

Coordination Mechanisms for the Implementation of the Africa Fertilizer and Soil Health Action Plan (AFSH-AP) and Soil Initiative for Africa (SIA)

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About AUDA-NEPAD

The African Union (AU) Development Agency-NEPAD (AUDA-NEPAD) is Africa's first-ever continental technical and development agency. The foundation of AUDA-NEPAD is built on the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD) that was established as Africa's continental renewal and development programme by AU in 2001 and championed through the then NEPAD Secretariat, based in Midrand, South Africa. The NEPAD vision represented a common pledge by African leaders to eradicate poverty and foster Africa's sustainable economic growth and development through the promotion of regional and continental integration, through the inclusion of Africa in global processes and through the empowerment of socially disadvantaged groups, such as women and children.

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

ACFD	African Center for Fertilizer Development
AEAS	Agricultural Extension and Advisory Services
AFAP	African Fertilizer and Agribusiness Partnership
AfCFTA	African Continental Free Trade Agreement
AFFM	Africa Fertilizer Financing Mechanism
AFSH-AP	African Fertilizer and Soil Health Action Plan
ARBE	Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy and Sustainable Environment
ASDAC	African Soil Data Center
AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
AUDA-NEPAD	African Union Development Agency
AUSO	African Union Soil Observatory
BR	Biennial Review
C4FB	Coalition for Fertilizer and Private Sector Engagement
C4PA	Coalition for Policy and Advocacy
C4SEAS	Coalition for Strengthening Extension and Advisory Services in Africa
C4SISA	Coalition for Soil Information Systems in Africa
CAADP	Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Program
CIFSH	Coalition of Implementors of Fertilizers and Soil Health
FARA	Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa
IFDC	International Fertilizer Development Center
ISRIC	International Soil Reference and Information Center
JDPG	Joint Development Partners Group
MSHIP	Multi-stakeholder Soil Health Initiative Platform
REC	Regional Economic Community
SIA	Soil Initiative for Africa
SIS	Soil Information System
SRO	Sub-Regional Research Organization
ToR	Terms of Reference
TSO	Technical Support Organization

Summary

The African Fertilizer and Soil Health Action Plan (AFSH-AP) is the ten-year implementation instrument of the long-term Soil Initiative for Africa (SIA) Framework. The successful implementation of the AFSH-AP is vital to the continental agenda to halt soil degradation in Africa and ensure improved and sustained soil health. The Nairobi Declaration (2024) specified the need to cover specific milestones and track key indicators. Achieving these milestones will require collaborative efforts by a wide range of stakeholders at all levels (global, continental, regional, national, and sub-national levels). Therefore, effective implementation of the AFSH-AP requires rigorous coordination to ensure coherent actions by all partners to achieve a measurable impact in improved soil health.

The mechanisms to ensure such coordination will be needed at every political level as well as geographical space, viz., landscape, farm

and field levels. The coordination mechanisms that are needed at the continental, regional, and national levels are described in this document. The mechanisms followed a series of consultations and intellectual discussions that take abreast of the realities of the different stakeholders. The framework also gives smart consideration to the supranational authorizing establishments and continental initiatives. This document is still considered a living document and may be revised occasionally to accommodate changes as they occur or are required.

Two pictograms summarize the coordination arrangements for the implementation of AFSH-AP in the document. The document also provides a body of text in the different sections with descriptions of the roles and responsibilities of key actors involved in the governance, coordination, and implementation of activities that constitute the AFSH-AP.

Background

The Soil Initiative for Africa (SIA) Framework was formulated to guide efforts to improve the health and productivity of African soil. The SIA Framework informs the development of a system to address all elements of the enabling environment as well as implementation on the ground. As such, the SIA Framework indicates the kinds of institutional structures, policies, programs, investments, partnerships, and services that will be needed at each level (farm, community, national, regional, and continental) across Africa. Together and when in place, these elements of the framework will ensure that farmers and communities have the support they need to utilize and sustain their

soil for optimal agricultural production, positive environmental outcomes, and sustainable livelihoods. As a long-term Framework (situated within CAADP¹), the SIA Framework will be implemented in four consecutive 10-year phases as structured in the Africa Fertilizer and Soil Health Action Plan (AFSH-AP, 2024-2034).

Effective implementation of the AFSH-AP will be carried out by multiple partners and organizations at multiple levels (i.e., continental, regional, national, and sub-national levels) and will require efficient coordination and facilitation to ensure optimal impact in improving soil health. Similarly, implementation of the AFSH-

1. CAADP = the African Union's Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Program

AP will need to be monitored and reported to track progress in achieving the set targets, identify challenges, as well as to guide the required support and coordination to improve implementation and ensure that the progress is optimal. The following considerations are essential to ensure successful coordination of the implementation of activities that would leverage the existing knowledge and understanding of the multiple organizations that were involved in the preparation of the two instruments (SIA Framework and AFSH-AP) adopted at the Nairobi Summit in May 2024. Emphasis is placed on the overall leadership by the African Union Commission (AUC) and the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD) (each within its respective mandates) in the coordination of post-Summit implementation to accentuate the African-owned and African-led process.

1. Recognizing that post-Summit implementation will be executed by a wide range of stakeholders and partners i.e., a combination(s) of technocrats, practitioners, scientists, donors, development partners,

public and private entities, industry actors, civil society organizations, consumers, and land users.

2. Recognizing the likelihood that a wide variety of financing models and flow-of-funds modalities will be employed in support of post-Summit implementation.
3. Recognizing and leveraging the valuable contributions and institutional memory of multiple organizations and donor partners in preparing for the Summit and in post-Summit activities.

Considering the complexity of post-Summit implementation, the wide range and large number of stakeholders involved, and the potential range of funding models, effective coordination of effort will be essential. The coordination of the implementation of the SIA will be structured as depicted in Figure 1. Figure 2 illustrates the organizational structure for the coordination and implementation of the SIA.

