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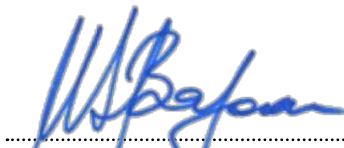
STRATEGY

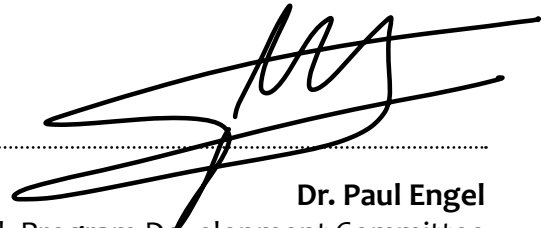## 2021-2025

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List of Acronyms

AAgWa	Africa Agriculture Watch
AATM	Africa Agriculture Trade Monitor
ACET	African Center for Economic Transformation
AERC	African Economic Research Consortium
AfCFTA	African Continental Free Trade Area
AGRODEP	African Growth and Development Policy
ARUA	African Research University Alliance
ATOR	Annual Trends and Outlook Report
AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
AUDA-NEPAD	African Union Development Agency-NEPAD
BR	Biennial Review
CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme
DCD	Department of Capacity and Deployment
DCO	Department of Communications and Outreach
DER	Department of External Relations
DKS	Department of Knowledge Systems
DOS	Department of Operational Support
DPI	Department of Policy Innovation
DPT	Department of Data Management, Digital Products and Technology
FANRPAN	Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network
GIS	Geographic Information System
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
JSR	Joint Sector Review
LAN	Local Analytical Network
MaMo	Malabo Montpellier
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NAIP	National Agriculture Investment Plan
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
PAAS	Policy Analysis and Advisory Services
REC	Regional Economic Community
ReNAPRI	Regional Network of Agricultural Policy Research Institutes
ReSAKSS	Regional Strategic Analysis and Knowledge Support System
RUFORUM	Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture
SAKSS	Strategic Analysis and Knowledge Support System
SCDS	Smart Cluster-based Database System
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals

I. Preamble

Africa has made enormous progress over the previous 20 years in improving living standards and building prosperity. The continent experienced some of the highest GDP growth rates as well as the highest agricultural growth rates in the world between 2000 and 2020. This robust growth performance represents a striking contrast with previous decades of stagnation and decline, during which living standards on the continent declined and the number of poor and hungry people swelled.

Despite optimism regarding Africa's development prospects at the time of independence, the process of transitioning from strategies focused on liberation and independence to those tacking complex economic policy and governance issues posed challenges. In addition, during the 1960s, the understanding of and evidence on the workings of economic development and transformation processes were still evolving. The economic development profession had a bias toward industrialization which was echoed in government policies, and the critical role of agriculture was just beginning to be recognized. Capacity weaknesses in newly formed nation states with no real access to relevant technical evidence, as limited as it was, to guide government action significantly undermined development efforts. Due to the usual time lag between policies and their effects, it took decades for the true cost of disadvantageous policies to become apparent.

As understanding of the economic development process improved considerably over time, aided by the large body of evidence from Asia and Latin America, and countries started to address weaknesses in economic governance and agricultural development strategies, economies across the continent began to grow again. The last two decades of solid growth are a good testimony to the critical importance of conducive, evidence-based policies. While there is no single factor behind Africa's dramatic turnaround, it is clear that improved governance and better policies have been fundamental drivers of the recovery. While some have attempted to attribute the recovery to global export booms or favorable climatic conditions, these circumstances occurred during the years of economic decline as well without triggering a growth response. African economies were able to respond positively to recent favorable conditions due to improvements in sectoral and macroeconomic policy and governance resulting from reforms undertaken in a broad group of countries during the 1980s, 1990s and 2000s. Across the continent, countries improved macroeconomic management by cutting deficits and reducing inflation; improved institutions and governance to create more accountable and responsive systems; and implemented sectoral policies that created a more conducive space for farmers and other private sector operators to invest in raising their productivity.

Perhaps most fundamentally, greater strategic focus on shared agricultural and economic development goals and more effective leadership at the continental level helped create a favorable environment for successful policies. The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) was launched in 2001 as a continent-wide shared development framework and blueprint for global partnership, followed in 2003 by the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), the main agricultural development initiative of NEPAD. Both NEPAD and CAADP emphasize the importance of evidence to inform policy design and

implementation, inclusive participation of multiple stakeholder groups at all stages of the policy process, and mutual accountability for actions and results. All of these principles contribute to the formulation of high-quality policies and help to ensure that successful policies are scaled up while unsuccessful policies are adjusted. CAADP has raised the profile of agriculture and encouraged greater policy and investment focus on the sector, with its strong linkages to overall economic growth.

The progress made by Africa over the past 20 years is unmatched by any world region. However, the challenges it continues to face are also enormous. The decades of stagnation and decline left the continent with lower standards of living and widespread hunger compared with other developing regions. Despite strong recent growth, average incomes in many countries have barely surpassed their levels of 50 years before. Most worryingly, economic growth has shown signs of faltering in recent years, and the Covid-19 pandemic has erased many of the gains made. Recovering from this unprecedented shock and not only maintaining but accelerating the growth recovery is essential in order to enhance livelihoods, create wealth and improve wellbeing across the continent.

Sustaining and accelerating progress in the face of the current challenges requires a renewed focus on the core NEPAD and CAADP principles of inclusiveness, partnership, accountability, and evidence- and outcome-based policy planning and implementation. African countries and institutions must strengthen the culture of evidence that has taken root during the past decades and continue to improve the policymaking environment. An enabling environment for evidence-based policymaking requires several mutually reinforcing key elements. First, well-informed policymaking depends upon access to timely, relevant data as well as proximity to local expertise capable of translating data into evidence in response to local needs. Second, mutual accountability platforms must exist to ensure that policies and programs are subject to broad review and that all parties are able to hold each other accountable for their commitments and actions. Mutual accountability platforms rely on high-quality data and analysis, but also help to strengthen data systems by ensuring sustained demand for evidence to inform review. Third, effective knowledge management and coordination functions must ensure that demand for evidence is channeled to local centers of expertise, and that data and knowledge products are made broadly available so that evidence is used to inform policy design and implementation and review and accountability efforts. With these elements in place, all decision makers and stakeholders have the information they need to make well-informed choices, monitor the impacts of these choices, contribute their views to planning processes, and hold other actors accountable for outcomes.

II. AKADEMIYA2063 Mission, Vision and Goals

AKADEMIYA2063 was established in January 2020 to house three major Africawide programs supporting CAADP implementation and promoting effective evidence-based development policy—the Regional Strategic Analysis and Knowledge Support System (ReSAKSS), the African Growth and Development Policy (AGRODEP) Modeling Consortium, and the Malabo Montpellier (MaMo) Panel—as well as other programs, projects and partnerships. AKADEMIYA2063's core programs and other activities aim in different ways to strengthen knowledge systems, promote evidence-based policymaking, and contribute to agricultural and economic development and ultimately to the achievement of the aspirations of the African Union's Agenda 2063—*The Africa We Want*.

Inspired by the ambitions of Agenda 2063, and grounded in the recognition of the central importance of strong knowledge and evidence systems, the vision of AKADEMIYA2063 is *an Africa with the expertise we need for the Africa we want*. This expertise must be responsive to the needs of the continent for data and analysis to ensure high-quality policy design and execution. Inclusive, evidence-informed policymaking is key to meeting the continent's development aspirations, creating wealth and changing livelihoods for the better.

