal, objectives and outputs**

#### **Goal**

Contribute to sustainable reduction in African food insecurity and poverty and enhanced environmental conditions through appropriate regional policies and improved performance of agricultural markets.

#### **Purpose**

Promote and facilitate policy analysis and market research in order to provide policy makers with evidence-based information for strategic agricultural policy formulation and improved broad-based inter- and intra-regional market performance.

#### **Objective**

Promote and facilitate policy analysis and market research that contribute to sustainable improvements of broad-based agricultural productivity, competitiveness and markets in Africa.

#### **Main output**

Strategic decision-making options for policy, institutions and markets developed.

To deliver on the above output, NSF3's focus will be to promote and facilitate networking among SROs, NARS and other stakeholders to address the agricultural policy and market issues identified in Table 2 in order to provide policy makers with evidence-based policy-making options.

Five specific outputs are needed to contribute to broad-based agricultural productivity, competitiveness and markets in Africa:

- Synthesize and disseminate tools and approaches for formulating appropriate policies and decision-making options.
- Synthesize and share information on strategic policy and market issues for regional trade and innovation.
- Support capacity strengthening for regional agricultural and trade negotiations.
- Support mainstreaming of policy and market analyses in curricula for agricultural education.
- Develop enabling gender-sensitive policy options for supporting innovation systems and value chain approaches through multi-stakeholder partnerships.

Six thematic areas of intervention have been identified to deliver the above outputs:

- Support to evidence-based policy formulation and decision-making
- Links to policy makers with policy and market analyses results
- Effective African participation in trade negotiations
- Raised profile of policy and market analysis in curricular for agricultural education
- Support for gender-sensitive policy options to enhance benefits from multi-stakeholder approaches
- Promotion of policies to harness modern biotechnology

NSF3 will collaborate with the SROs, NARS, regional policy institutions, CAADP Pillar institutions and other key stakeholders to develop the tools and approaches required to support policy formulation

and decision-making processes, to undertake studies of regional agricultural development and trade issues, and to draw lessons for up-scaling and out-scaling. Together with its partners, NSF3 will review and synthesise policy research results in suitable formats for use by policymakers. In so doing, we will facilitate linkages between policy research and policymakers, integrate the outcomes of policy and market analysis into the national and regional CAADP Compact processes, facilitate the alignment of national policies with regional priorities, and facilitate alignment of commodity-specific policies into national and regional policies and strategies. We will also cooperate with regional and international institutions (e.g. the Food, Agriculture and Natural Resource Policy Analysis Network [FANRPAN], the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation [CTA], the European Centre for Development Policy Management [ECDPM], the Foundation for Democracy in Africa [FDA]) and other CAADP Lead Pillar Institutions to enhance Africa's capacity for policy and trade negotiations in order to improve the performance of African agricultural markets. And finally, we will liaise with African universities and other tertiary institutions to incorporate policy and market analysis in their curricula.

### **Thematic Area 1: Support to evidence-based policy formulation and decision-making**

NSF3 will promote the development of tools and approaches to support policy change processes by undertaking the following:

- *Facilitate the development of policy frameworks and guidelines* to support policy formulation processes.
- *Establish and facilitate an agricultural policy think tank* to organize constructive debates on important issues facing African agriculture. This will provide intellectual support to policy makers for evidence-based regional policy formulation and decision-making.
- *Establish a database of national and regional agricultural and trade policy experts and institutions* to provide a single-source directory for locating knowledgeable authorities and leading institutions actively involved in a broad range of policy and trade issues, and to avail information on on-going policy analysis and research on relevant agricultural and trade issues, both domestic and foreign.

**Figure 2. Roundtable discussions during a FARA-CTA-ECDPM-FDA-ASARECA-SADC regional policy dialogue on promoting access to agricultural commodity markets in East and Southern Africa, Nairobi, Kenya.**



## Thematic Area 2: Linking policymakers with policy and market analyses results

NSF3 will address the problem of limited dissemination and use of evidence-based policy and market research results by facilitating and promoting linkages between policy makers and other end users and the outcomes of policy and market analyses. This will be done by:

- *Facilitating policy dialogue* to promote debate, enhance dialogue and facilitate interactions on regional agricultural and trade policy issues among national, regional and international experts, stakeholders and policymakers to provide technical background for the policy-making process. An annual Regional Agricultural Policy Forum (RAPFO) will be established to bring together high-calibre researchers, policy analysts, policy makers, government practitioners and other stakeholders from within and outside Africa to discuss and debate important current and emerging strategic regional agricultural and trade policy issues, draw lessons and come up with recommendations on how these issues could be addressed. The Forum will identify and bring attention to lead issues on food, agriculture, natural resources and environment.