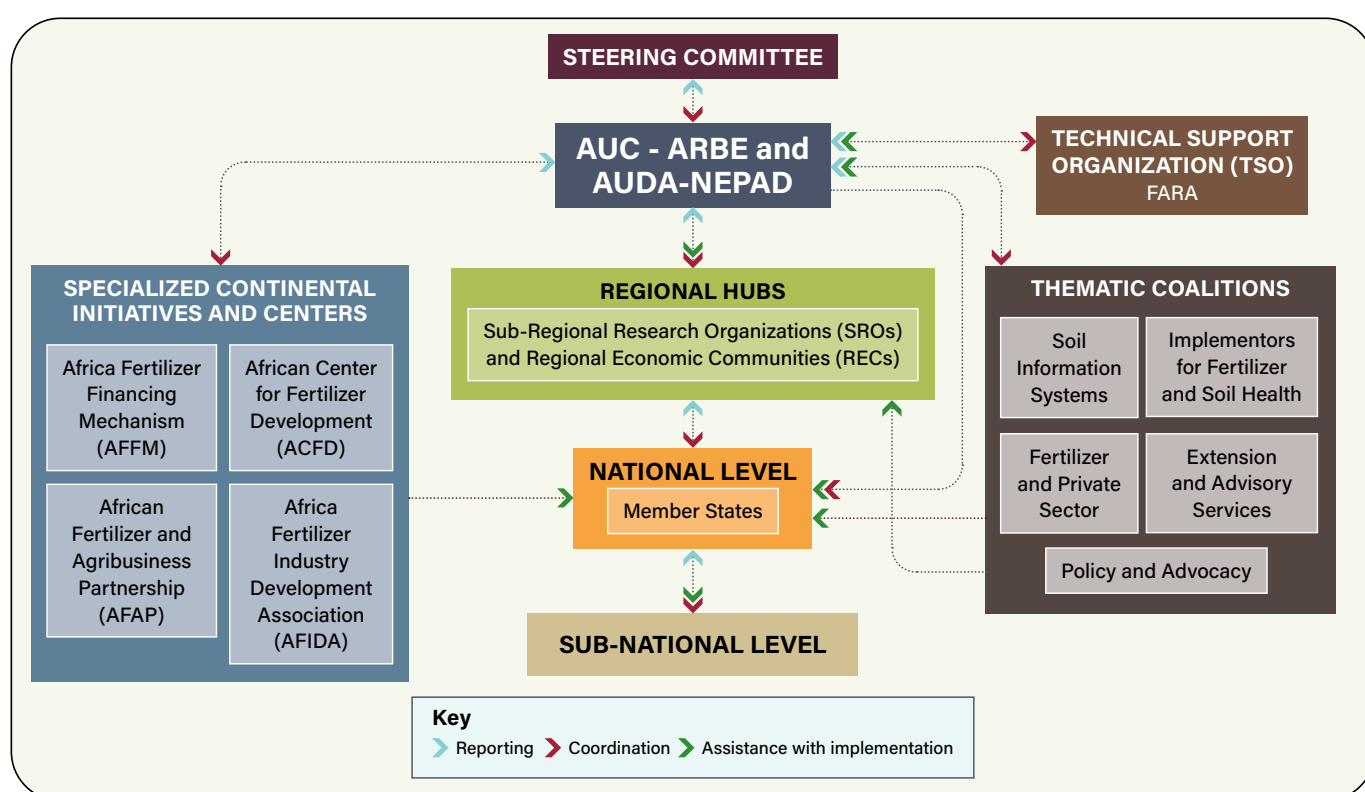


Figure 1. AFSH-AP and SIA Implementation Structure

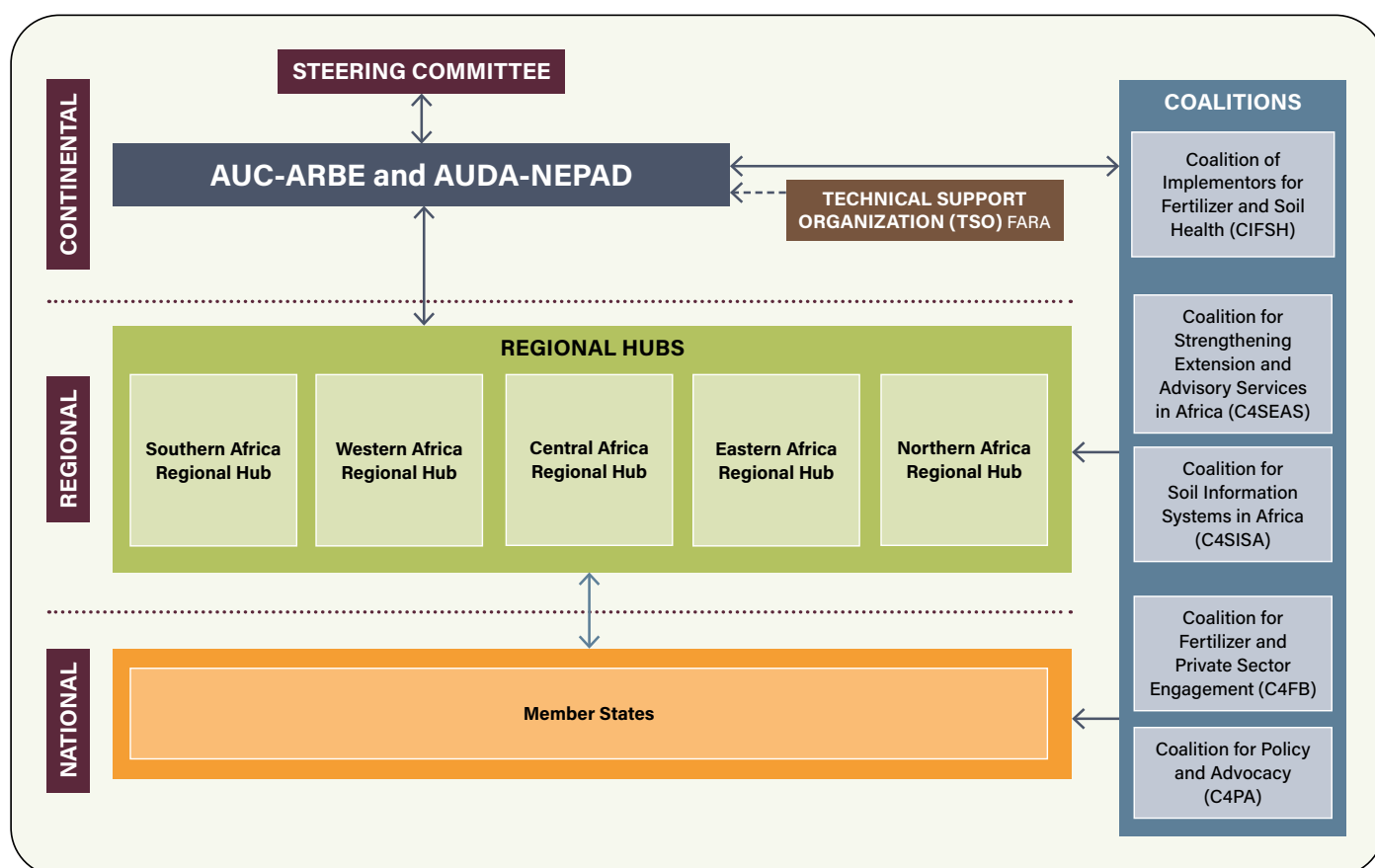


Figure 2. Organizational Structure for the Implementation of the AFSH-AP and SIA

Roles and Responsibilities of the Coordination and Implementation Entities for the AFSH-AP

The Role of the African Union Commission (AUC)

The AUC serves as the executive body of the African Union (AU), providing political leadership and setting the overall policy direction for continental initiatives. As such, the AUC is responsible for organizing all continental development efforts. It has the statutory role of engaging other entities on the continent to develop initiatives and seek the highest political backing to implement

them. Within the AUC, the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy and Sustainable Environment (ARBE) is responsible for all matters relating to fertilizer and soil health in Africa. Having played the overarching leadership and convening role in conceptualizing and developing the AFSH-AP/SIA, the AUC, through ARBE, will have the following leadership and coordination

roles and responsibilities for the AFSH-AP implementation:

1. Provide overall continental executive and political leadership as the co-authorizing body (together with AUDA-NEPAD) for the AFSH-AP/SIA implementation.
2. Serve as the permanent co-chair of the AFSH-AP/SIA Steering Committee along with AUDA-NEPAD (Figure 1).
3. Receive and process progress reports on the implementation of the AFSH-AP/SIA, facilitated by the AFSH-AP/SIA Technical Support Organization (TSO).
4. Convene key political stakeholders at the continental level, such as Heads of Government and Ministers, on the issues of fertilizer and soil health in Africa and to facilitate political support from Member States to implement the AFSH-AP/SIA.
5. Coordinate with the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and national governments on issues related to fertilizer and soil health.
6. Facilitate collaboration and partnerships with global stakeholders, including bi-lateral and multi-lateral donors, technical and financial development partners, and private sector partners to encourage and

support the alignment of soil health and fertilizer-related funding and activities with the priorities and processes outlined and agreed upon under the AFSH-AP/SIA.