AKADEMIYA2063's overall mission is to create, across Africa and led from its headquarters in Rwanda, state-of-the art technical capacities to support the efforts by the Member States of the African Union to achieve the key goals of the African Union's Agenda 2063 of transforming national economies to boost growth and prosperity. Following from its vision and mission, the main goal of AKADEMIYA2063 is to help meet Africa's needs at the continental, regional and national levels in terms of data, analytics and mutual learning for the effective implementation of Agenda 2063 and the realization of its outcomes by a critical mass of countries. AKADEMIYA2063 strives to meet its goals through programs organized under five strategic areas—policy innovation, knowledge systems, capacity creation and deployment, operational support, and data management, digital products and technology—as well as partnerships and outreach activities.

III. Theory of Change

A major factor driving the pursuit of inadequate and even harmful policies in Africa in past decades was the disconnect between science and policymaking. Policies were crafted based on leading development theories of the time, but were rarely informed by empirical evidence; once implemented, policies were often not subject to review. Thus, policies which were intuitively appealing but ultimately curtailed economic actors' incentives and opportunities persisted for years, resulting in long-lasting damage. Good policies must be informed by timely, high-quality, locally-relevant evidence and must undergo rigorous economic, social and environmental review. For this to be the case, connections between the scientific and policymaking spheres must be established and maintained. This has required the forging of missing linkages at different levels as well as institutional innovation to find a set of conduits to transmit the knowledge products and tools emanating from empirical research into policy and program planning and implementation processes.

The Theory of Change that informs AKADEMIYA2063's approach to enabling improvements in policy design and implementation, and ultimately improved outcomes, is illustrated in Figure 1. The figure demonstrates three major building blocks required to improve the quality of policymaking—strengthened capacities, effective mutual accountability processes, and well-functioning linkages between knowledge supply and knowledge demand.

Linking the supply of and demand for knowledge and evidence is at the heart of improving the quality and effectiveness of policies, and requires action along three major connection points. The first, carrier policy processes, are major national, regional or continental policy and strategy initiatives or agendas with sufficiently large catalytic potential to command attention and focus action from multiple stakeholders. CAADP, the Malabo Declaration, and Agenda 2063 are examples of carrier policy processes that serve as pointers to research and capacity development institutions to align their own portfolio of activities in order to respond to the resulting knowledge requirements. The AGRODEP program is intended to respond to knowledge needs emanating from these carrier policy processes by positioning a strong cadre of African economic modelers to contribute evidence to inform key strategy questions facing the continent.
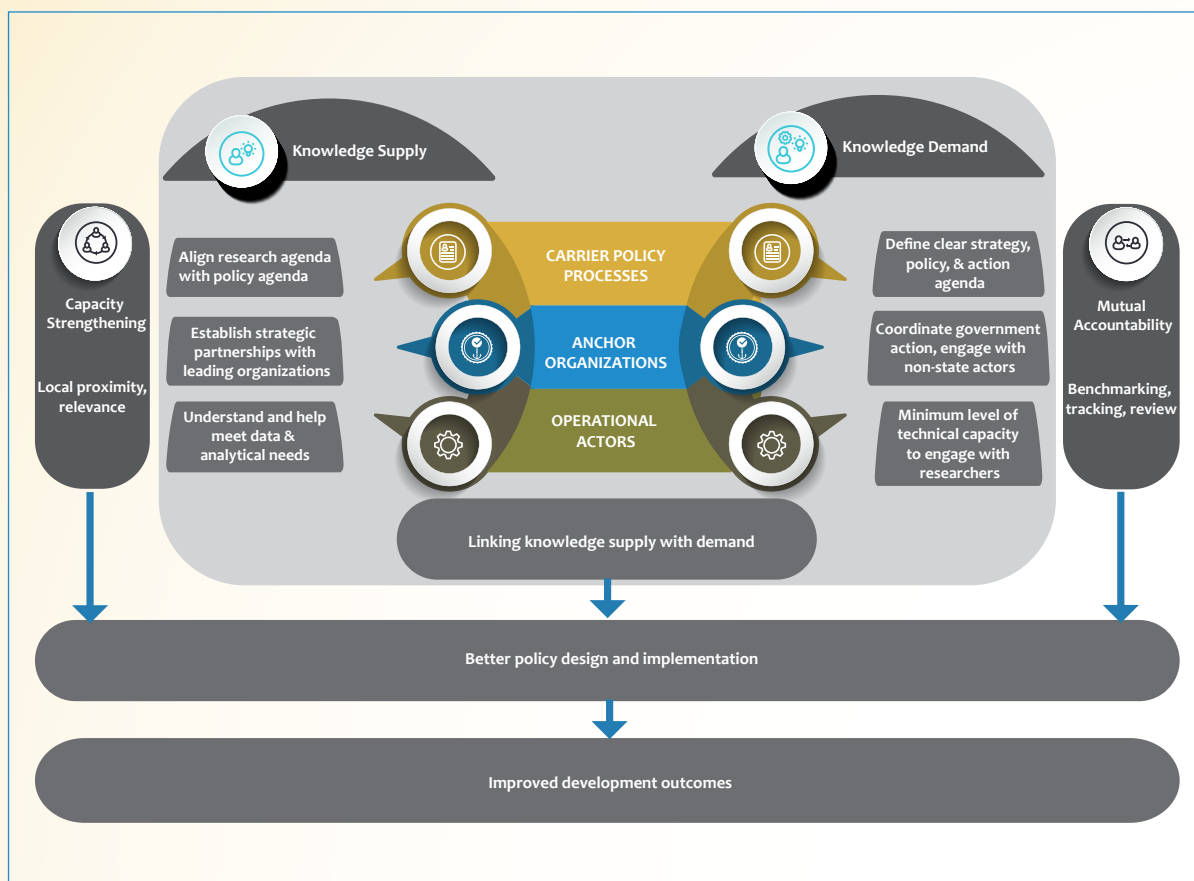
The second key connection point, anchor organizations, refers to the various institutions charged with implementing or coordinating the implementation of carrier policy processes, including non-state actor organizations, whether at the country, regional or continental levels. They play a critical role in the interaction between research and policy as intermediators for the expression of demand for and use of knowledge in decision making. It is through strategic partnerships with anchor organizations that research and other knowledge supply institutions can link up with the policy and decision making system. A key function of the ReSAKSS program is accordingly to serve as a broker between knowledge generators and knowledge users.

The third and last connection point between research and policy is that of operational actors. It is here that individual researchers and officials charged directly with designing and executing policies and programs come into contact. These relationships can be forged and maintained by country Strategic Analysis and Knowledge Support Systems (SAKSS), which have been established under the facilitation of ReSAKSS in around 20 countries. SAKSS platforms play the same knowledge brokering role at the country level, and seek to mobilize and formally connect local centers of knowledge with government agencies through the establishment of local analytical networks.

Establishing functioning links between the demand for knowledge to inform policymaking and the supply of knowledge from local centers of expertise is a key challenge and an essential step in enabling improved policy design and implementation. However, these connections must be complemented by reinforced technical capacities and by opportunities for wide and inclusive review of policies and their implementation. Capacity strengthening helps to secure the availability of high-quality local expertise to fill evidence and knowledge needs. Policymakers' proximity to local expertise ensures that policies can be informed not only by theory or by experiences in other contexts, but by timely, locally-generated evidence that increases policy relevance and legitimacy.

Figure 1. AKADEMIYA2063 Theory of Change

Source: AKADEMIYA2063

Finally, platforms for mutual accountability, the process by which multiple stakeholders hold each other accountable for their commitments and actions, are a vital element to ensure that policies are adequately vetted and that implementation is regularly reviewed. Strong mutual accountability processes ensure that multiple stakeholder groups have a voice in policy formulation, that policies are scrutinized from diverse points of view, that progress toward commitments and targets is monitored and implementing actors are held accountable for outcomes, and that unintended effects are brought to light, permitting policies to be retooled if necessary. Accountability processes also help to strengthen data and knowledge systems by ensuring continued demand both from policymakers and from other stakeholders for evidence to inform review and monitoring efforts.

