I. Introduction and Context

Country Context

CAADP is the African Union (AU)/New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) Planning and Coordination Agency’s (NPCA) vision and strategy for the development of African agriculture. African leaders have signaled their commitment to achieving growth in agricultural productivity and agricultural GDP through their launch of Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), recognizing that growth in agriculture is crucial to achieving widely shared economic growth and poverty reduction in Africa and that growth in agricultural productivity is key to achieving agricultural growth on the continent. The goal of CAADP is to help African countries reach and sustain a higher path of economic growth through agricultural-led development that reduces hunger and poverty and enables food and nutrition security and growth in exports.

Under CAADP, the AUC, NPCA and Africa’s Regional Economic Communities (RECs) work
closely with countries to encourage and guide them through processes designed to: improve agricultural planning; make agricultural policy-making more evidence-based; scale up investments in the sector; and better coordinate all stakeholders (including development partners) around agreed plans. The CAADP process is framed conceptually around four Pillars: (i) sustainable land and water management; (ii) development of infrastructure and improved access to markets; (iii) increased food supply, reduced hunger, and improved response to food crises; and (iv) dissemination and adoption of improved agricultural technologies and investment in agricultural research. Lead Pillar agencies have been established to provide technical support to countries, regions, and at the continental level within each of their respective technical areas.

Pillar IV of CAADP addresses challenges of agricultural education, research and technology uptake. The approaches advocated for these programs are articulated in the Framework for African Agricultural Productivity (FAAP). Developed through extensive consultation with Africa’s communities of practice in this area, the FAAP provides principles and recommendations for program and institutional design at every level – guidance intended to help these programs and institutions become more effective at helping farmers and other agricultural enterprises to improve agricultural productivity, profitability and sustainability. Topics addressed in the FAAP include reforming agricultural institutions and services, farmer empowerment, integration of agricultural research with farmer advisory services, training and education; increasing the scale of Africa’s agricultural productivity investments, and aligned and harmonized financial support. The FAAP emphasizes that the effectiveness of technology generation and dissemination depends on their relevance and responsiveness to farmers’ needs, and therefore provides guiding principles for the reform of agricultural advisory services (AAS) institutions to make them more client-driven for enhanced farmer empowerment.

The Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) has the mandate to lead Pillar IV activities on a continental basis. FARA adequately represents agricultural research stakeholders in the CAADP roundtables and post-compact CAADP processes. However, given that FARA’s core competencies are more research-oriented rather than AAS, stakeholders debated whether to attempt to establish this competency at FARA or delegate responsibility for this topic to a stand-alone institution dedicated to AAS. AAS stakeholder representatives (government, farmer organizations, NGOs, academia, development partners) worked with FARA to form the African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (AFAAS) as a platform for sharing information, lessons, tools and approaches for efficient and effective AAS delivery and to provide a mechanism for supporting and coordinating the development of AAS within the CAADP framework.

5. AFAAS has been delegated as the continental lead on the delivery and development of AAS, formalized through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between FARA and AFAAS in 2008. FARA is fully committed to AFAAS and its mandate, and recognizes its importance as a strategic partner in applying FAAP principles and making agricultural research more effective. There is consensus between stakeholders that AFAAS will collaborate with FARA, the sub-regional research organizations and with TEAM-Africa on meeting the goals of CAADP and, in particular, those of Pillar IV.

**Sectoral and Institutional Context**

In the case of Africa it is widely accepted that agricultural research, extension and education should be essential elements in any program to increase agricultural productivity. While agricultural output in Africa has almost doubled over the past forty years, this been mainly accounted for by an increase in area while total factor productivity has played a secondary role. In summary, growth has
increased but productivity lags. The bulk of African agriculture is small-scale, in highly diversified, rain-fed farming systems. Such systems, which are often very complex, have received scant attention resulting in little knowledge on how they function. There is a limited flow of information from the farm to the research, education and extension.