7. Oversee the development of continental soil health and fertilizer-related policies as required to implement the AFSH-AP/SIA, ensuring alignment with relevant existing policies.
8. Oversee and guide the review and reporting of progress in implementing the AFSH-AP at the CAADP Partnership Platform and Specialized Technical Committee (STC) on Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment (ARDWE).
9. Mobilize the support of stakeholders and partners to invest resources toward building the capacity of AUC-ARBE to provide continental executive and political leadership for the implementation of the AFSH-AP and the SIA Framework.
10. Provide executive and political support to the AFSH-AP TSO for advocacy on all issues related to AFSH-AP/SIA implementation.

The AUC-ARBE will require dedicated full-time and/or seconded staff to complement existing staff to fulfil these roles and responsibilities effectively and expeditiously.

■ The Role of the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD)

The mandate of AUDA-NEPAD is to coordinate and execute priority continental programs and projects to promote continental integration towards the accelerated realization of Agenda 2063. Statutorily, AUDA-NEPAD's role is to:

- Provide knowledge-based advisory services and technical assistance to AU Member States and RECs to strengthen their capacity.

- Act as the continent's technical interface on policy development recommendation and implementation with partners and stakeholders.
- Undertake the full range of resource mobilization.
- Coordinate and execute priority regional and continental projects enshrined in Agenda 2063 with the aim of accelerating regional integration so as to achieve "The Africa we want".

AUDA-NEPAD plays a pivotal role in coordination and implementation of continental initiatives, including the CAADP and the AFSH-AP/SIA, which is a flagship program of CAADP. It provides technical backstopping to the AU/AUC in formulation and implementation of policy at the continental level. AUDA-NEPAD equally provides support to the RECs and Member States on policy and implementation. The AUDA-NEPAD will, therefore, play a leadership and coordination role in the domestication of the Nairobi Declaration and the implementation of the AFSH-AP and the SIA. In particular, AUDA-NEPAD will support Member States in developing and executing their respective national implementation work plans for the AFSH-AP and the SIA. AUDA-NEPAD's roles will include the following:

1. Provide overall technical leadership and coordination for the domestication and implementation of the AFSH-AP/SIA within the overarching CAADP implementation framework.
2. Act as the continent's technical interface with partners and stakeholders for the coordinated and collaborative implementation of the AFSH-AP/SIA at the continental level.
3. Coordinate resource mobilization to support implementation of AFSH-AP.
4. Serve as the permanent co-chair of the AFSH-AP/SIA Steering Committee along with the AUC (see Figure 1).
5. Provide guidance and support to RECs, Member States and other stakeholders in the domestication and implementation of the AFSH-AP/SIA at the regional and national levels with support from the AFSH-AP TSO.
6. Lead engagement with Member States to mobilize high-level national support for the domestication and implementation of the Nairobi Declaration.
7. Provide leadership and guidance at the regional and national level to incorporate soil health and fertilizer priorities into Regional and National CAADP Agrifood Investment Plans.
8. Provide oversight and guidance on delivery mechanisms and impact pathways for implementation of the AFSH-AP/SIA at the continental, regional, and national levels.
9. Oversee, coordinate and guide stakeholders in the development of tools, collection, and reporting of relevant soil health and fertilizer-related indicators to be integrated into the CAADP Biennial Review (BR) process.
10. Provide technical leadership on the development and implementation of continental policies on fertilizers and soil health in collaboration with AUC and with support from the AFSH-AP TSO.
11. Mobilize the support of stakeholders and partners to invest resources towards building the capacity of AUDA-NEPAD to strengthen continental leadership on the implementation of the AFSH-AP and the SIA Framework.

To efficiently and timeously implement these roles and responsibilities, AUDA-NEPAD will require a dedicated full-time staff complement.

The Role of the AFSH-AP/SIA Technical Support Organization (TSO)

The Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) has been designated by AUC/AUDA-NEPAD as the TSO to support the implementation of the AFSH-AP and SIA. The AFSH-AP TSO will provide support to AUC and AUDA-NEPAD in their leadership and coordination of the implementation of the AFSH-AP and the SIA Framework. In this capacity, the TSO will work closely with the AUC and AUDA-NEPAD, as well as other implementing partners to support actions on key designated technical components of the AFSH-AP. In addition to supporting, coordination, and facilitation roles, the TSO will house the African Union Soil Observatory (AUSO).

The role of the AFSH-AP TSO includes, inter alia, the following:

1. Support the AUC and AUDA-NEPAD in their leadership and coordination roles to ensure effective implementation of the AFSH-AP including:
 - Support the monitoring, analysis, and reporting on progress in the implementation of the AFSH-AP.
 - Support AUDA-NEPAD to ensure strong alignment of all initiatives related to the implementation of AFSH-AP, especially through capacity development, policies, fertilizer production, trade, and utilization.
 - Support AUDA-NEPAD in discussions and planning processes leading to the domestication of the AFSH-AP at the regional and country levels. This includes supporting the mainstreaming of the recommendations of the AFSH-AP and the SIA Framework into Regional and National Agrifood Investment Plans.
2. Support AUC and AUDA-NEPAD in advocacy and partnership building for:
 - Support AUDA-NEPAD in the development and definition of key metrics for soil health and ensuring their regular collection for the SIA and AFSH-AP at the continental level and below, leveraging and supporting the CAADP BR process.
 - Support and facilitate the design and implementation of policies related to AFSH-AP/SIA at continental, regional and national levels.
 - The operational development, resource mobilization and scaling up of investments and programs related to AFSH-AP and SIA in collaboration with AUC and AUDA-NEPAD.
 - The alignment of current programs, potential investments, policies, implementation approaches with the recommendations of the AFSH-AP/SIA – including the development and application of implementation support tools such as the SIA Companion Document.
3. Provide technical support to AUC and AUDA-NEPAD by:
 - Serving as a technical exchange platform, recognizing the need for technical assistance in planning and implementation of activities under the SIA Framework and the AFSH-AP and help to mobilize such technical assistance.
 - Serving as a continental platform for learning from experiences and

exchanging experiences through the implementation of the SIA Framework and the AFSH-AP with support from RECs and Sub-Regional Research Organizations (SROs) at the regional level.