The dialogue on these policy issues made possible through the Forum will provide a basis for building relationships and trust with policy makers that can be of value in influencing decisions on legislative priorities and funding. It will also provide fertile ground for building partnerships and alliances (south-south and north-south) for sharing of experiences and for mobilising technical and financial resources. Regional consultation workshops would facilitate policy dialogue on contentious issues such as agricultural subsidies, modern biotechnology and bio-safety, trade in genetically modified (GM) crops, and tariff and non-tariff barriers.

- *Facilitating information sharing and awareness creation* on strategic policy and market issues for regional trade and innovation. NSF3 will build on analytical work done by policy institutions such as the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), the Regional Strategic Analysis and Knowledge Support System (ReSAKSS), the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI), the Africa Rice Center and FANRPAN to synthesise and share information on strategic policy and market issues. A series of case studies will also be commissioned to document various success stories or best practices on implementation of national and regional policy interventions. Reports of these studies will be in the

**Figure 3. Dissemination of FARA's reports and policy briefs at the Agri-business Forum 2009 in Cape Town, South Africa (left), and at a biotechnology meeting at the Pontifical University Regina Apostolorum in Rome, Italy.**



public domain through the FARA website. Key messages gleaned from the studies and lessons learned will be synthesised in the form of policy briefs and disseminated for public consumption through print and electronic media sources.

- *Establishing a Ministerial Policy Briefs Series (MIPOBS)* to synthesise evidence-based information targeted at high-level policy makers (ministers) of relevant government ministries and regional economic communities. The Ministerial Policy Briefs will involve the production of short, concise and informative documents (policy briefs, fact sheets, discussion points, policy proposals, etc.) on some of the key agricultural policy challenges to provide background information and recommendations to policymakers and other stakeholders.

### **Thematic Area 3: Facilitating effective African participation in agricultural trade negotiations**

- *Facilitate African participation in meetings of WTO and standard-setting organizations.* NSF3 will collaborate with regional and international institutions such as the African Union's Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR), FANRPAN, CTA, EDCPM, FDA and the Trade Policy Center in Africa (TRAPCA) to facilitate the participation of officials from government and regional economic communities in SPS standard-setting meetings organized by WTO, IPPC, OIE and CAC. We will also organize meetings to prepare African positions on key agricultural trade issues prior to WTO, IPPC, OIE and CAC meetings.
- *Support trade negotiators with evidence-based economic, scientific and technical information.* NSF3 will work with the SROs and other stakeholders to synthesize available evidence-based economic, scientific and technical information required by trade negotiators to support their positions. It will also develop guidelines for effective trade negotiations to assist Government Ministry Officials, African representatives in Foreign Missions including those in international standard setting institutions, and public and private sector trade negotiators.

### **Thematic Area 4: Raising the profile of policy and market analysis in curricular for agricultural education**

NSF3 will collaborate with SROs to institutionalise policy analysis and market research into the curricula of agricultural education institutions. With technical support from FARA's projects

**Figure 4. Discussions on agricultural trade-related issues during Agri-business Forum 2009 in Cape Town, South Africa.**



on Strengthening Capacity for Agricultural Research and Development in Africa (SCARDA), Regional Agricultural Information and Learning Systems (RAILS), Sub-Saharan Africa Challenge Program (SSA-CP), Strengthening capacity for safe biotechnology management in sub-Saharan Africa (SABIMA) and Platform for African-European Partnership on Agricultural Research for Development (PAEPARD), NSF3 will support the SROs to work with the deans of the faculties of agriculture to develop training materials that will be included in the syllabi of these institutions.

### **Thematic Area 5: Supporting gender-sensitive policy options to enhance benefits from multi-stakeholder approaches**



**Figure 5. Marketing grains in a local market.**

Because FARA recognises that women are at the centre of smallholder agricultural development in Africa, policies must be gender-sensitive and incorporate the concerns of women and disadvantaged groups. NSF3's focus will therefore be to ensure that national and regional agricultural policy options take cognizance of the gender equity efforts of national governments and regional institutions. This will be done by developing the tools and instruments necessary for involving women in policy formulation and integrating women's issues in national and regional policies and strategies. In addition to developing guidelines, benchmarks, indicators and strategic considerations for mainstreaming gender in national and regional policy formulation processes, gender analysis will also be undertaken. These will provide the tools for creating an enabling environment for women to access, own, control, use and manage land as well as access credit for productive use. The tools will commit national governments to a number of guiding principles intended to actively promote the principle of gender equity in innovation systems and value chain approaches. They will also articulate the mechanisms for ensuring women's full and equal participation in policy formulation and decision making.