The knowledge loop is not closed. To ameliorate this situation there needs to be an integrated approach around the research, extension and education triangle with the farmer at the center. Farmer organizations need to partner with research, education and extension organizations in a participatory system, which effectively links knowledge, innovation, science, research, education and advice.

Women farmers need particular attention in this area as they play a leading role in all aspects of crop production and commercialization. This emphasis on female participation has to be dealt with throughout the triangle to ensure that there is adequate participation in all areas. Not alone has there to be support to women farmers but careers in agriculture have to be insured for professional women.

A paradigm shift is needed towards an innovation, information, knowledge and education system in place of the outmoded linear and top-down research-extension-farmer-framework that has failed in Africa. AAS must be established more widely and existing ones strengthened to facilitate the development of farmer participatory knowledge systems and to promote the value addition agro-processing and marketing that can better exploit economies of scale and encompass vertical, horizontal and lateral integration from production to markets. There is a pivotal role to be played by AFAAS to distill from the experiences of national AAS systems everywhere best practice options to guide this process.

African leaders have signalled their commitment to achieving growth in agricultural productivity and agricultural GDP through their launch of Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), recognizing that growth in agriculture is crucial to achieving widely shared economic growth and poverty reduction in Africa and growth in agricultural productivity is key to achieving agricultural growth on the continent. CAADP calls for reforming and scaling up agricultural advisory services – and its recommendations for how to achieve this are articulated in CAADP’s Framework for African Agricultural Productivity (FAAP). This document, developed by the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa, provides guidance on the types of program characteristics which would make this possible. It calls for reforms to AAS that would improve the accountability of advisory service providers to clients, put in place a demand/market-driven service provision system, decentralize service delivery and promote increased pluralism (including participation of the private sector) in the provision of services.

Designing and putting in place such reforms is an ambitious agenda. Prior to the launch of the African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (AFAAS) no institution in Africa had either the capacity or the mandate to take on this challenge. AFAAS does have this mandate – but needs a stable source of support to be able to succeed. The proposed MDTF would provide this support.

AFAAS was created based on demand from AAS actors to have a platform for sharing information, lessons, tools and approaches for efficient and effective AAS delivery and to provide a mechanism for supporting and coordinating the development of AAS within the CAADP framework. The specific objectives that in the short-to-medium term shall be the basis for generating outputs for which AFAAS shall be directly accountable are to:

- Ensure that CAADP Pillar IV sufficiently involves advisory services providers in its
strategy, workplan and implementation, contributing to making these services more effective and relevant;
• Ensure the availability and accessibility of appropriate and up-to-date knowledge on advisory services from a range of sources in Africa and worldwide;
• Strengthen the capacity of country level advisory service stakeholders in determining own priorities and in improving their advisory service systems
• Build partnerships at national, regional and international levels between agricultural advisory service and other institutions contributing to sustained growth and transformation of agriculture
• Build a continental African Organization that can sustainably support national agricultural advisory services to continuously enhance their contribution to national, regional, continental and global development objectives

Relationship to CAS
AFAAS’ objective is consistent with the Africa Region’s Agriculture Strategy and that of NEPAD’s and CAADP’s vision. The Africa Agriculture Strategy Report, “Africa’s Renewed Emphasis on Agriculture and the World Bank’s Support for it (November 2011), states that support to agricultural development will be framed around the CAADP program and its four pillars. The fourth pillar of the program deals with agricultural technology generation, uptake and agricultural education, and the Africa Region’s support focuses on building national and regional capacities in these areas, as well as capacity for information and communication technology.

AFAAS also contributes to the successful implementation of Africa’s Regional Integration Assistance Strategy (RIAS). It is aligned to the Region’s integration assistance pillars of support, particularly, that of “providing regional public goods”. RIAS envisages Bank’s assistance to regional public goods to focus on, inter alia, raising agricultural productivity (including research and knowledge-sharing on implication of climate change and mitigation strategies). AFAAS, at a continental level, will create a mechanism for sharing experiences on AAS approaches, and exchanging information on the challenges facing agricultural advisory service provision. The design of AFAAS has embedded RIASs guiding principles of engagement such as starting small and building on success, seeking champions, and open regionalism. The implementation modality will take into account political and economic grouping and sub-grouping in the region and will fit into structures that best help experience exchanges and learning processes. For this, the existing structures of SROs and/or RECS will be used to create synergies and complementarities.