- Engaging in continuous development of responses to emerging issues on fertilizer, soil health, and complementary areas.
- 4. Support AUC and AUDA-NEPAD in mobilizing stakeholders and partners to invest resources toward building the capacity of the TSO, RECs and other key institutions to coordinate and implement the AFSH-AP and the SIA Framework.
- 5. Support AUC and AUDA-NEPAD in the engagement process related to resource mobilization, coordination, and efficient resource utilization for implementing AFSH-AP and SIA.
- 6. Provide technical support for the collation, harmonization, curation, standardization, and accessibility of soil data and related information sources relating to the AFSH-AP and SIA through the AUSO.
- 7. Support AUC and AUDA-NEPAD to build, maintain, and sustain an effective partnership strategy for the implementation of AFSH-AP and SIA.
- 8. Support communication and outreach activities to garner awareness and support for the implementation of the SIA Framework and AFSH-AP.
- 9. Collect and disseminate (via a digital dashboard) information on developments, investable projects, programs, or opportunities in Africa's soil health sector.

Box 1. Terms of Reference (ToR) for the AFSH-AP Steering Committee

The AFSH-AP Steering Committee will provide strategic advice to AUDA-NEPAD and AUC for implementing the AFSH-AP. It is recommended that the AFSH-AP Steering Committee be composed of representatives of key thematic organizations involved in the issues around fertilizer and soil health in Africa. The issues include research and innovation, extension, capacity building, policy, private sector engagement, research coordination organizations, etc.

The Steering Committee would be composed as follows:

- AUC-ARBE and AUDA-NEPAD would be the permanent co-chairs of the Steering Committee.
- Other members of the committee will have a term of three years, after which a replacement will be sourced. (The members will be sitting based on their individual profile as well as nomination to represent the knowledge thematic area).
- Other members will include representatives from the five coalitions as well as farmers' organizations.
- A representative from the Donor and Development Partner group, and other members as required.
- At the end of each 3-year cycle, at least 50% of the members will be retained for a second 3-year term to retain institutional memory and understanding of the key issues related to coordination and implementation.

The AFSH-AP/SIA Steering Committee will hold its meetings twice a year, one in-person and one virtual meeting. Members from key organizations may be included as observers as required.

A full ToR for the Steering Committee would be required.

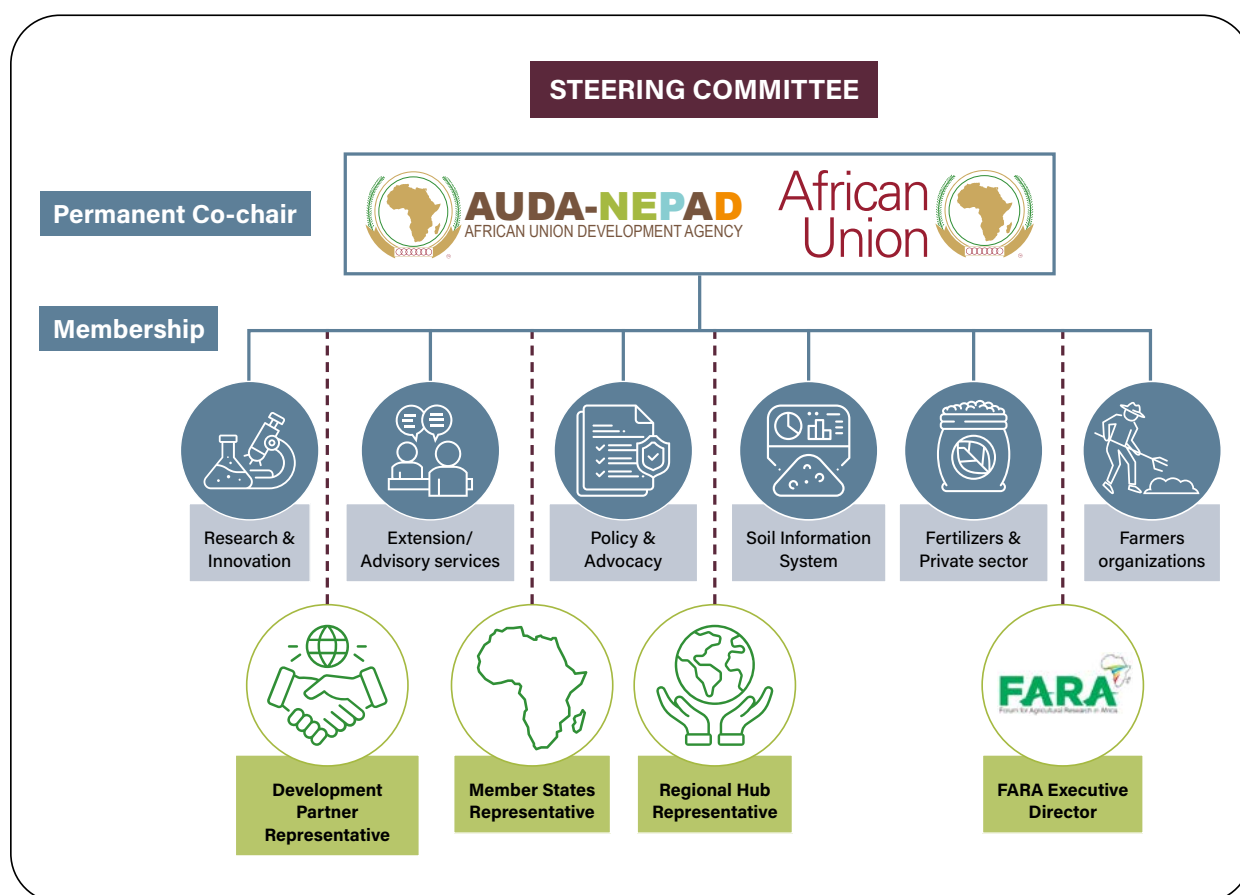


Figure 3. Membership Structure of the AFSH-AP and SIA Steering Committee

Joint Development Partners Group (JDPG) for the AFSH-AP/SIA

Recognizing the importance of coordinating their efforts to support the AFSH-AP/SIA, the external development partners have developed a mechanism to coordinate their efforts to support the AFSH-AP and SIA implementation. A Joint Development Partner Group (JDPG) was formed and initially led by USAID and later by the World Bank. The JDPG has, *inter alia*, the following roles:

1. To lead the effort to harmonize resources for implementing AFSH-AP/SIA among the development partners.
2. Support development partners' efforts to develop projects consistent with members' areas of priority and interests and consistent with and aligned with the principles and approaches established for the AFSH-AP/SIA.
3. Provide relevant technical assistance to the implementation of the AFSH-AP/SIA at every level.
4. Serve as a strategic thought partner for the implementation of the AFSH-AP/SIA.
5. Have membership in, and represent development partners in, the AFSH-AP/SIA Steering Committee.