Capacity strengthening efforts to ensure the availability of local expertise, linkages to connect this expertise with the knowledge and evidence needs of policymakers, and mutual accountability processes which subject policies to broad-based review together raise the quality of policy design and implementation, ultimately enabling policies to meet their goals and achieve improved outcomes.

AKADEMIYA2063 operates at the continental, regional and national levels to support capacities for evidence-based policymaking in Africa. Much of our work at the continental level seeks to align and embed our support within carrier policy processes such as CAADP. At the regional and national levels, we similarly pursue alignment with major policy and strategic agendas set by regional economic community (REC) and national leaders, as well as supporting the implementation of these policies and strategies. For example, we work extensively with RECs to support CAADP implementation at the regional level, including by informing regional investment plans, strengthening regional mutual accountability processes, and providing country-level support on behalf of regions. A significant share of our work to create the conditions for evidence to feed more effectively into decision making is carried out at the country level, through work to improve country data systems and connect national centers of knowledge with national decision makers through local analytical networks established and maintained by country SAKSS.
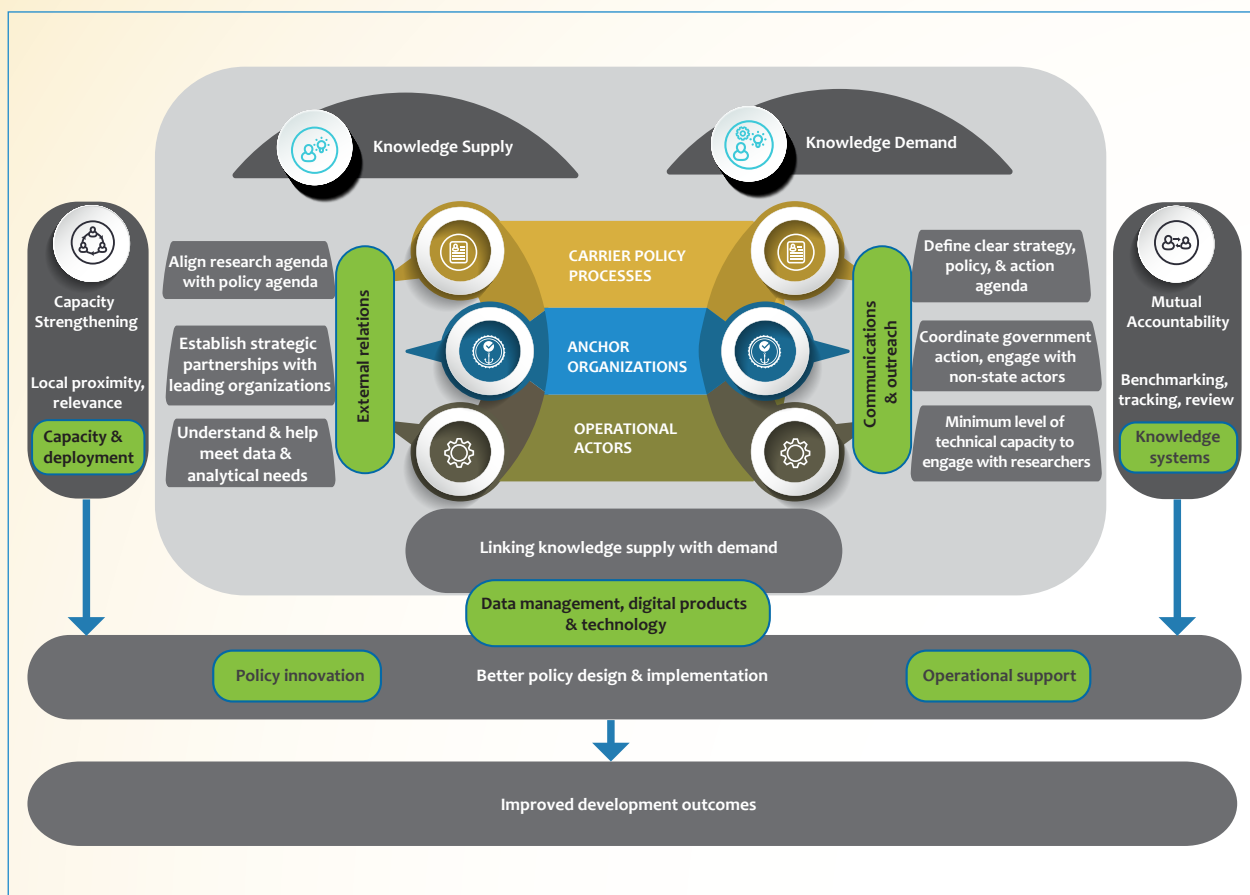
IV. AKADEMIYA2063 Strategic Areas

AKADEMIYA2063 is not an academic institution pursuing science for science's sake. Rather, our aim is not only to practice the best science with our partners and collaborators, but also to leverage that science toward practical purposes, particularly better planning and execution of development actions on the ground. This is why our strategic areas and departments do not have thematic titles (such as "trade," "nutrition," etc.), but functional names that indicate their roles in ensuring that the highest-quality knowledge and evidence contributes to improving progress on the ground. Our five major strategic areas—policy innovation, knowledge systems, capacity creation and deployment, operational support, and data management, digital products and technology—encompass actions that, in different ways, contribute to building capacities for evidence-based policymaking in support of Africa's development goals and ambitions.

Figure 2 demonstrates the positioning of AKADEMIYA2063's strategic areas within our Theory of Change. Capacity creation and deployment ensures the availability of local expertise to inform policymaking, while knowledge systems fill a critical need of functioning mutual accountability systems. Policy innovation and operational support contribute to better policy design and implementation by promoting learning and exchange at the highest levels and by providing technical guidance for better design and execution, respectively. Data management, digital products and technology increase efficiency at all levels of the evidence-based policy system through technological innovations. Work under each of the five strategic areas is carried out with attention to two major implementation modalities: external partnerships to increase our reach and effectiveness and communications and outreach to disseminate information to all partners and stakeholders. Both of these are key elements in the process of linking knowledge supply with demand for relevance and impact on the ground.

Figure 2. AKADEMIYA2063 strategic areas

Knowledge Supply | **Knowledge Demand**

Capacity Strengthening
Local proximity, relevance
Capacity & deployment

Align research agenda with policy agenda
Establish strategic partnerships with leading organizations
Understand & help meet data & analytical needs

External relations

CARRIER POLICY PROCESSES
ANCHOR ORGANIZATIONS
OPERATIONAL ACTORS

Communications & outreach

Define clear strategy, policy, & action agenda
Coordinate government action, engage with non-state actors
Minimum level of technical capacity to engage with researchers

Mutual Accountability
Benchmarking, tracking, review
Knowledge systems

Linking knowledge supply with demand

Data management, digital products & technology

Policy innovation | Better policy design & implementation | Operational support

Improved development outcomes

Source: AKADEMIYA2063

1. Policy innovation

Introduction and core programs

At the heart of AKADEMIYA2063's approach to policy innovation is the fact that much progress has been made over the past two decades in Africa in terms of economic growth, agricultural development and addressing hunger and malnutrition, not least through CAADP and the targets set under the Malabo Declaration. However, to sustain the momentum and to ensure that progress is brought to scale faster and in more countries, there is need to learn from the success and positive change visible across the continent. Supporting and scaling up continued policy innovations are key in ensuring that governments can meet the development targets under the African Union's Agenda 2063 as well as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

AKADEMIYA2063's Department for Policy Innovation (DPI) supports this vision through the Malabo Montpellier (MaMo) Panel and Forum, one of AKADEMIYA2063's flagship programs, and related activities. The MaMo Panel's approach to policy innovation is the firm belief that innovation at the highest levels of policymaking can expedite implementation and contribute more effectively to the transformation of Africa's agriculture sector and the food system overall. In this respect, the MaMo Panel seeks to guide policy choices by providing high-quality research and evidence to equip decision makers to effectively develop and implement policies and programs that benefit food systems.

