

“Seize the Moment” - Securing Africa’s Rise through Agricultural Transformation

Introduction and overview

Foundations have been laid for a renaissance in African agriculture, one powered by the enormous progress evidenced in farmers who are gaining more options in the seeds they plant, fertilisers they use and markets available for their produce. As a result, the region is witnessing major advancements in agribusinesses and on millions of small family farms that are the region’s main source of food, employment and income. This change can be attributed to the leadership provided by Heads of States and Government who adopted a remarkably ambitious set of concrete goals to be reached by 2025, in the ‘*Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods*’. Subsequent to this, national governments have put in place agricultural strategies, policies, systems and programmes that promise to significantly transform the structure of the region’s economy.

While a lot of progress has been made, a lot more is still required. With over 70% of the population (more than 80% of whom are small holder farmers), reliant on agriculture witnessing a low productivity growth rate averaging 1% per year, this change is taking place at a critical moment. A moment when a robust policy framework, conducive enabling environment and **more investment is required to increase productivity and mitigate the challenges the region faces and seize existing opportunities including:** rapidly growing urban populations expected to reach 1.4 billion by 2030; growing food market projected to grow to US\$1 trillion by 2030

from US\$300 billion; 60% unemployment rate among working-age populations leading to high migration in search for employment; and, the daunting problems of climate variation and change that is greatly affecting food supply whose demand is expected to raise by 2.9% per year from now to 2050. The need to avert an imminent crisis by speeding and scaling up progress witnessed is thus urgent; neither population growth nor climate change will present insurmountable challenges to agricultural development if Africa seizes the moment it now has.

Prioritized investment in and improvement of the agricultural sector not only bolsters food security and nutrition but also offers the greatest potential for increasing broad-based inclusive growth that would reduce poverty and inequality and increase resilience to economic shocks in Sub Saharan Africa. It is estimated that agriculture development is 11 times more effective in reducing poverty than development in any other sector (World Development report, 2008). Stronger institutions are required to drive this transformative agricultural agenda at all levels; as well as, supportive policy environments that drive investment at the country level, from the public and private sector as well as development partners. All of these are essential to achieving the goals contained in National Agricultural and Food Security Investment Plans (NAFSIP), and in alignment with the New Vision of CAADP which underscores the leadership commitment to grow agriculture made in the Malabo Declaration, the African Union’s

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Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

It is against this background that African Governments together with the African Union Commission (AUC), NEPAD, African Development Bank (AfDB), and the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) on April 12, 2016 launched the Seize the Moment Campaign.

To secure political and financial commitments needed to catalyse action and partner engagements towards the realisation of the provisions of the Malabo Declaration, and to rally farmers, private sector, civil society organisations, development partners and financial institutions to take advantage of the huge opportunities that it presents.

This campaign is a *Moment* to unite key stakeholders in the agricultural landscape around a common agenda of stimulating the acceleration of agriculture-led structural transformation at country and regional level that would ensure better lives for millions of farmers and families especially women and the youth. The campaign aims to build on and advance the African CAADP agenda by supporting countries to expedite action, catalyze investment and strengthen accountability and coordination. There is not a moment to lose.

The campaign was launched at the CAADP Partner Platform meetings in Accra on April 12th. The event was officially presided over by H.E. Rhoda Peace Tumusiime, AU Commissioner for the Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture and Dr. Ibrahim Assane Mayaki, CEO of NEPAD, and it was co-hosted by campaign leaders Dr. Agnes Kalibata, President of the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) and Dr. Benedict Kanu, representing President Akinwumi Adesina of the African Development Bank.

Campaign summary

Campaign Goal

To bring together the most prominent actors in African agriculture to speak in a common voice about the needs for the sector and advance public, political and financial commitments needed to drive a sustainable and inclusive agricultural transformation.

Campaign Rationale/ why Seize the Moment?

Agriculture is an urgent, high priority sector whose improvement will not only bolster food security and nutrition but also offers the greatest potential for an inclusive economic growth and development.

While significant progress has been made in sector growth and development, gains can be lost if there is a slackening in the momentum needed to build a robust policy framework, ensure a conducive enabling environment and catalyse investment in all countries to increase productivity and build resilience to risks faced.

Empowering farmers, and especially vulnerable under-resourced small holders - 80% all farmers on the continent, to achieve their aspirations will ultimately lead to economic growth, development and prosperity of the entire continent. As a continent, we cannot afford to invest in agriculture in the same way and pace we have been; a critical feature of the Malabo Declaration is that it sets a new ambition and compels us to make a leap. For sustained transformation, we need a collective commitment to accelerate results on the ground – *the time to do so is now.*

Campaign Objectives

To build on and advance countries CAADP agenda through:

1. Optimizing in-country coordination and driving an inclusive implementation process at country level;
2. Reviewing National Agriculture and Food Security Investment Plans (NAFSIP) and identifying priority programmes;

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3. Advancing the policy architecture and reforms needed to develop an inclusive agriculture system;
4. Securing a multi-year spending plan with African Ministries of Finance; and
5. Aligning countries on a performance scorecard built out of the CAADP results framework, to ensure a focus on results and accountability.