Regional Coordination

Implementation of the AFSH-AP and SIA requires a clear and dedicated coordination mechanism and related technical support functions at the regional level, as shown in Figures 1 and 2. The functions will be integrated into the establishment of the regional hubs for fertilizer and soil health. Each of the five defined geographical regions of Africa (i.e., Western, Eastern, Central, Southern, and Northern) is expected to establish a hub to play key roles in the coordination and implementation of the continental instruments.

The Role of RECs and SROs in Regional AFSH-AP/SIA Hubs

Leadership, coordination, and support for SIA and the AFSH-AP will also be needed at the regional level. To provide this support in each region of Africa, it is expected that the relevant REC will establish a regional AFSH-AP/SIA Hub (i.e., Western Africa, Eastern Africa, Southern Africa, Central Africa, and Northern Africa Hub). The roles of the RECs, in collaboration with their respective SROs, include the following:²

1. Champion, lead, and facilitate cooperation and coordination for AFSH initiatives in their respective regions in accordance with the SIA and AFSH-AP.
2. Facilitate and contribute to the discussion, development, harmonization, and implementation of sub-regional policies and regulations related to fertilizer, quality control, and soil health management in accordance with the AFSH-AP.
3. Facilitate and support the development and implementation of plans to strengthen regional and country-level capacities for institutions and programs related to fertilizer and soil health management.
4. Lead the establishment of a regional fertilizer and soil health hub to coordinate the provision of technical services to countries in the region based on their demand.
5. Report on progress toward the implementation of the AFSH-AP to the AUC/AUDA-NEPAD.

Box 2. The Regional Hubs for Fertilizer and Soil Health (Ref. Figure 1 and 2)

A regional hub is a platform that brings together all relevant stakeholders in the fertilizer and soil health sector to implement the AFSH-AP in a specific region of Africa.

ROLE OF A REGIONAL HUB

1. Platform for the delivery and Implementation of the AFSH-AP for the region.
2. It brings together all relevant stakeholders in the fertilizer and soil health sector in the region.

2. Further elaboration of these roles and functions will require input from the RECs and other regional bodies (including the SROs).

3. Delivers innovations through knowledge sharing and collaboration.
4. Fosters inclusivity around fertilizer and soil health issues in the region.
5. The regional hub focuses on transforming ideas into practical solutions that deliver sustainable impact.
6. It could provide a coordinated approach to resource mobilization for fertilizer and soil health issues.

The regional hub will serve as a platform to provide relevant technical support to national and sub-national interventions.

THE OBJECTIVES OF REGIONAL HUBS

Regional hubs, working with Member States and partners, will outline their priorities guided by the AFSH-AP and regional plans. Below are some of the suggested areas of focus for the regional hubs.

Soil Information System (SIS)

1. To support countries in accessing and utilizing digital soil health and fertility maps.
2. To facilitate access to plant, fertilizer, and soil analytical laboratory services, including the development of standard operating procedures (SOPs).
3. To develop a dashboard for soil health and fertility that allows for monitoring productivity, resilience, greenhouse gas emissions, and nutrient and water use.
4. To advise on carbon accumulation and sequestration potential for specific soils.

Knowledge Management (inclusive of both soil health and fertilizer)

1. To set up, update, and facilitate access to a rationalized and harmonized repository of knowledge products related to soil health and fertility management and climate adaptation, including decision support tools, with specific reference to climate adaptation practices.
2. To provide options for climate change adaptation and mitigation, responding to hazards resulting from climate change.

Capacity Building

1. To support farmer-led experimentation to adapt integrated soil fertility management (ISFM) and 4R+ practices and recommendations to local conditions.
2. To strengthen the capacities of regional and national institutions responsible for soil health and fertility research and development (R&D) and dissemination.
3. To operationalize a certification scheme for agronomy recommendation, knowledge and expertise.

Policy and Advocacy

1. To support policy development, harmonization, implementation and decision-making processes, e.g., in relation to:
 - Quality control and regulatory frameworks as well as smart subsidies for fertilizer and soil health management, including the development of nutrient road maps;
 - Incentivizing improved soil and agronomic management practices across agricultural sub-sectors; and

- Regulatory frameworks and standards to minimize the detrimental effect of land use and soil management practices in other sectors that affect agricultural soils (i.e., from mining, water, and infrastructure sectors).
- 2. To advise on the integration of gender- and youth-specific aspects.
- 3. To advocate for topics related to soil health and fertility and create widespread awareness on the role of soil health in sustaining agricultural production and other ecosystem services.

Resource Mobilization

1. To mobilize financial resources for the operation of the regional hub and its programs aimed at improving soil health and fertility.
2. To facilitate policies for country-based financing.
3. To facilitate access to support for sustainability schemes that include aspects of soil health, e.g., in relation to carbon credits or mitigation options, net zero production systems, etc.

National-Level Actors

Successful implementation of the Nairobi Declaration will require the domestication of the AFSH-AP at the national level and effective coordination of related national activities. National focal points will be critical as central contact points with regional and continental coordination functions.

The responsibilities of the national actors are as follows:

1. Engage with stakeholders and develop an agreed, comprehensive national fertilizer and soil health action plan (Country Action Plan) cascading from the AFSH-AP/SIA. (Recommended steps for the development of Country Action Plans are provided below).
2. Ensure the mainstreaming of the Country Action Plan into national agrifood investment plans and national soil health and fertilizer policies and strategies.
3. Lead planning for, and implementation of, the elements of the AFSH-AP which must be carried out at the country level.
4. Contribute to resource mobilization for implementation of the Country Action Plan for their respective countries through national budget allocations, private sector contributions, support from external development partners, etc.
5. Lead the mobilization of, and execution of, in-country partnerships, including those required between relevant ministries and agencies, to effectively implement AFSH-AP/SIA -related actions.
6. Support actors in the implementation of the Country Action Plan at sub-national levels in their planning and implementation of SIA/ AFSH-AP at those levels.

7. Develop and implement effective policies, regulations, and procedures for the implementation of the Country Action Plan at sub-national levels.
8. Ensure the development and execution of communication and advocacy strategies.
9. Strengthen institutional and human capacities for implementation of the AFSH-AP and SIA Framework.
10. Organize an effective monitoring, evaluation, and learning system for the AFSH-AP in alignment with the continental CAADP BR process.

Box 3. Steps for the Development of Country Action Plans

1. Initial visit to the country for dialogue on the AFSH-AP:
 - This preliminary visit should be implemented by key actors from the relevant regional hubs as well as regional representatives of the recognized supporting coalitions.
 - The purpose of the visit would be to engage national governments and other key stakeholders at the country level to discuss the critical importance of the AFSH-AP and discuss whether the country is interested and ready to start to domesticate the AFSH-AP.
 - In some cases, the visit may take place at the request of the country because they would very much like to start domesticating the AFSH-AP.
2. If/when a country expresses interest in proceeding with the development of a Country Action Plan the following steps are recommended: Conduct a country scoping study (local consultant):
 - This step should be implemented in collaboration between the country and the regional hub.
 - The objective would be to identify the critical issues in the country related to soil health (including soil fertility) and water resources at both farm and landscape levels, and/or within ecological niches of importance in the country (e.g., grazing lands, forest lands, wetlands, etc.) and simultaneously to identify key stakeholders (both state and non-state actors).
 - The scoping study should also include engagement with key stakeholders to evaluate the “readiness” of the country to develop and implement a Country Action Plan. Those stakeholders would include both state and non-state actors (private sector and civil society).
3. Discussion on country status and internal processes:
 - Based on the findings of the scoping study, there should be a national discussion on the preparedness of the country to develop and implement a Country Action Plan, and assuming that it was decided that the country was “ready”, there would also be a discussion on the processes for the development and implementation of the Action Plan.