### **Thematic Area 6: Promoting policies to harness modern biotechnology**

New technologies are needed to support traditional practices to meet the food production and poverty reduction challenges. One of these technologies identified by participants at the NSF3 stakeholder consultation in October 2008 is modern biotechnology. The 8<sup>th</sup> AU Summit in January 2007 called for the building of Africa's capacity in modern biotechnology, which has seen phenomenal growth over the past 12 years, impacting positively on the economies of producers such as the US, Argentina, Canada, Brazil, India and China. GM crops are currently cultivated in 23 countries, including South Africa. Because Africa has not made much progress in the application of modern biotechnology, the AU has called for the necessary capacity to be built to enable Africa to make judicious use of modern biotechnology.

NSF3's role in strengthening biotechnology on the African continent will be to facilitate interactions between various actors with a view to promoting harmonised, efficient and safe use of biotechnology for smallholder development. NSF3 will also promote the necessary policy dialogues to stimulate local investment in biotechnology to address food security and rural poverty. Key areas of intervention will include:

- Creating awareness at highest policy level on issues of biotechnology and implications for African countries
- Soliciting national commitment to biotechnology and bio-safety capacity development, including the creation of the needed legal frameworks, training, and research and technology transfer/negotiations
- Supporting African countries to make effective contributions to global fora in biotechnology and bio-safety such as the COP-MOP meetings
- Assisting African countries to gain understanding of the trade dimensions of modern biotech products in WTO trade negotiations
- Strengthening capacity for safe biotechnology management under the SABIMA project
- Ensuring that African countries gain understanding on WTO and the Cartagena Protocol on Bio-safety decisions and their impact on global trade promoting the development of the necessary south-south and north-south partnerships in biotechnology capacity strengthening



**Figure 6. Potential and benefits of modern biotechnology in Africa.**



## 4. Implementation of the Strategy

### 4.1 Institutional arrangements, roles and responsibilities

This strategy outlines the role of NSF3 within FARA's overall Strategic Plan. Its implementation will therefore be guided by the principles that underpin both FARA's Strategic Plan and its MTO. The guiding principle is that of *subsidiarity*. This means allowing the SROs, NARS, policy institutions, advanced research institutes, universities and other partners to apply their comparative advantages to best conduct the interventions outlined in this strategy. Policy analysis and market research will, for example, be undertaken by these institutions based on their capacities and expertise (comparative advantage), but will be promoted and facilitated by NSF3 in order to maximise their collective utility and impact as well as build on the resulting synergies. NSF3 will promote linkages, networking and knowledge sharing on agricultural and trade policy issues among national, regional and global (GFAR) policy makers, farmers and farmer organizations, CSOs, public and private sector players, regional economic communities (RECs), among others. It will also facilitate links between policy and market research and policymakers and other end users (Table 3).

The interventions identified for this strategy are not only in congruence with those of the other FARA NSFs, but align with the objectives of FARA's main stakeholders and collaborators as defined in their respective Strategic Plans (Table 4). It is therefore logical that they take the lead in the field implementation of these activities within their respective sub-regions as these would enable them to better serve the interests of their respective stakeholders. For example, ASARECA's Policy Analysis and Advocacy Programme (PAAP) identifies four themes, all of which align with and are supported by the interventions proposed in this strategy:

- Analysis of trends
- Rationalisation, harmonisation and advocacy of policies and legislation
- Analysis of policy issues for natural resource management
- Options and opportunities for small-scale agricultural growth

FARA will work with its partners to develop the relevant policy frameworks and guidelines to support policy formulation processes; facilitate meetings and workshops to promote dialogue, debates and consultations on key agricultural trade policy issues; prepare and share documentary evidence for informed policy decision-making; and facilitate effective participation in trade negotiations, while ensuring that gender-sensitive policy and market analysis are institutionalized in the curricula of agricultural education institutions.