The MaMo Panel is facilitated by AKADEMIYA2063, Imperial College London, and the University of Bonn, and is co-chaired by Dr. Ousmane Badiane of AKADEMIYA2063 and Professor Joachim von Braun of the University of Bonn. The Panel itself is composed of 17 leading African and international experts in the areas of agricultural development, nutrition and health. Twice a year, the Panel publishes technical reports that target leading decision makers in government as the primary audience. Two thematic areas per year are identified that are of strategic importance for attaining the targets of the African Union's Agenda 2063, the Malabo Declaration, and the SDGs. The key element of the reports is a set of 5–7 analyses of countries that are identified as leaders in specific thematic areas. The country case studies focus on what government actions—policy and institutional innovations and programmatic interventions on the ground— have led to progress and what lessons and recommendations can be drawn to enable other African governments to replicate and bring to scale these approaches.

The reports are launched at the Malabo Montpellier Forum meetings, which are held twice a year and provide a platform for African policy advisors to draw lessons and provide strategic guidance to senior government officials. The Forum promotes policy innovation by using the evidence produced by the Panel's reports to facilitate dialogue and exchange among high-level decision makers on African agriculture, nutrition and food security. The Forum brings together senior government representatives at permanent secretary level and above, development partners, private sector representatives, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) with the members of the Panel. The aim of the meetings is peer-to-peer learning across borders, with a focus on the policy and institutional innovations and programmatic interventions on the ground that have contributed to progress. The work of the MaMo Panel and Forum adds to broader efforts to ensure that investments, partnerships, programs and policies are informed by credible evidence, thus raising the quality of policy design and implementation and improving outcomes on the ground.

Policy innovation strategy and objectives

The Panel's approach to policy innovation with country analyses that focus on government action is the unique selling point of the program, and is gaining prominence as a model in other fora and discussions. The Panel has gradually built a reputation for facilitating dialogue and cross-border learning, and an external mid-term evaluation conducted in spring 2020 has shown that the Panel's approach is perceived as very useful by policymakers.

Over the coming two to three years, the MaMo Panel will intensify its engagement with policymakers. Building on the experience and work of the Panel so far, a focus for the DPI will be to start leading from the front, i.e. to be at the heart of agenda-setting as well as to strengthen the emphasis on leadership building and on implementation at country and continental levels. This two-pronged strategy will require stronger outreach and advocacy, supported by greater collaboration with other departments inside AKADEMIYA2063.

The DPI will work closely with other partners (think tanks, NGOs, the private sector, development partners, etc.) to build soft advocacy coalitions and move towards making concrete progress in thematic areas pertinent to food system transformation. In addition, the choice of outputs will be strategically aligned with the current agenda of the African Union. The production of outputs in turn will be founded on data and information generated by colleagues within AKADEMIYA2063

and other partners. The DPI and the MaMo Panel will analyze what government action was taken to make progress, and based on these findings, develop proposals for policy design and implementation. The DPI will subsequently equip other departments at AKADEMIYA2063 with those findings and in collaboration with them provide targeted, direct guidance on the ground to governments. The aim is to become within two to three years the go-to thought-leader on identifying successes (and failures) in different thematic areas and provide targeted analysis on what has worked, where, and how to ensure that pockets of progress can be brought to scale, more quickly and in more countries.

To implement the vision and objectives outlined above, the thematic workplan of the DPI—and currently hence that of the Panel—will need to become more closely aligned to the African Union (AU)'s Agenda 2063 and the AU's calendar. While all the topics covered by the Panel in the past and on the shortlist of forthcoming reports (gender, bioeconomy, post-Covid resilience, migration, youth, finance, inclusivity/social safety nets) are all relevant to attaining the Agenda 2063 targets, DPI can be more strategic in the timing of topic coverage to coincide with the implementation phase at the AU level and hence *pre-empt rather than react* to the African development agenda.

In addition to publishing reports and hosting meetings of the Forum, the DPI will engage in additional activities around communicating the Panel's work and developing a supplemental pipeline of projects and partnerships. These activities may include additional publications on lessons and good practices from development research; workshops and leadership training on policy design and implementation for technical staff within government ministries or regional entities; roundtable meetings in collaboration with the African Union Commission (AUC), regional economic communities, and other institutions around specific topics; and South-South learning programs to share experiences from regions outside of Africa. Additional partnerships will be explored with continental and regional institutions, research and scientific organizations, and major policy initiatives within and outside of Africa.

2. Knowledge systems

Introduction and core programs

Robust, inclusive and effective knowledge systems are an essential component of AKADEMIYA2063's vision of an Africa with the expertise to inform the continent's development. Knowledge systems that address the need for locally-relevant data and effectively link the demand for and supply of knowledge and evidence will ensure that Africa's own expertise is harnessed to solve its challenges and meet its development goals and aspirations. AKADEMIYA2063's approach to strengthening knowledge systems calls for using modern technologies to promote a culture of review, benchmarking and tracking, and to support this culture through innovative ways to collect and analyze data, disseminate knowledge broadly, and facilitate learning across countries and different stakeholder groups.

AKADEMIYA2063's work to strengthen knowledge systems is carried out by one of its flagship programs, the Regional Strategic Analysis and Knowledge Support System (ReSAKSS). Established in 2006, ReSAKSS supports efforts to promote evidence- and outcome-based policy planning and implementation. In particular, ReSAKSS provides data and related analytical and knowledge products to facilitate CAADP benchmarking, review, and mutual learning processes.

AKADEMIYA2063 facilitates the work of ReSAKSS in partnership with the African Union Commission (AUC), the African Union Development Agency-NEPAD (AUDA-NEPAD), and leading regional economic communities. By providing policy-relevant data and analysis, facilitating dialogue among stakeholders, monitoring progress in achieving goals, and strengthening mutual accountability processes, ReSAKSS supports the successful implementation of CAADP.

A key function of ReSAKSS is monitoring CAADP progress through its interactive website and Annual Trends and Outlook Report (ATOR). The ReSAKSS website tracks progress on over 30 core CAADP indicators, provides an interactive map and chart and country and regional profiles, and features interactive country eAtlases for mapping and analyzing data at the subnational level. As the official CAADP monitoring and evaluation report, the ATOR tracks progress on CAADP indicators and provides in-depth analyses of topics of strategic importance to the CAADP and Malabo agendas. A second key role of ReSAKSS is to enhance mutual accountability processes, notably country and regional agricultural joint sector reviews (JSRs) and the continental Biennial Review (BR) process. ReSAKSS carries out assessments which evaluate existing agricultural review processes and propose action plans for improving or establishing best-practice JSRs. Since the inaugural BR in 2018, ReSAKSS has provided wide-ranging technical and capacity strengthening support for the BR, including developing technical guidelines, tools and indicators in collaboration with the AUC and AUDA-NEPAD; training national experts; supporting national and regional efforts related to data collection, analysis, and reporting; and drawing lessons to strengthen the review process.

ReSAKSS provides additional capacity strengthening and technical support at the country level, notably by facilitating the provision of analysis to inform National Agriculture Investment Plans (NAIPs), and by establishing and strengthening national Strategic Analysis and Knowledge Support Systems (SAKSS) rooted in local capacities and infrastructure. The country SAKSS is a critical instrument for supporting the review of and dialogue on CAADP implementation as well as providing country-level data and analyses. A key role of the SAKSS is to support the establishment and operations of Local Analytical Networks (LANs). The LANs bring together centers of expertise involved in data and policy research at the national level (faculties of economics, bureaus of statistics, national agricultural research centers, planning units of key ministries, independent think tanks, etc.) to engage formally with the Ministry of Agriculture around a defined analytical agenda to support policy and program planning and implementation. ReSAKSS and national SAKSS platforms help to formalize relationships among local knowledge centers and between the knowledge centers and knowledge users to ensure the availability of evidence to inform policy design, implementation and review.