- It is recommended that the national government lead this meeting but also include representatives of diverse stakeholders from the private sector and civil society, with guidance from technical experts in the relevant regional hub. This dialogue should strive to develop a process that would be understood and agreed upon by all stakeholders (both state and non-state actors). It may be useful to invite donors active in the country to participate from this stage onward.

4. Organization of country consultation (key stakeholders' group).

5. Development of Country Action Plans (Expert Group):

At this point, the regional hub and regional representatives of coalitions should meet with key actors at the country level who will be leading the process of developing the Country Action Plan and discuss key elements of a national Action Plan. Some of these key elements might include:

- The need to work at both the farm and landscape levels, with special attention to key agroecosystems within the country (crop farms, rangeland and/or forests etc.).
- The crucial need for a holistic and integrated plan (multi-sectoral) that will be implemented by both state and non-state actors.
- The need for an effective coordination unit at national and possibly at sub-national levels due to the number of actors involved and the multiple issues to be addressed. The organization that would host this coordination unit, and the structure of the unit, should be identified/developed early in the Country Action Plan development process.

- Key indicators for monitoring progress and reporting through the CAADP BR process, etc.

- The process for developing the Country Action Plan would ideally include an initial stakeholder meeting to announce the program, identify interested and capable participants (state and non-state actors), and gather some initial input from stakeholders to develop the Action Plan. In this meeting, a small group of key stakeholders (state and non-state) should be identified/selected and tasked to create an initial and fairly detailed plan for validation by the larger stakeholder group. Donors who are active at the country level should also be invited to participate in the discussions.

6. Validation of Country Action Plan:

- This would involve a meeting at the national level and include all key stakeholders, including donors active in the country.
- At this meeting, the group that was tasked with the development of a more detailed plan would present that plan and it would be discussed, adapted as necessary and finally approved (possibly with conditions identified by stakeholders in the meeting).

7. Integration of Country Action Plan (multiple ministries)

- The relevant ministries would have participated in the validation meeting and would now be tasked with integrating the agreed plan into the appropriate national plans and initiatives.
- How the Country Action Plan is incorporated into relevant country plans and initiatives

should be outlined by the Coordination Unit and clearly communicated to all stakeholders at the country level and with the relevant regional hub.

8. Identification of country-based implementing organizations.

9. Support the country with initiatives:

- As far as possible, national governments should provide financial and technical support to implement the Country Action Plan. Other national stakeholders (private sector and civil society) should also contribute as much as possible.
- Further financial support might be provided upon request by donors active in the country or one or more of the development banks.
- Technical support for the Country Action Plan should be sourced both from technical

experts within the country as well as the regional hubs and supporting technical coalitions participating in the SIA and AFSH-AP. Over time, the coalitions should work to build sufficient expertise within the region and country so that the country can meet most of their own technical needs – recognizing of course that it will always be useful for national experts to be connected to their relevant regional, continental and global Communities of Practice.

10. Support country actors to source funding:

- While national governments themselves should be the primary source of funding for Country Action Plans, the regional hubs, AUDA-NEPAD and FARA can and should assist stakeholders at the country level with sourcing additional financial assistance for the implementation of various aspects of Country Action Plans.

■ Coalitions to Support the Implementation of Actions

The coalition should provide coordinated thought leadership, capacity building, technical assistance, and backstopping of fertilizer and soil health initiatives related to the specific coalition support topics. They should also support countries and regional bodies in developing and implementing relevant components of the AFSH-AP. To ensure holistic and practical national implementation of the AFSH-AP, it is recommended that all of the recognized coalitions be represented during the development of national AFSH-AP.

Generic roles for the coalitions to support implementation of actions:

- 1.** Support national and regional initiatives and strengthen national and regional partners to ensure local ownership and sustainability of implementation and impact.
- 2.** Coordinate their activities with other coalitions, regional hubs and the other organizations to ensure that their operations do not duplicate or conflict with the actions of others and that their actions support the AFSH-AP and Country Action Plans in ways that lead to synergistic impacts.

3. Develop opportunities and resource mobilization from the donor community and facilitate the flow of technical and financial resources in support of the above.
4. Share information on the resources that they generate in support of the AFSH-AP and Country Action Plans with the relevant regional hubs and AUC and AUDA-NEPAD so that the total financial contributions to the AFSH-AP can be monitored and gaps can be identified.
5. Leverage the expertise of the member organizations based on existing expertise areas and assets and country presence.
6. Leverage their collective technical expertise, assets, and synergies and support regional soil fertility hubs in Western, Eastern, Southern, Central, and Northern Africa to support the implementation of the AFSH-AP/ SIA.
7. Provide expertise, as needed, in complementary areas and engage with coalitions on other thematic topics to support interventions.
8. Operate in a responsive and agile structure with the ability to respond to diverse donor, regional hub, or national needs quickly and efficiently.
9. Leverage existing funding mechanisms and fertilizer and soil health initiatives of the member organizations to support and strengthen new initiatives.

Box 4. Difference Between Implementation and Implementation Support

The various coalitions are expected to provide implementation support to the regional hubs, and the countries. As such there is the need to distinguish between implementation and implementation support to allow all the actors to play their roles effectively and in a coherent and well-coordinated manner to prevent duplication of efforts as well as taking up the roles of the national actors.

Implementation is defined as “the execution of plans, activities, projects, and programs and their contribution to policy formulations and discussions”. Implementation will focus on directly carrying out of activities in the field at the country level and the execution of tasks and processes for handling the activities on the ground. The core function of implementation will be operationalizing core activities specific to the countries as outlined in Country Action Plans.

Implementation support refers to facilitation of support to regional and national actors in the design and execution of activities, projects, and programs in line with the Country Action Plans. It is the provision of technical, financial and human resources support to regional and national actors who implement projects and programs as outlined in the Country Action Plans. The focus of the implementation support is to provide human capital, technical experiences, advisory services for the implementation of activities, projects, and programs at the national and sub-national levels. The implementation support organizations are also expected to participate in and advise national and sub-national policy discussions.

The coalitions and the regional hubs are expected to respect, support and align with designated national actors who will lead and own national processes and programs.

Roles of the Coalitions to Support the Implementation of Actions

The coalitions are alliances of organizations with similar and complementary skills, competencies and experience in defined thematic areas that support the implementation of the AFSH-AP and SIA. Each coalition is made up of willing organizations with their own structure who agree to work together to support the implementation of actions under each thematic area.