**Table 3: Roles and responsibilities of NSF3 and other implementing partners**

Intervention	Institution						Regional policy institutions
	FARA-NSF3	SROs	NARS	CGIAR	ARIs	RECs	
Development of policy frameworks and guidelines	√	√					√
Facilitation of policy dialogues, regional consultations	√	√				√	
Analyses of regional agricultural policy and trade issues		√	√	√	√		√
Case studies and documentation of best practices		√	√	√	√		√
Synthesise results of policy and market analyses into policy briefs	√	√	√	√	√		√
Dissemination of policy and market analyses results	√		√				√
Strengthen capacity for trade negotiations						√	√
Promote participation in meetings of WTO and standard setting organizations	√	√				√	√
Coordinate Ministerial Policy Brief Series	√						
Mainstreaming of policy and market analyses into curricula of agriculture education institutions		√					√
Promote policies to harness modern biotechnology and bio-safety	√	√				√	√
Coordinate agricultural policy think tank	√	√				√	√

**Table 4. Alignment of NSF3 interventions with those of FARA's stakeholders/ collaborators (SCs)**

FARA SC	Policy-related programme of SC	SC objectives	NSF3 alignment to SC objective (common to all)	Output/result
ASARECA	PAAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysis of trends</li> <li>• Rationalisation, harmonisation and advocacy of policies and legislation</li> <li>• Analysis of policy issues for natural resource management</li> <li>• Options and opportunities for small-scale agricultural growth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote development of policy frameworks and guidelines (policy instruments)</li> <li>• Facilitate evidence-based policy analysis of key issues (e.g. subsidies, tariff and non-tariff barriers, modern biotechnology, SPS, etc)</li> </ul>	Policy options for enhancing performance of agricultural sector in the ASARECA sub-region
CORAF/ WECARD	Technical and Policy Research Programme – a new paradigm (Policy, markets, trade, institutions and socio-economics research)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting the demand of policy makers for appropriate policy research through effective dialogue and relationships</li> <li>• Identify, develop and establish policy-related partnerships that support policy, trade, markets, institutions and socio-economic issues</li> <li>• Identify key policy and decision-makers in sub-region and create effective working partnerships between them and the programmes and any other relevant policy research constituents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitate policy platforms for dialogue, advocacy, awareness, consultations, etc</li> <li>• Prepare gender-sensitive guidelines, benchmarks and indicators</li> <li>• Prepare policy briefs to inform policy change processes</li> <li>• Develop database of national and regional agricultural and trade policy experts and institutions</li> </ul>	Strategic decision-making options for policy, institutions and markets in the CORAF/ WECARD sub-region
SADC-FANR	Agricultural and Natural Resources Research and Development Unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop, promote and harmonise gender-sensitive agricultural policies, strategies and programs</li> <li>• Ensure sustainable food security policies and programmes</li> <li>• Develop, promote and harmonize biodiversity, SPS crop and animal husbandry policies</li> <li>• Develop, promote and harmonise policies and programs aimed at effective and sustainable utilisation of natural resources</li> <li>• Develop and harmonise sound environmental management policies</li> <li>• Promote trade in agricultural products</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthen capacity of policy makers in trade and environmental treaty negotiations skills</li> <li>• Strengthen capacity of agricultural education and training institutions in policy analysis and market research in SADC sub-region</li> </ul>	Ensure sustainable food security, environmental and natural resource management through appropriate agricultural, environmental and natural resource policies in the SADC sub-region

FARA SC	Policy-related programme of SC	SC objectives	NSF3 alignment to SC objective (common to all)	Output/result
FANRPAN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capacity building for policy development</li> <li>• Markets and trade</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote, influence and facilitate quality agricultural and natural resources policy research, analysis and dialogue at the national, regional and global levels</li> <li>• Conduct research in priority policy areas in order to provide a basis for policy reform</li> <li>• Strengthen capacity for both policy research and policy deliberations at regional and node levels through partnerships and training that link research-based contributions to policy advocacy</li> <li>• Engage in both regional and national policy-making processes through policy advocacy</li> </ul>		<p>Deliver high-quality policy-relevant economic and social analysis that can be used by national policy makers, donors, private sector and other stakeholder groups to aid in formulating agricultural, food and natural resources policies</p>



## 5. Monitoring and Evaluation

FARA's M&E Unit has recently developed a framework to track progress towards the achievement of results and outputs by each NSF as defined by key performance indicators. The framework provides guidelines and procedures for the collection and analysis of data and information on the indicators. For each of the interventions proposed in this strategy, a number of key indicators and progress markers have been identified (Table 2). FARA's M&E framework will be used to track progress toward achievement of the results using these indicators. The alignment of NSF3 activities to those of the SROs and other sub-regional policy institutions also allows the approaches and methodologies used by these stakeholders to monitor and evaluate implementation of their activities to apply to those of NSF3 that will be implemented through them. Continuous monitoring together with mid-term evaluation using the M&E system will provide information, data and analysis that will be used to amend, as necessary, this strategy in the light of what has worked and what has not worked, to keep in line with the changing implementation environment.