Knowledge systems strategy and objectives

The objective of AKADEMIYA2063's knowledge systems work, carried out by the Department of Knowledge Systems (DKS), is to become the Africa knowledge hub for data, analysis, and tools to facilitate benchmarking, review, and mutual learning for agricultural development and economic transformation in Africa. In addition to serving as a resource for knowledge and evidence, AKADEMIYA2063 will help countries to strengthen their knowledge systems and build enabling environments for inclusive evidence-based policy formulation, implementation, tracking and review.

Led by DKS, AKADEMIYA2063 will continue to carry out and expand key ReSAKSS functions of supporting CAADP monitoring and evaluation (M&E), enhancing CAADP mutual accountability processes, supporting the formulation of evidence-based NAIPs, and strengthening country capacities through the establishment of SAKSS platforms. In addition to continuing key M&E activities including tracking CAADP indicators, producing the ATOR and sharing its findings at the annual ReSAKSS Conference, DKS will use digital technologies to improve the accessibility and coverage of monitoring and evaluation and knowledge dissemination efforts. Working in collaboration with other AKADEMIYA2063 departments, DKS will design and maintain interactive digital platforms for data management and analysis at national and subnational levels and will redesign the ReSAKSS website, the eBiennial Review data collection tool, and the ReSAKSS eAtlases for better functionality, utilization, and visibility. Options to further digitalize data collection for CAADP M&E efforts will be explored and implemented. In addition to tracking indicators and metrics, DKS will develop tools to track and monitor policy changes, and will expand the ReSAKSS website to include a policy tracking section.

DKS and ReSAKSS will continue to supply technical assistance to support key CAADP mutual accountability processes at the country, regional and continental levels. ReSAKSS will carry out at least 10 country and 2 regional JSR assessments per year, evaluating the institutional and policy landscape and the quality of current agricultural review processes and developing action plans to improve or establish best-practice JSRs. Learning events will be organized to share the results of JSR assessments and discuss next steps to strengthen JSRs with national and regional stakeholders. DKS will continue to lead support for the BR process by organizing training sessions for country experts on BR methodologies and tools and providing technical support for data collection, analysis and reporting. Training and technical support will be guided by lessons learned from previous BR processes as well as a pilot project carried out by ReSAKSS in 2019 to strengthen BR reporting in selected countries. The aim is to help countries improve on previous BR processes to increase the level of reporting as well as the quality of reported data, with a target of improving the level of reporting in at least 40% of countries by 2025. DKS will also lead the production of briefs distilling lessons from BR reports and processes, with a target of 4 regional, 15 country and 5 thematic BR briefs every 2 years.

DKS will coordinate work by ReSAKSS to respond to country requests for technical support to develop evidence-based, Malabo Declaration-compliant NAIPs. In particular, DKS will update the previously developed NAIP Toolbox that outlines metrics, analytical tools, methodologies, and core programmatic components to guide NAIP design and will re-mobilize the NAIP Experts Group composed of AGRODEP members and other local experts who provide technical support to countries. In addition to providing support for new NAIPs, AKADEMIYA2063 will make the case for updated analyses to revise current NAIPs to account for the significant effects of Covid-19 on African economies. Finally, ongoing efforts to build country-level analytical and policymaking capacities through the establishment or strengthening of Local Analytical Networks will intensify. In partnership with the Department of Capacity and Deployment, DKS will facilitate the establishment of LANs with a target of at least five functioning networks per year. DKS and partners will carry out institutional mapping of actors involved in the demand for and supply of data and knowledge for agricultural development, develop action plans for improving knowledge value chain best practices, and support LANs to develop their workplans in line with demand from Ministries of Agriculture.

3. Capacity creation and deployment

Introduction and core programs

Strengthening capacities to allow Africa to meet its own development goals is central to AKADEMIYA2063's mission. AKADEMIYA2063 aims to play a catalytic role to empower African expertise, to connect that expertise to action on the ground, and to ensure that Africa can meet its own data and analytical needs more fully as time progresses. Capacity strengthening is an important component of most of AKADEMIYA2063's activities and programs, but is the primary focus of one of the three flagship programs, the African Growth and Development Policy (AGRODEP) Modeling Consortium.

AGRODEP, housed in the Department of Capacity and Deployment, positions Africa-based experts to take a leading role in agricultural growth, policy debate and development issues facing the African continent. Since its establishment in 2010, the Consortium has sought to build a critical mass of first-class modeling experts within Africa's research community that can respond to the emerging and long-term demand for analytical knowledge on the continent. Through a series of membership calls, the Consortium has expanded to 234 regular members from 33 countries and 30 affiliate members as of 2021. AGRODEP has developed and maintained a vast technical resources library, including nearly two dozen state-of-the-art models, hundreds of high-quality data sets, and several technical guides and toolkits. Regular membership in the AGRODEP Consortium empowers early-career African economic modelers by offering free access to cutting-edge economic research tools, data, training, and opportunities to apply for competitive research and travel grants, and by connecting them to a large and influential network of research experts in Africa and beyond.

AGRODEP members have access to a suite of models that have been developed or customized to better address the specific context of African countries and/or core topics of the African development agenda. Each model is fully documented, with programming codes, data and technical guides for replication and adaptation. The data portal provides members with access to more than 300 datasets available for economic analysis and policy research. In addition, training and other capacity strengthening activities have ensured that the members continue to hone their skills, and outreach activities undergird their presence in the broader research and policy analysis community, within and outside of Africa. An annual member survey usually determines the content of the 7–8 advanced training courses delivered each year, taught by leading experts from around the world.

Capacity creation and deployment strategy and objectives

While AGRODEP is now close to achieving its long-term vision of creating a critical mass of modeling and analytical experts working to meet the knowledge needs of African countries and organizations, AKADEMIYA2063's Department of Capacity and Deployment (DCD) will work to scale the lessons drawn from AGRODEP's experience to further strengthen capacities of members, mobilize members to contribute to development planning across the continent, and work with partners to expand capacity strengthening activities beyond the AGRODEP Consortium. DCD will advance AKADEMIYA2063's work to strengthen and mobilize capacities through three main strategic goals: (i) expansion of AGRODEP resources, (ii) capacity strengthening of non-AGRODEP members, and (iii) provision of analytical and advisory services.

(i) Expansion of AGRODEP resources

DCD will continue to increase the membership of AGRODEP while seeking to accelerate the development of sub-networks within the Consortium around the thematic areas of the African Union's Agenda 2063. In collaboration with key partner institutions, DCD will add new resources to the AGRODEP library, with greater emphasis placed on developing and/or warehousing models, tools, and data resources addressing all key areas of Agenda 2063. This will also involve customization of existing models to better address the context of specific countries and topics.

Building on AGRODEP's past experience, DCD in collaboration with other technical partners will continue to design and deliver high-impact training courses for AGRODEP members. Training on the latest data analysis and economic modeling tools and techniques will be offered to members to ensure that they continue to use best-of-breed methodologies and to keep their skill sets aligned with the areas of Agenda 2063. The training program will cover new areas such as research communications and writing to enable AGRODEP members to effectively communicate their research findings to policymakers and CAADP stakeholders.

(ii) Capacity strengthening of non-AGRODEP members

DCD will contribute to capacity building in Africa beyond AGRODEP members by supporting the establishment of Local Analytical Networks (LANs) and expanding training activities to non-members through a new AGRODEP School. First, DCD will help to consolidate the LANs which are currently being supported by AKADEMIYA2063 through the ReSAKSS program in a handful of countries and expand them to cover more countries. In collaboration with ReSAKSS and AKADEMIYA2063's Department of Knowledge Systems, DCD will undertake the necessary assessments and required network-building activities to prepare current and future LANs to collaborate with AGRODEP members on research and participate in other AGRODEP activities. The department will facilitate research networking among AGRODEP and LAN members and between them and other leading researchers working on Africa, providing opportunities to enhance expertise throughout AGRODEP and LANs.