The central role of the coalitions is to act as an “implementation support” partner for national and regional actors in line with their plans. The coalitions may be involved in technical activities, planning and organization, partnership support, networking, resource mobilization, financial management, etc. The implementation support provided by coalitions may be at all governmental levels: i.e., continental, regional (Hub), and country level. The coalitions will have dedicated roles and activities in the central work plan to be jointly developed by AUC/ AUDA-NEPAD/ FARA (TSO).

Multiple coalitions are envisaged; currently, the following have been established: Coalition of Implementors of Fertilizers and Soil Health (CIFSH), the Coalition for Strengthening Extension and Advisory Services in Africa (C4SEAS), the Coalition

for Policy and Advocacy (C4PA), the Coalition for Soil Information Systems in Africa (C4SISA), and the Coalition for Fertilizer and Private Sector Engagement (C4FB). In principle, one organization can belong to more than one coalition provided it contributes to the coalition action through its competencies and comparative advantages. It is essential that every organization in a coalition has something to contribute and gain. Every coalition will be expected to have a lead organization and/ or with a co-lead, it may also embrace rotational leadership. The role of a lead organization will be solely the facilitation of coalition actions, fiduciary management, technical reporting, liaisons, etc. Although coalitions may be formed with a smaller number of member organizations, these coalitions are considered open for additional membership as relevant organizations arise that can constructively and actively contribute to the coalitions’ actions.

A coalition “is not a new organization” and hence does not require the conventional organizational structures or its own defined personnel structure. The personnel needed for the coalition could be staff of the member organizations who will dedicate a proportion of their time to the coalition activities.

TOR FOR THE COALITION OF IMPLEMENTORS OF FERTILIZERS AND SOIL HEALTH (CIFSH)

1. The coalitions will support national and regional initiatives and strengthen the institutional and human capacity in data management and analytics for empowerment, development of Country Action Plans, local ownership, sustainability and scalability of interventions developed under the AFSH-AP. (Outcome 4; Output 4.1- 4.4)
2. The coalition will mobilize resources from the international and domestic donor communities and facilitate the flow of technical and financial resources for the implementation of AFSH-AP in the regions and countries in an agile and responsive manner. (Outcomes 1 – 4)

3. The coalition, in collaboration with other partners, will leverage their collective technical expertise, assets, and synergies to support County Action Plans and regional soil fertility hubs (centers of excellence) in Western, Eastern, Southern, Central, and Northern Africa to support the implementation of the AFSH-AP and SIA; by multiplying impact, knowledge transfer, build local ownership and ensure harmonized actions to address the fertilizer and soil health challenges in Africa. (Outcomes 1, 3 and 4)
4. The coalition will draw on the expertise of their members and their portfolios of proven solutions and interventions, their frameworks for making solutions available and relevant at scale and use their capacity in research and innovation to fill remaining gaps and answer open questions in close collaboration with local stakeholders. The coalition will support national and regional partners to contribute to the increase in agricultural productivity

(crops, livestock, forestry, and non-timber forest products) and accelerate inclusive and sustainable agricultural transformation through support to regions and countries to achieve increased fertilizer and nutrient use efficiencies, improved soil health at farm and landscape levels, strengthened climate change adaptation and production systems improvement. (Outcome 2; Output 2.1)

The coalitions will work with various partners and stakeholders to resuscitate the African Center for Fertilizer Development (ACFD) in Harare, Zimbabwe. (Outcomes 1, 2, and 4)

Current members:

International Fertilizer Development Center (IFDC), International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), African Plant Nutrition Institute (APNI) and FARA

TOR FOR THE COALITION FOR STRENGTHENING EXTENSION AND ADVISORY SERVICES IN AFRICA (C4SEAS)

1. Conduct comprehensive assessments to evaluate existing agricultural extension and advisory services (AEAS) models at the local, national, and regional levels, create and apply better, participatory, farmer-inclusive, context-specific methodology, and support sustainable soil health solutions.
2. Support the mobilization of resources and lobbying for government backing, advocating for increased investment to enhance national AEAS for effective fertilizer application and soil health enhancement.
3. Leverage expertise to design and implement pluralistic, grassroots-oriented AEAS interventions tailored to diverse local needs, ensuring inclusivity and effectiveness at all levels.
4. Strengthen current centers of excellence in AEAS and/or Country Forum to build knowledge and skills for public and private sector AEAS providers for increased capability in soil health practices.

5. Provide AEAS expertise and guidance to the regional hubs' centers of excellence to promote evidence-based soil fertility and fertilizer management recommendations.
6. Support national systems to improve last-mile delivery and farmer access to soil health technology and inputs.
7. Facilitate the collection, documentation and dissemination of best practices and innovations related to AEAS services, soil fertility and fertilizer use and support knowledge sharing platforms for last mile delivery.
8. Collaborate with other coalitions to integrate and strengthen extension and advisory concerns, advancing soil health and sustainable soil management alternatives.
9. Promote and support digital innovations for extension delivery by developing and

deploying mobile advisory services, digital platforms, and decision-support tools to provide farmers with real-time data, weather advisories, and soil-specific recommendations while facilitating feedback mechanisms to enhance soil health and fertilizer management.

Current members:

African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (AFAAS), Sasakawa Africa Association, Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA), Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM), Center for Agriculture and Biosciences International (CABI), EEAF, African Fertilizer and Agribusiness Partnership (AFAP), Catholic Relief Services (CRS), International Soil Reference and Information Center (ISRIC), and FARA

TOR FOR THE COALITION FOR FERTILIZER AND PRIVATE SECTOR ENGAGEMENT (C4FB)

The private sector and business coalition will provide coordinated thought leadership, capacity building, technical assistance, and backstopping related to the roles and responsibilities of the PSBCI, which are primarily focused on the private sector, finance, and trade. Sustain Africa as an IFDC led platform will lead the PSBC, working with other coalitions on workstreams that overlap, the regional hubs and respective countries in developing and implementing the deliverables of the AFSH-AP.

The key essentials from the Nairobi Declaration for the C4FB are as follows:

1. Triple domestic production and distribution of certified quality organic and inorganic fertilizers by 2034 - to be led by IFDC and AFAP.
2. Fully operationalize the Africa Fertilizer Financing Mechanism (AFFM) to improve the production, procurement, and distribution

of organic and inorganic fertilizers and soil health interventions - to be led by the AFFM.

3. Leverage the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) to increase intra-Africa fertilizer trade and enact sovereign guarantee agreements between importers and manufacturers.
4. Domesticating the Continental Action Plan into national agrifood investment plans for implementation.

The coalition will work with the donor community, fertilizer and other soil health input companies, financial institutions, the regional hubs, and respective countries and also work in synergy with respective coalitions as necessary to ensure the delivery of the AFSH-AP.

Specific roles for the C4FB:

- Lead in resource mobilization from donors, financial institutions, and the private sector to facilitate the flow of technical and financial resources in, and activities that lead to, the realization of the PSBSC mandate. Work with global, continental, regional, and national private sector working with governments and development partners towards the realization of tripling domestic production and distribution of certified quality organic and inorganic fertilizers by 2034.
- To improve access to finance to the sector, support the AFFM in enhancing its offering and fully operationalizing; supporting efforts in repurposing for smarter and enhanced utilization of subsidy funds with increased

uptake of technology for efficiency; integrating climate-smart soil fertility investments; and incorporating de-risking instruments to safeguard farmers' investments and gender-sensitive financing.