## 6. Funding and Human Resources

The interventions identified in this strategy constitute NSF3's essential continuing functions. Funding for these interventions will come from FARA's core funding through the Multi-Donor Trust Fund (MDTF). There are also complementary time-bound initiatives. Funding for these will be secured through specific projects. Resource mobilisation efforts will continue in order to fund the non-MDTF activities.

Currently, NSF3 has a staff complement of five:

- Director
- Policy and Markets Analyst
- Project Coordinator for the SABIMA project
- Project Assistant for SABIMA
- Senior Bilingual Secretary



# Acronyms and Abbreviations

ARD	agricultural research and development
ASARECA	Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in East and Central Africa
AU-IBAR	African Union – Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources
AUC	African Union Commission
CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme
CORAF/WECARD	Conseil Ouest et Centre Africain pour la Recherche et le Développement Agricoles / West African Council for Agricultural Research and Development
CSO	civil society organization
CTA	Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation
ECDPM	European Centre for Development Policy Management
EPA	economic partnership agreement
FAAP	Framework for African Agricultural Productivity
FANRPAN	Food, Agriculture and Natural Resource Policy Analysis Network
FARA	Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa
FDA	Foundation for Democracy in Africa
GMO	genetically modified
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
ILRI	International Livestock Research Institute
MDTF	Multi-Donor Trust Fund
MIPOBS	Ministerial Policy Briefs Series
MTOP	Medium-Term Operational Plan
NARS	national agricultural research system
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa’s Development
NSF	Networking Support Function
PAAP	Policy Analysis and Advocacy Programme

PAEPARD	Platform for African-European Partnership on Agricultural Research for Development
RAILS	Regional Agricultural Information and Learning System
RAPFO	Regional Agricultural Policy Forum
RAPOBS	Regional Agricultural Policy Briefs Series
REC	regional economic community
ReSAKSS	Regional Strategic Analysis and Knowledge Support System
SABIMA	Strengthening Capacity for Safe Biotechnology Management
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
SADC-FANR	SADC-Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Directorate
SCARDA	Strengthening Capacity for Agricultural Research and Development in Africa
SPS	sanitary and phyto-sanitary
SRO	sub-regional research organization
SSA CP	Sub-Saharan Africa Challenge Programme
TRAPCA	Trade Policy Center in Africa
WTO	World Trade Organization



## About FARA

FARA is the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa, the apex organization bringing together and forming coalitions of major stakeholders in agricultural research and development in Africa.

FARA is the technical arm of the African Union Commission (AUC) on rural economy and agricultural development and the lead agency of the AU's New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) to implement the fourth pillar of the Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP), involving agricultural research, technology dissemination and uptake.

**FARA's vision:** reduced poverty in Africa as a result of sustainable broad-based agricultural growth and improved livelihoods, particularly of smallholder and pastoral enterprises.

**FARA's mission:** creation of broad-based improvements in agricultural productivity, competitiveness and markets by supporting Africa's sub-regional organizations (SROs) in strengthening capacity for agricultural innovation.

**FARA's Value Proposition:** to provide a strategic platform to foster continental and global networking that reinforces the capacities of Africa's national agricultural research systems and sub-regional organizations.

FARA will make this contribution by achieving its *Specific Objective* of sustainable improvements to broad-based agricultural productivity, competitiveness and markets.

Key to this is the delivery of five *Results*, which respond to the priorities expressed by FARA's clients. These are:

1. Establishment of appropriate institutional and organizational arrangements for regional agricultural research and development.
2. Broad-based stakeholders provided access to the knowledge and technology necessary for innovation.
3. Development of strategic decision-making options for policy, institutions and markets.
4. Development of human and institutional capacity for innovation.
5. Support provided for platforms for agricultural innovation.

FARA will deliver these results by supporting the SROs through five Networking Support Functions (NSFs):

NSF1. Advocacy and resource mobilisation

NSF 2. Access to knowledge and technologies

NSF 3. Regional policies and markets

NSF 4. Capacity strengthening

NSF 5. Partnerships and strategic alliances

FARA's donors are the African Development Bank (AfDB), the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the Centre de Coopération Internationale en Recherche Agronomique pour le Développement (CIRAD), the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA), the Department for International Development (DFID), the European Commission (EC), the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), the Syngenta Foundation, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), the World Bank and the Governments of Italy and the Netherlands.



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