Second, DCD will explore opportunities to broaden access to training. There has been growing interest in the academic community across Africa to access the training being offered by AGRODEP, but limited financial and management resources have made it impossible to open the programs to non-members. DCD will lead the set up and expansion of a modeling school to provide training services on a cost-recovery basis, working in partnership with organizations such as the African Economic Research Consortium (AERC) and the Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM). Through the modeling school, DCD will harness AGRODEP's extensive experience in skills development to help bolster technical capacities in the broader African research community.

(iii) Provision of analytical and advisory services

DCD will continue to support and expand the provision of analytical and advisory services to organizations and governments, in partnership with other centers of expertise. The Consortium launched Policy Analysis and Advisory Services (PAAS) activities in 2017 to strategically position members to provide data and analytical support to meet needs for analysis on the ground.

For that purpose, the most advanced AGRODEP members are organized thematically in PAAS teams by area of expertise, with quality assurance from lead coordinators and backstopping from international experts. AGRODEP-PAAS members have responded to analytical needs in the continent in numerous ways, including by supporting the formulation of second-generation national agriculture investment plans (NAIPs) in several African countries and contributing to the review, validation and synthesis of country reports during the first CAADP-Malabo Biennial Review (BR).

Building on these contributions, AKADEMIYA2063 will accelerate the transition of AGRODEP to a well-connected cadre of experienced researchers responding to the analytical needs of Africa's development agenda. DCD will continue to identify advanced AGRODEP members for PAAS activities but will also expand the group of PAAS experts to include the most experienced LAN members. At the continental level, AGRODEP-PAAS will provide analytical support to the CAADP-Malabo agenda, including for implementation of agriculture joint sector reviews, formulation of the new generation of NAIPs, future rounds of the CAADP BR, operationalization of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), and other development efforts related to the African Union's Agenda 2063. At the country level, AGRODEP-PAAS will work in collaboration with LANs to help meet country data, analytical and policy advisory needs. The PAAS function will be supported through targeted technical training, deployment of models and datasets vetted by AGRODEP, and backstopping by AKADEMIYA2063 senior researchers and other leading international experts.

4. Operational support

Introduction

Operational and implementation support is an important part AKADEMIYA2063's portfolio. Our focus on putting science to use requires us to go beyond carrying out research and analysis to directly support action on the ground. Operational support at AKADEMIYA2063 aims to improve implementation of programs and strategies at the national and regional level, and will include provision of ex ante analysis, performance monitoring, impact evaluation, and derivation of lessons and best practices. Many of AKADEMIYA2063's operational support activities are coordinated by the Department of Operational Support (DOS). DOS houses programs which, unlike the three core programs which support Africa-wide initiatives, are country- or region-specific and time-bound. These programs are usually intended to meet the data and analytical needs of a country, development partner or civil society organization.

The need for bilateral programs for operational support arises from three stylized facts. First, African countries and development partners have specific and contextual needs that cannot be addressed through the multilateral analytical support provided by the core programs. These needs emanate from country-specific development programs designed to tackle a country's or region's problem bilaterally. Second, the core programs provide knowledge products, capacities and policy options, and these knowledge products and policy innovations have to be translated into operational interventions and contextualized for specific circumstances while the capacities must be utilized to generate micro-level empirics for implementation support. Bilateral programs are thus needed to complement the core programs by providing data and

analytical support for the implementation of continental, regional and national strategies and programs at the operational level. Third, AKADEMIYA2063 aims to support the achievement of the broader Agenda 2063 which encompasses a wide range of sectors and issues beyond agriculture, poverty and food security. Hence, bilateral programs are needed to expand analytical support beyond agriculture and rural economies, and capture emerging issues pertinent to Agenda 2063.

Operational support strategy and objectives

DOS aspires to become a competitive and credible technical arm of AKADEMIYA2063 for mobilizing and managing bilateral programs to help African countries achieve the goals of Agenda 2063. It seeks to position AKADEMIYA2063 as one of the strongest allies in strategic and operational analysis in Africa for the design and implementation of bilateral economic development programs by countries, development partners, and civil society organizations.

To meet this goal, the department aims to achieve a hierarchy of objectives in the long, medium and short terms. The overall long-term objective of DOS is to meet the data and evidence needs of countries, development partners and civil society organizations working for African economic development. As the core programs support and closely work with the African Union for the implementation of Agenda 2063, the bilateral programs will work with and support other actors to enhance their contribution to the achievement of the same agenda and support countries to implement country-specific agendas. The achievement of the long-term objective is measured by the increased number of bilateral programs in AKADEMIYA2063, increased data and evidence for the design and implementation of country-specific bilateral programs, and increased knowledge and analytics for emerging issues pertinent to the achievement of Agenda 2063. The long-term objective will be realized through building competence and expertise and diversifying research programs in the medium term. In the short term, the department focuses on capturing opportunities and undertaking bilateral programs through responding to calls, initiating country programs and facilitating the implementation of approved projects.

DOS engages in a variety of projects which have diverse outcomes including building capacities at country level, supporting programs at implementation level, and enhancing the strategic understanding of country-specific issues. Thus, the department builds competence and diversifies analytical support to deliver on three main outcome areas:

1) Enhancing the analytical capacity of countries: DOS will collaborate with individual Ministries of Agriculture to develop, finance and implement a partnership program for capacity building in evidence-based policy planning, monitoring and evaluation that will help mobilize, train and engage national expertise for decision making and program formulation.
2) Supporting program implementation and operations: the department will assist countries, development partners and civil society organizations in designing actionable programs, measuring performance, and estimating impacts on households, markets and economies.
3) Enhancing the understanding of country-specific and emerging issues pertinent to the achievement of the Agenda 2063 goals: DOS will partner with global knowledge centers such as universities and research organizations to conduct strategic analysis to meet the specific contextual and topical needs of development partners, corporations and non-state actors.

The selection and prioritization of calls will be made based on their strategic importance for building competence in the outcome areas presented above and meeting the objectives of AKADEMIYA2063. The organization will focus on calls that generate public goods and support the achievement of the Agenda 2063 goals.

In addition to responding to calls, DOS will initiate and facilitate the establishment of Smart Cluster-based Database Systems (SCDS) for African countries, following a successful pilot in Senegal. Motivated by the enormous data challenges in many African countries, the purpose of SCDS is to build analytical capacity by creating a sustainable and reliable data collection and accessibility system following a cluster-based approach. DOS will develop generic guidelines and a toolkit that specifies the approaches, purposes and tools of SCDS that can be adapted and customized for different county contexts. The establishment of SCDS starts with creating partnerships with the Ministry of Agriculture in each country to formulate country-specific SCDS project plans and seek funding. DOS will then set up a team of regional and international experts that will support the implementation of the project. So far, the DOS team has initiated the formulation of SCDS for Benin, Togo, and Ethiopia. The department will continue to facilitate the formulation, funding and implementation of SCDS in these countries and will expand to additional countries, with a goal of reaching at least 10 countries in the coming 3–5 years.

5. Data management, digital products and technology

Introduction

AKADEMIYA2063's approaches to policy innovation, capacity development and knowledge management rely on leveraging emerging technologies to overcome many of the institutional, infrastructural, and organizational obstacles that hinder the free exchange of information. Digital technologies offer important opportunities to access, generate and share knowledge more broadly than ever before. While all of AKADEMIYA2063's departments rely on digital technologies to accomplish their objectives, the Department of Data Management, Digital Products and Technology (DPT) houses the organization's efforts to advance the boundaries of what can be accomplished through digital technologies and to identify new ways in which digital technologies can support the organization's work as well as broader efforts to improve capacities and knowledge for policymaking in Africa.

