



## **The Principal Resolutions of the 4<sup>th</sup> FARA General Assembly Sandton Convention Centre, Johannesburg 10<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> June 2007**

The 4<sup>th</sup> FARA General Assembly drew together over 670 delegates, including 10 Ministers and Deputy Ministers of Agriculture, from all over Africa, delegates from Africa's development partners and non-African collaborating institutions to discuss different themes associated with the theme of the assembly, which is **Productivity and competitiveness of African agriculture in a global economy.**

The discussions in plenary led to the following summary recommendations:

### **Sub Theme 1. Identifying and exploiting Africa's competitive advantages in agricultural production, agri-business and related industries**

Theme 1: Summary recommendation:

FARA stakeholders, should promote intra-African trade in food staples and international trade in high-value products underpinned by creating commercial environments that will engage the energy of the private sector, jointly with the public sector, to produce tools to help smallholders invest in change and manage risk.

### **Sub Theme 2. Developing Africa's capacity for agricultural commerce and innovation**

Theme 2: Summary recommendation:

FARA stakeholders, must develop endogenous innovation capacity, including the ability to identify and adapt potential foreign innovations, and to take full advantage of Africa's traditions of extended families and human interaction with renewed confidence and greater reliance on home-grown solutions and products, underpinned by policy and financing environments that support small and medium enterprises.

### **Sub Theme 3. Learning from past success of research in influencing agricultural policies**

Theme 3: Summary recommendation:

FARA stakeholders, should aim to maximise the impact of agricultural research and development by providing policy makers with evidenced-based pragmatic options that have preferably been developed jointly by researchers and policy makers and in alliances with policy influencers, including the media.

### **Sub Theme 4. The status of the five requirements for turning Africa's agriculture around**

Theme 4: Summary recommendation:

FARA stakeholders, endorse FARA's integrated set of networking support functions as a sound basis for continent-wide contributions to the work of the SROs, provided that they are implementing in accordance with the subsidiarity principle and organised to achieve impact.

### **Sub Theme 5. Positioning agricultural research institutions to be fully effective**

Theme 5: Summary recommendation:

FARA stakeholders; should advocate and facilitate strengthening research management as well as strengthening agricultural sciences and fortifying the capacity of actors across whole value chains so that they can participate effectively in innovation systems approaches and that these efforts should be supported by sustainable funding mechanisms, such as endowments.

### **Sub Theme 6. Learning lessons from responding to risks and disasters**

Theme 6: Summary recommendation:

FARA stakeholders, must develop adequate veterinary capacity and livestock disease surveillance, epidemiological and response systems and interlink them with the human disease counterparts to enable nations to cope with disease outbreaks, especially of zoonotic diseases, and to comply with international health and safety standards. Improved community-based responses are also required. to ameliorate the risks of desertification, land degradation and climate change.

### **Sub Theme 7. Africa's capacity to build human and institutional capacity for the agricultural industry**

Theme 7: Summary recommendation:

FARA stakeholders, should address the broad and systemic issues in capacity strengthening so as to focus on causes rather than symptoms and also to assure that the capacity strengthening initiatives reflect established demands and that they redresses gender and age imbalances and inequities. In doing so they should take advantage of ICTs and existing capacity strengthening and technology mediated learning and information and learning networks. That must be underpinned with African investment and the creation of conducive environments for trainers, researchers, change agents and the private sector to work together effectively within strategies for harnessing of African capacities.

### **Sub Theme 8. Mobilising civil society for agricultural development**

Theme 8: Summary recommendation:

FARA stakeholders, should recognise that sub Saharan and North African civil society organizations are comprised of very diverse institutions and attempting to impose values is not helpful. CSO organisations must be supported and strengthened to fulfil their missions in the context of shared, rather than imposed, values based on mutual objectives and respect for each others perspectives and motives rather than on artificial organisational conveniences.

### **Sub Theme 9. Peri-urban agriculture**

Sub Theme 9. Summary recommendation:

FARA stakeholders, should regard research on peri-urban agriculture as a mainstream activity but one that requires new approaches to research and dissemination of outcomes including exploitation of the diversity of African horticultural crops, the demands of local markets and the African diaspora, the risks associated with horticultural production and not forgetting the potential for development inherent in the diversity of livestock, fish, trees, insects and microbes.

### **Sub Theme 10. Capturing indigenous knowledge for development while respecting intellectual property rights, ethical and moral integrity and biosafety**

Sub-theme 10: Summary recommendation:

FARA stakeholders, should mainstream indigenous science into agricultural research and development and make the necessary personal and institutional adjustments that are required to enable communication and joint learning between practitioners of the different sciences. The intellectual property of indigenous communities should be afforded enforceable legal protection against external misappropriation and exploitation of their intellectual properties and to assure their right to use and to share biodiversity amongst their communities and in their domains.

**Overall Summary:**

The resolutions from the different sub-themes will inform the overall conclusions of the Assembly which will be formulated once we have had time to distil the proceedings of what has been a very intensive, participatory and productive General Assembly.

Thank you for your attention