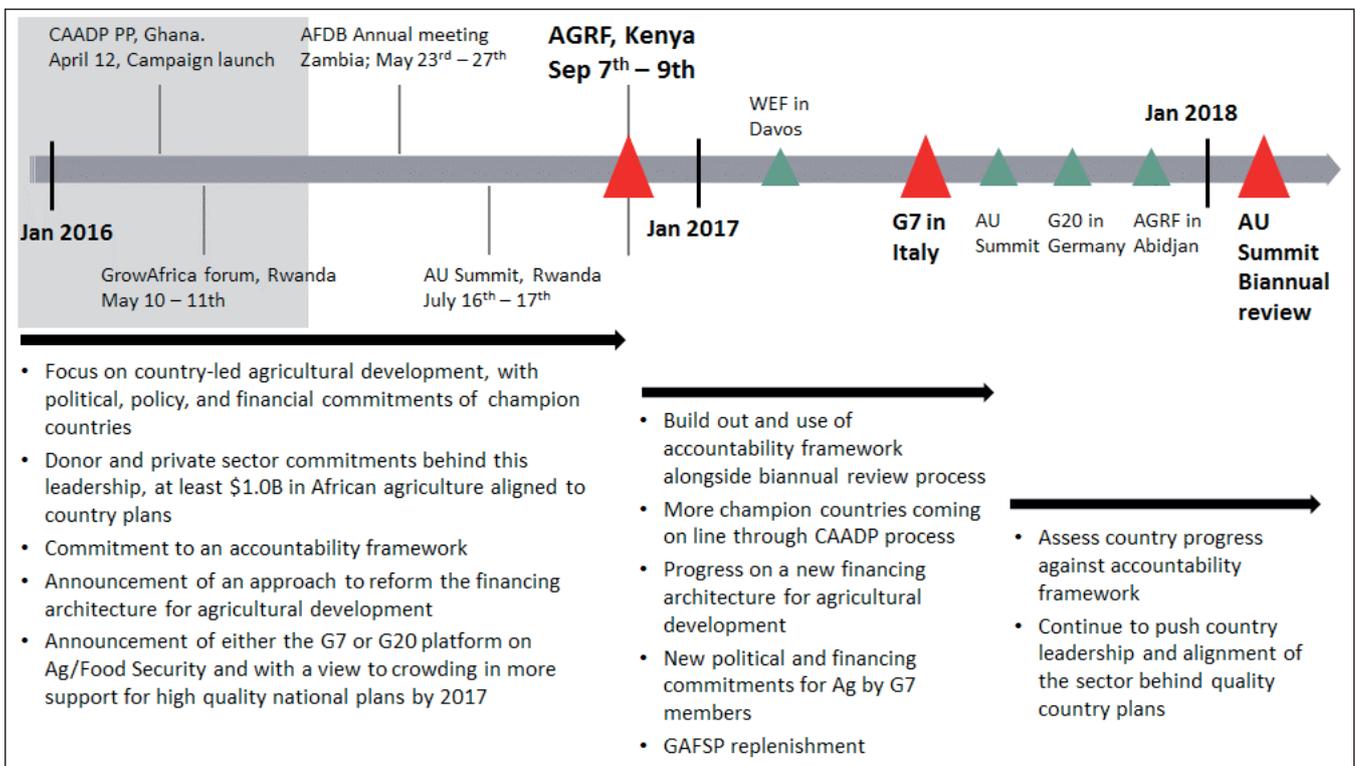
Campaign Asks

Seek the support of the national, regional and international community and ask they commit to support country champions by:

1. Providing technical support to the country efforts above;
2. Rallying donors and partners to finance and operationalise country plans; and
3. Champion and rally country implementation efforts to generate broader political will at national, regional and global levels.

Campaign Success:

- Increased commitments and engagements among key agriculture stakeholders to rally and backstop country implementation efforts;
- A number of African countries making public commitments to prioritize agriculture and support this with multi-year policy and financial commitments;
- An array of financial commitments from bilateral and multilateral donors, foundations and philanthropists, private companies and financial institutions; and,
- An improved and stable Africa-wide financing architecture for agriculture, food security and nutrition that increases the effectiveness of public spending and leverages/unlocks private-sector financing.



Key Campaign Moments

Following the campaign launch at the CAADP Partner Platform meetings in Accra, a central campaign coalition was assembled to finalise and drive the campaign narrative in a number of separate events, moments, reports and communication opportunities in the lead up to AGRF in 2016 and into the AU summit biannual review in 2018. Even while focused on results at a country level, the campaign will tie together several Africa-led regional platforms on the schedule for 2016 to advance the agenda for the entire region. AGRF will be the launchpad for the global campaign leading up to the G7 in 2017 and the AU biannual review in 2018.

Key campaign milestone moments include:

Campaign Leadership

This campaign is owned and driven by African countries Heads of State and Government and four regional institutions: the African Union Commission, AUC-DREA and NEPAD, the African Development Bank and the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA).

The campaign brings together a cross-section of national, regional and global stakeholders including: farmers groups, public and private sectors, agriculture research institutions, civil society organisations and development partners.



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