DPT leads the Africa Agriculture Watch (AAgWa) program, which aims to use new technologies to overcome persistent issues related to the availability of agricultural data. Under AAgWa, remotely sensed data will be combined with machine learning techniques to produce forecasts of production and yield for major crops. The interactive AAgWa platform will allow users to anticipate predicted changes in food production systems resulting from shocks and thereby serve as an aid to planning and crisis prevention. The department also collaborates with other departments on projects with components related to data creation and management, remote sensing, geographic information system (GIS) analysis, predictive modeling, and digital platform creation, among other topics.

DPT is also responsible for the construction and maintenance of all of AKADEMIYA2063's digital platforms. The department works closely with program leaders to ensure that platform features meet end-users' needs and that the data provided are up-to-date.

Data management, digital products and technology strategy and objectives

The primary objective of DPT is to increase and sustain AKADEMIYA2063's impact in the African digital ecosystem by facilitating data creation and platforms, providing information and communication technology (ICT) services, and fostering the use of emerging technologies in the course of its mission. To fulfill its objective, the department contributes to AKADEMIYA2063's mission through 6 core missions:

    a.   Lead AKADEMIYA2063's work to position the institution as a major player in data creation and management, creating and deploying data visualization and analytical platforms.

    b.   Ensure the proper operation of AKADEMIYA2063's platforms and their promotion to serve as the primary destination of our and partners' data.

    c.   Provide ICT services by building, maintaining, and upgrading AKADEMIYA2063's ICT infrastructure.

    d.   Lead AKADEMIYA2063's work in exploring and applying emerging technologies to workstreams.

    e.   Provide capacity building activities to ensure up-to-date digital and technological skillsets to clients and partners.

    f.   Participate in increasing AKADEMIYA2063's portfolio and resources in technological and digital-led projects and programs.

A major focus of DPT will be to build, maintain and upgrade AKADEMIYA2063's digital platforms with new features or datasets. The department will add at least five countries annually to the ReSAKSS eAtlas to cover the remaining 25 countries within 5 years and encompass the entire continent. The department will furthermore train national eAtlas partners in GIS-based technology mapping and data upload procedures, as well as working with ReSAKSS and the Department of Knowledge Systems to improve and deploy digital tools for data gathering and reporting. DPT will operationalize the AAgWa platform, including generating production and biophysical parameter forecasts, generating and publishing remote sensing datasets and products on the platform, and working with other departments to create new products and features. Another platform in development is the Fast Mapping Tool, which will use web technology to allow users to map their own data.

In addition to enhancing existing platforms and operationalizing those currently under construction, DPT intends to build the AKADEMIYA2063 Big Data platform as a primary destination for generated data within the institution and from external clients and partners. The Big Data platform will provide access to a broad range of data from research projects, programs, platforms, and external sources in one place. The goal is to provide a receptacle, an infrastructure, and a wealth of data for researchers, decision makers, and others across the continent and beyond. DPT will build and maintain the platform and develop visualization tools to facilitate data analysis. Working in collaboration with other AKADEMIYA2063 departments, DPT will form partnerships with data providers including ministries, statistical bureaus, and research institutions, and advertise the platform to users.

Finally, as the digital technological watch arm of AKADEMIYA2063, DPT will monitor emerging digital technologies and their potential applications in the institution's workstreams. The department team particularly emphasizes the use of machine learning techniques for predictive modeling and classification purposes, applied to remotely sensed, economic or other data. DPT will initiate an AKADEMIYA2063 Lab to explore, experiment, and benchmark potential applications of emerging technologies to different workstreams; foster the use of emerging technologies among African researchers and students through capacity building activities and dataset publications; host events on specific topics related to emerging digital technologies with partners from the public and private sectors in Africa and beyond; and work with internal and external researchers to apply emerging technologies in ongoing analysis.

V. Implementation modalities

AKADEMIYA2063's work under each of our strategic areas involves many partners and stakeholders, including the various actors that are part of the evidence-based policymaking landscape. As shown in our Theory of Change (Figure 1), AKADEMIYA2063's approach to linking the supply of knowledge and evidence with demand focuses on three major connection points: *carrier policy processes*, or major continental, regional or national policy initiatives that catalyze action and drive agendas; *anchor organizations*, the institutions charged with implementing or coordinating these major policy initiatives; and *operational actors*, the individuals in the research and policymaking spheres who inform, design and implement policies and programs.

AKADEMIYA2063 advances its goals through collaboration with partners and communication with stakeholders at each of these connection points. At the level of carrier policy processes, our interlocutors are the agenda setters and policy champions, including African Union and REC leadership and Heads of State. With these partners, we seek to align and embed our research into major policy agendas to ensure the relevance of our contribution. For example, in our work supporting the Biennial Review, continental and REC leaders and national Heads of State are the ultimate recipients of the data and analytics that empower the BR process to serve as a shared and high-level mutual accountability platform. At the level of anchor organizations, we interact with a second group of partners composed of continental, regional and national organizations—for example, AUC and AUDA-NEPAD, RECs, regional farmer and professional organizations, and national coordination units for major policies and strategies—to support their guidance of the policy agenda and help to ensure the alignment of local research agendas with anchor organizations' data and analytical needs.

A third category of partners and stakeholders coincides with the operational actors that implement activities on the ground, such as local researchers generating knowledge and evidence, Ministry staff charged with the design and implementation of policies and programs, and farmer and professional organizations and their members carrying out productive activities and making investments. We reach these actors through knowledge products, learning events, data and analytics, and capacity strengthening efforts.

In addition to interlocutors associated with carrier policy processes, anchor organizations, and operational actors, we engage with two additional categories that cut across these levels: development partner and donor organizations, and the broader research community. We engage with major bilateral and multilateral donor organizations to understand how they interface with carrier policy processes at continental, regional and national levels and together

determine how best to align support with these policy agendas; we also work with these agencies' representation in countries and regions to support their agenda on the ground.

In addition, AKADEMIYA2063 partners and collaborates with research and science leaders at the continental, regional and national levels, including the African Economic Research Consortium (AERC), the African Center for Economic Transformation (ACET), the Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM), the African Research University Alliance (ARUA), the Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network (FANRPAN), the Regional Network of Agricultural Policy Research Institutes (ReNAPRI), and country-level knowledge centers such as think tanks and universities. While many of AKADEMIYA2063's activities are carried out in partnership with members of the research and science community, the AGRODEP program is one of our principal platforms for engagement, collaboration, and capacity building of the research community and the mobilization of broad expertise to meet knowledge and evidence needs.

Forging and maintaining partnerships and ensuring effective knowledge dissemination to stakeholders at all levels are essential in linking the research and policymaking spheres and ultimately improving the quality of policy design and implementation. While AKADEMIYA2063's core programs play key roles in linking knowledge supply to demand, equally important is a strong focus on external partnerships and on communications, outreach and knowledge management. Key strategies and objectives in these two areas are outlined below.

1. External partnerships

The work accomplished already by ReSAKSS, AGRODEP, and the MaMo Panel to strengthen capacities for well-informed policymaking has been possible only through collaboration with a wide network of partners who contribute to knowledge creation and help to ensure strong linkages with stakeholders across the continent. Partnerships at the levels of carrier policy processes, anchor organizations and operational actors have increasingly become indispensable to efforts to bring about economic transformation and achieve development goals including the Agenda 2063, CAADP and Malabo Declaration goals. The efforts of AKADEMIYA2063 to leverage science and generate knowledge can be amplified by continuing to build and maintain strategic partnerships with a wide range of actors that also work in support of Africa's economic transformation agenda. These include global, continental, regional, and national partners encompassing continental and regional political organizations, research and policy think tanks, universities, governments, the private sector, civil society, farmers' organizations, and donors.

