

**BUILDING A REGIONAL APPROACH FOR
BIOTECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA**

THE FARA APPROACH

BACKGROUND TO THE FARA STRATEGY

- INDICATIONS ARE THAT AFRICA REMAINS IN THE GRIPE OF POVERTY AND MALNUTRITION
- POPULATION DYNAMICS REMAIN A CHALLENGE
- EXCEPT FOR A FEW COUNTRIES THE SITUATION IS TAKING A TURN FOR THE WORSE.

FARA'S SYNTHETIC PHILOSOPHY

- FOR MOST AFRICAN COUNTRIES AGRICULTURE REMAINS THE KEY SECTOR TO LIVELIHOOD
- INCREASED AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY WILL REQUIRE INVESTMENTS IN TECHNO-INNOVATIONS ALONGSIDE OTHER ISSUES
- EXAMPLES ELSEWHERE INDICATE THAT THE RETURN ON INVESTMENT IN AGRICULTURAL TECHNOLOGY IS WORTHWHILE

FARA'S VISION/MISSION

■ FORGING STRATEGIC ALLIANCES

- public

- private

- ngo's/traditional opponents

- governments/international links

- special mediation (the case of zambia)

- “to enable Africa to achieve at least 6% annual growth rate in agriculture by the year 2020 through enhanced research and value adding to its products, consequently increasing food security, poverty alleviation and economic growth in a

FARA'S VISION/MISSION' CONTD.

- IN SYNCH WITH SRO'S/NARS
- “to promote regional economic growth by developing, introducing and disseminating agricultural technologies which both create markets and respond to prevailing and future economic opportunities for new technologies, as well as maintaining the long-term sustainability of the agricultural resource base” (ASARECA)

FARA'S VISION/MISSION' CONTD.

- “by the year 2020, to have made significant contribution to poverty alleviation and sustainable growth, through agricultural research and training in the SADC region” (SACCAR)
- “to facilitate the exchange of information and experiences, promote partnerships at the sub regional level, identify and formulate common research themes, identify innovative research projects” (CORAF/WECARD).

FARA'S VISION/MISSION' CONTD.

- FARA will serve as a *catalyst* for agricultural development by enhancing and implementing new ways of doing agricultural research in Africa
- Emphasis on economic growth
- FARA is not a research implementing body

THE TASKS AHEAD

1. Advocacy of the role of agricultural research
2. Promotion of functional partnerships and strategic alliances
3. *Stimulating the development and dissemination of new technologies and methodologies*
4. Accelerating sharing and exchange of information
5. Promotion of capacity building

TECHNOLOGY FOR DEVELOPMENT

- “countries that are unable to access, generate and utilize relevant scientific knowledge will fall even further behind in the development process.”
- “Modern technology therefore should be seen as part of a broader effort to help the poor solve their problems more efficiently and more cost-effectively”

TECHNOLOGY FOR DEVELOPMENT' CONTD.

- ⑩ Establish the state of knowledge on biotechnology in various regions/countries
- ⑩ Establish needs versus technological applications
- ⑩ The state of biosafety regulations/ phytosanitary structures
- ⑩ Capacity for handling intellectual property rights
- ⑩ Source of knowledge and information dissemination within countries and sub-regions.

CONCLUSION.

- There are some outstanding technologies that Africa must fast-track in order to accelerate development. These include biotechnology, information/communication technology, and geographic information systems.
- regional coverage would be more efficient in terms of e.g. biosafety regulations than a country-specific regulation framework in selected countries.