- Work with and leverage the AfCFTA and other stakeholders, including governments and RECs, towards increased intra-African fertilizer trade.
- Lead in growing the membership of partners that can join in implementing the workstreams of the PSBCI. Lead in stakeholder engagement, coordinating, tracking and reporting the work and results of the initiatives that relate to increasing local production and innovative financing to the sector.
- Capacity building and technical assistance to governments, small and medium-sized enterprises, women and youth that enable tripling production, enhancing innovative financing and increased trade.
- Work with the TSO, respective coalition partners, regional hubs, and respective countries to support the domestication of the AFSH-AP into national agrifood investment plans for implementation.

Current members:

IFDC (Sustain Africa), African Development Bank (AfDB - AFFM), AFAP, Trade-Mark-Africa, Continental private sector, International Fiscal Association-Africa and FARA

TOR FOR THE COALITION FOR SOIL INFORMATION SYSTEMS IN AFRICA (C4SISA)

The coalition seeks to be the thought leader in African soil information systems (SIS) development, providing capacity building, technical assistance, and backstopping the development and management of digital SISs and databases in Africa. The coalition will support countries and regional bodies in developing and implementing discoverable, accessible, interoperable, and regularly updated digital SIS, soil data centers, and decision support tools to guide investments, sustainable soil management, and soil health monitoring at all African levels. The coalition will also support standardization of processes and methods for establishing digital SIS to operationalize fertilizer, crop, and climate decision support tools on soil management at the national, regional, and continental levels.

The roles of C4SISA include:

- Support the establishment and operationalization of a soil observatory, which could eventually be identified as the African Union Soil Observatory (AUSO) and African Soil Data Center (ASDAC).
- Support establishment, operationalization, harmonization, and standardization of SISs, soil data centers, and soil health monitoring at the regional and national level.
- Support standardization and implementation of capacity building programs for setting up, management, and use of SISs.
- Support establishment and operationalization of a soil health, fertilizer, crop, and climate dashboard for decision support on sustainable soil management.
- Collaborate with other coalitions to support the establishment and operationalization of analytical and decision-support tools to guide investment decisions at the farm, national, regional, and continental levels.
- Collaborate with other coalitions to support building, strengthening, and standardizing soil and fertilizer analysis capacity to rapidly, accurately, and cost-effectively analyze large sample volumes.
- Collaborate with other coalitions to support standardization of quality control measures for soil and fertilizer analysis at national and regional laboratories in accordance with agreed quality standards.
- Jointly develop proposals for funded projects that aim at the development of the SISs, or part of them.

- Collaborate with other coalitions to support the development and operationalization of tools for promoting national soil health and fertilizer policies, strategies, and road maps.
- Collaborate with other coalitions to support selecting and developing soil health indicators and descriptors for monitoring soil health at the continental, regional, and national levels.
- Support tracking the impact of policy implementation on soil health and fertilizer efficiency at continental, regional, and national levels.
- Advise on strategic data collection and special studies to support soil health monitoring.
- Promote access to and use of soil information in decision-making amongst stakeholders and smallholder farmers.
- Promote long-term political, institutional and financial support for soil information at continental (AU), regional and national levels.
- Support partnerships and networking with initiatives and programs for SIS development in Africa.

Current partners:

FARA, ISRIC, CABI, and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

TOR FOR THE COALITION FOR POLICIES AND ADVOCACY (C4PA)

The main objectives of the C4PA are:

- Establishment of a local coalition of organizations under one memorandum of understanding (MoU) by creating a national Multi-stakeholder Soil Health Initiative Platform (MSHIP).
- The MoU will formalize the MSHIP coalition and declare its objective of supporting the implementation of the AFSH-AP.
- The coalition will serve as a platform for donors and other stakeholders interested in investing in the implementation of the Nairobi Declaration on AFSH at the country level.
- Support the countries in domesticating the AFSH-AP and help develop strategies and actions to address challenges in fertilizer and soil health.
- Develop strong relationships across government, civil society, development partners, and the private sector to coordinate stakeholders' contributions to policy development in implementing the AFSH-AP.
- Support the country advisory group (multi-stakeholder platform) established to continue adapting and implementing the AFSH-AP.

- The coalition will facilitate developing and communicating best practices and resource mobilization to ensure a coordinated approach to fertilizer and soil health initiatives.
 - Collaborate with other coalitions on resource mobilization.
- Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI); Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network (FANRPAN); Alliance for African Partnership (AAP)/Michigan State University (MSU), and FARA

Current members:

Africa Network of Agricultural Policy Research Institutes (ANAPRI); AGRA; International

Sub-National Level Actors

Officials and stakeholders at the sub-national level will:

1. Participate in national planning for implementation of AFSH-AP.
2. Participate in the development and implementation of plans for implementation of AFSH-AP in their areas of jurisdiction.
3. Engage in national dialogues and report to national authorities on progress in the implementation of AFSH-AP/SIA in their areas of jurisdiction.

Financing the AFSH-AP/SIA

The endorsement of the AFSH-AP/SIA by the Nairobi Declaration represents establishing an African system to organize and strengthen how Africa's soils are managed. The development and implementation of these systems require the active engagement of different actors across

geographical levels, viz., the farm, watershed, community, sub-national, national, regional, and continental levels. Actors outside Africa are also engaged in supporting this initiative. Some of the key elements of the system are described in the sections above.

Each of the elements and actors in the system are autonomous entities with their own plans, activities, and budgets. As such, it is not practical to establish a comprehensive “aggregate budget” for the AFSH-AP/SIA nor is there a single line of authority over such a budget for the system in its entirety or for its constituent parts. Therefore, the financing (and the corresponding flow of funds for the various entities and their activities related to the AFSH-AP) will take the form of a large number of program-specific modalities that will correspond to the operational requirements of funders (which will include *inter alia*, public sector budgets, development partners, private sector actors including agribusiness and partners and farmers, etc.). It is expected that the bulk of the funding for the system will be needed at the national, sub-national, and farm levels.

While there is no single authority over the various elements of the system, the outcome of the AU Extraordinary Heads of State Fertilizer and Soil Health Summit (Nairobi, 2024) appealed to all actors operating in the fertilizer and soil health space to operate in accordance with the principles and approaches endorsed by the Summit (and expressed in the SIA Framework document, the AFSH-AP, and the Nairobi Declaration). All such actors will be expected to commit to operating in this manner. Systematic reporting on progress in the implementation of the AFSH-AP/SIA will provide an opportunity to take stock of the extent to which actors (including development partners and the private sector) adhere to such commitments.

Conclusion

The organizational structure for implementing the AFSH-AP and the SIA ensures coherent planning for implementation and effective engagement with minimal overlaps and duplication of efforts. This document will be referred to by all as a guide to ensure coherence of action. The specified roles for actors (as articulated above) are intended to ensure that each actor will carry out its activities in a manner consistent with the SIA Framework and the AFSH-AP.