AKADEMIYA2063's Department of External Relations (DER) leads the organization's efforts to increase the impact, effectiveness, and reach of all of AKADEMIYA2063's work by building and maintaining strategic and innovative partnerships on behalf of the Executive Office and by working collaboratively with other departments. DER has developed a set of partnership principles and criteria to aid AKADEMIYA2063 departments in selecting, building and maintaining partnerships to achieve shared goals. These principles call for AKADEMIYA2063 to engage in partnerships that enhance the impact and effectiveness of the organization's work through efficient resource use, show strong commitment and transparency from each partner, and promote innovation. AKADEMIYA2063 will evaluate prospective partnerships based on the potential of the partnership to advance our mission and vision; the complementarity of strengths

between AKADEMIYA2063 and a potential partner; the reputation of potential partners; and risks and benefits of the partnership, assessed based on partners' past performance, technical capacity, governance and control systems, and commitment and willingness to share responsibilities.

Led by DER, AKADEMIYA2063 will follow a series of steps as part of establishing a new partnership. These include identifying the strategic reason for the partnership, defining partner roles and responsibilities within the work plan or agreement, outlining communication expectations and governance and accountability procedures, and defining mechanisms for monitoring, evaluating, reviewing and adapting the partnership to ensure success and sustainability.

Within the next five years, DER seeks to expand and enhance AKADEMIYA2063's portfolio of African and global partners and ensure successful partnerships that are impactful and effective, promote innovation, and advance the mission of AKADEMIYA2063's work. First, AKADEMIYA2063 will expand collaboration with its well-established partners under the ReSAKSS, AGRODEP, and MaMo Panel programs, including the African Union Commission, the African Union Development Agency–NEPAD, regional economic communities, country governments, non-state actor organizations, and development partners. In addition, DER will lead efforts to build additional strategic and innovative partnerships to include new African and global organizations also working to advance the African economic transformation agenda and to diversify AKADEMIYA2063's funding portfolio to include previous, new, and emerging development funders. The department will identify and act on potential partnership and funding opportunities, organize periodic meetings with key current and potential funders and partners to exchange on opportunities for collaboration, participate in partner events to share AKADEMIYA2063's work and forge new relationships, and work with other departments to document and disseminate the impact of the organization's work using impact stories.

2. Communications, outreach and knowledge management

As a young institution, AKADEMIYA2063 needs to position itself on the African and international research and think tank landscapes by building a strong brand and clarifying its role and mandate, enhancing the reach and maintaining the reputation of its existing core programs, and establishing leadership in new areas of expertise, including digital technologies. AKADEMIYA2063's Department of Communications and Outreach (DCO) strives to support the organization's mission and goals by communicating our products to our diverse partners and audiences. DCO's communications strategy will support the positioning of AKADEMIYA2063 within the African research landscape by building on our strengths—which include our flagship programs and their reputation for quality, our knowledge and expertise, our commitment to Agenda 2063 and our strong network of partners—and seizing opportunities that could positively impact the organization's development.

In collaboration with other AKADEMIYA2063 departments, DCO develops our products and works to ensure that they reach our different audiences and partners. At the level of carrier policy processes (see Figure 1), AKADEMIYA2063's audiences include continental, regional and national leaders, agenda setters and policy champions. To these audiences we target our flagship publications and major events, including the ReSAKSS Annual Trends and Outlook Report (ATOR), the ReSAKSS Annual Conferences, the Africa Agriculture Trade Monitor (AATM),

and the Malabo Montpellier Panel reports and Fora. These documents and events provide high-level strategy guidance and outlook and serve as opportunities for decision makers to learn from state-of-the-art research and analysis as well as from the experiences of their colleagues in other countries.

At the level of anchor organizations, our audiences are the organizations charged with implementation or coordination of major policy initiatives. These audiences are targeted with our tools and platforms as aids for planning, forecasting, monitoring and tracking. These include the ReSAKSS platform, the AAgWa platform, and other knowledge management, data and analytical tools. To audiences associated with operational actors, we target products that will help them to carry out the day-to-day, granular-level work of informing, designing, implementing, and tracking policies and making other decisions in different economic sectors. These include the national eAtlases, our webinars and learning events, and our research outputs and knowledge products, such as those produced and shared through our Covid-19 portal during our first months of operation. Finally, the African research community is an important audience of all of the tools and knowledge products mentioned above. We also engage with this group through the AGRODEP program, which seeks both to build skills and expertise among the scientific community and to facilitate collaboration among and between African and global researchers.

DCO's efforts to reach all of these audiences with AKADEMIYA2063's products are supported by the department's functions and use of tools including social and traditional media outreach. At a basic level, DCO ensures a consistent look and feel for AKADEMIYA2063's graphic and visual communications through its work to develop templates and put in place branding guidelines. The department curates the organization's social media presence and is developing a social media strategy to continue to grow our audiences; engages with media to ensure coverage of AKADEMIYA2063's activities and milestones; facilitates the publication of AKADEMIYA2063's research findings and other knowledge products through copy-editing, design, layout and execution, and distribution through a variety of channels; and organizes and advertises events to communicate analytical findings and engage with policymakers, the research community and other stakeholders.

Communications products take many forms. Technical content, such as research and analytical findings, will be shared via briefs, bulletins, working papers, reports and other publications; webinars, seminars and conferences; and videos, interviews and podcasts. Institutional content, which provides information on AKADEMIYA2063's activities, will be shared via direct email newsletters, the organization's website, press releases, social media campaigns, and other channels. The department monitors the impact of communications and outreach activities by tracking metrics on event participants, website visitors, and downloads, and will continue to revise our communications and outreach strategy to generate more reach and facilitate engagement from audiences.

While focusing on our core functions of communicating AKADEMIYA2063's products to our diverse audiences, DCO seeks to progressively broaden the channels through which we engage with stakeholders. Short-term goals of the department, to be achieved within the next 6–12

months, include offering internship opportunities for students from communications and journalism schools and developing tutorials to introduce audiences to AKADEMIYA2063's various data and knowledge platforms. Within two years, DCO aims to have a recurring calendar of events organized in partnership with regional institutions and governmental entities, such as the African Union and regional economic communities. Three-year goals include the implementation of a dedicated marketing component within the department and the establishment of a production studio to accelerate and improve the production of outreach videos. Within five years, the department aims to expand the current practice of offering most content in English and French to begin translating some of AKADEMIYA2063's knowledge products into local African languages, such as Swahili or Fulani.

VI. Conclusion

AKADEMIYA2063 takes its name from the inspiration provided by the African Union's Agenda 2063—*The Africa We Want*—and from the preeminent role of knowledge in ensuring that the aspirations of Agenda 2063 are achieved. The spelling of *AKADEMIYA* reflects that used in many African languages and communicates our African identity and our conviction that Africa's capacities and resources can and will play an increasingly prominent role to inform its development.

Africa was able to overcome tremendous challenges and reverse years of stagnation by improving the quality of governance and policymaking. In particular, policies which have become progressively better informed by evidence of impact, more open to dialogue, and subject to wider review have permitted African countries to reap the benefits of higher-quality planning and implementation in terms of better outcomes. Stronger leadership and strategic focus at the continental level through initiatives including NEPAD and CAADP have strengthened the practices of mutual accountability and inclusive, evidence-based policy formulation, implementation and review.

Africa's persisting challenges, and the repercussions of the unprecedented shock of the Covid-19 pandemic, mean that it is more important than ever to strengthen Africa's culture of evidence and review and continue to build capacities in the continent to generate and use the evidence required for well-informed policymaking. Through its core programs, its operational support to countries and development partners, its digital platforms and services, its extensive partnerships, and its communications and outreach activities, AKADEMIYA2063 aims to accelerate the development and mobilization of African expertise to achieve the continent's aspirations of transforming economies and boosting prosperity.