II. Proposed Development Objective(s)

Proposed Development Objective(s) (From PCN)
The objective of this project is to reform and strengthen Agricultural Advisory Services (AAS) in accordance with FAAP principles towards increasing agricultural productivity and food security. The expected outcome is more effective national AAS systems that are responsive to the needs of farmers in their roles as producers, members of farmers’ organizations, consumers of agricultural inputs, and marketers of agricultural outputs. MDTF resources will also support AFAAS to strengthen its own capacity, governance and management systems.

Key Results (From PCN)
Key project performance indicators are among others: (i) Number of value chain actors utilizing improved knowledge and technologies; (ii) % of various categories of value chain actors satisfied with the quality of AAS; (iii) Number of Country Fora established; (iv) Number of CF established
and operating in accordance with FAAP guidelines; and (v) Number of partnerships effectively delivering gender-related reforms in AAS.

III. Preliminary Description

Concept Description

The project will support AFAAS, AASs and CFs to participate in implementation of CAADP Pillar IV and will support the emergence, in each member country, of a common umbrella body (called Country Fora) under which they will be able to share information, exchange information and innovate on how to improve AAS delivery. CF enable AAS actors to relate to each other within a framework of a set of agreed principles, rules and well defined roles and responsibilities. CF is also pre-requisite for the AASs to be embedded in the national agricultural innovation systems so that they are continuously aware of the factors in the system that influence their effectiveness. The CF would enable the stakeholders monitor the performance of the system and identify the issues that they need to respond to. Hence the general objectives of supporting CFs are (i) to strengthen the capacity of AAS stakeholders at country level to lead advisory service development, (ii) to proactively and responsively support the CF to mobilize, reflect and learn how to improve advisory service provision within an agricultural innovation system framework, (iii) to act as the arm of the country CAADP implementing organs linking with AAS stakeholders and, (iv) to be able to utilize (within and between countries) the human capacity that is being developed for undertaking reforms in AAS.

The project will also strengthen AFAAS innovation, communication, information and knowledge management capacity. It will assist AFAAS to design and implement KIT management strategy that enables AAS stakeholders to network with each other and to access information from external sources. This component will also support establishment of infrastructure and mechanisms for enabling AAS actors to network for purposes of, among other things, sharing experiences, finding solutions to everyday problems that they face, accessing global knowledge hubs and facilitating collective innovation in AAS delivery.

Moreover, the project shall strengthen AFAAS partnership capacity. It will achieve this by networking and forming linkages and partnerships with other organizations and initiatives that have similar mandates and interest in building AAS. It shall pursue partnership relationships in the context of CAADP with Sub-Regional Research Organizations, umbrella regional and continental organizations bringing together the various categories of actors in agricultural innovation including farmer organizations, non-government organizations, higher education institutions, information/knowledge management organizations, continental advocacy organizations, and the private sector.

Finally, the project will strengthen AFAAS governance and management systems. This will include: support for AFAAS internal Units; an updating of its governance manual, operational manual, internal systems, guidelines and constitution; establishment and strengthening of a human resource, finance and procurement units; and strengthening of the information and communications unit. The component would fund: (i) operational costs including staff salaries of the Secretariat; (ii) office equipment; (iii) convening of and participation in regional and international fora; (iv) capacity building in financial management, procurement, accounting, and human resource management; (v) rehabilitation and maintenance of the AFAAS Secretariat Headquarters; (vi) development and maintenance of an M&E system, and (vii) General Assembly and Board meeting expenses.
IV. Safeguard Policies that might apply

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V. Financing (in USD Million)

- Total Project Cost: 18.40
- Total Bank Financing: 0.00
- Total Cofinancing: 7.50
- Financing Gap: 10.90

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VI. Contact point

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