



# ANNUAL REPORT

# 2023

Annual Programme Progress  
Report and Summary of the  
2019-2023 BP cycle



© 2025 Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa

**CITATION:**

Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA),  
FARA Annual Report 2023  
Accra, Ghana.

FARA encourages the fair use of this material.

**ADDRESS**

No. 7 Flower Avenue, New Achimota Mile 7  
PMB CT 173, Accra, Ghana  
Tel: + 233 302 772823 | 302779421  
Fax: + 233 302 773676  
Email: [info@faraafrica.org](mailto:info@faraafrica.org)  
Website: [www.faraafrica.org](http://www.faraafrica.org)

**Photo credits: FARA**

**Editing & Graphic Design: FARA Communications Office**

# Acronyms

<b>2IPS</b>	Innovation to Impact Partnerships & Systems
<b>AARINENA</b>	Association of Agricultural Research Institutions in the Near East and North Africa
<b>AATF</b>	Africa Agriculture Technology Foundation
<b>ABLA</b>	Agribusiness Learning Alliance
<b>AFAAS</b>	African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services
<b>AfCFTA</b>	African Continental Free Trade Area
<b>AfDB</b>	African Development Bank
<b>AFSH-AP</b>	Africa Fertilizer and Soil Health Action Plan
<b>AIRTEA</b>	Strengthening Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Ecosystem for Inclusive Rural Transformation and Livelihoods in Eastern Africa
<b>ANAPRI</b>	Africa Network of Agricultural Policy Research Institutes
<b>APNI</b>	Africa Plant Nutrition Institute
<b>AR4D</b>	Agricultural Research for Development
<b>ARC</b>	Agriculture Research Council
<b>ASARECA</b>	Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa
<b>ASBPP</b>	African Seed and Biotechnology Partnership Platform
<b>AU-DAS</b>	African Union Digital Agriculture Strategy
<b>AUC</b>	African Union Commission
<b>AUDA</b>	African Union Development Agency
<b>BMGF</b>	Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
<b>CEAFIRST</b>	Consortium Europe Africa on Research and Innovation for Food Systems Transformation
<b>CAADP</b>	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme
<b>CAADP-XP4</b>	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme ex-Pillar IV
<b>CAFEYA</b>	Climate Action and Food Systems Empowerment by Youth in Africa
<b>CCARDESA</b>	Centre for Coordination of Agricultural Research and Development for Southern Africa
<b>CIG</b>	Cote D'Ivoire-Ghana
<b>CIRAD</b>	French Centre for International Cooperation in Agricultural Research for Development
<b>COMESA</b>	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
<b>CRS</b>	Catholic Relief Services
<b>CSA</b>	Climate-Smart Agriculture
<b>DeSIRA</b>	Development Smart Innovation through Research in Agriculture
<b>DeSIRA-LIFT</b>	A service facility supporting the DeSIRA Initiative
<b>EAFF</b>	Eastern Africa Farmers' Federation
<b>EC</b>	European Commission
<b>FANRPAN</b>	Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network
<b>FAO</b>	Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations

<b>FNSSA</b>	Food, Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture
<b>GA</b>	General Assembly
<b>GFAiR</b>	Global Forum on Agricultural Research and Innovation
<b>GIZ</b>	German Agency for International Cooperation
<b>ICF</b>	Institutional Capacity and Future Scenarios
<b>IDRC</b>	International Development Research Centre
<b>IFAD</b>	International Fund for Agricultural Development
<b>IFDC</b>	International Fertilizer Development Center
<b>IICA</b>	Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture
<b>IITA</b>	International Institute for Tropical Agriculture
<b>IRC</b>	International Research Consortium
<b>ITFC</b>	International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation
<b>JRC</b>	Joint Research Centre
<b>KM</b>	Knowledge Management
<b>KM4AgD</b>	Knowledge Management for Agricultural Development
<b>KMDL</b>	Knowledge Management, Digitalization and Learning
<b>MEL</b>	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (system)
<b>NORAD</b>	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
<b>OACPS</b>	Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States
<b>PAFO</b>	Pan African Farmers' Organisation
<b>PANAP</b>	Pan-African Network for Economic Analysis of Policies
<b>PARI</b>	Program for Accompanying Research for Agricultural Innovation
<b>PISSA</b>	Partnership for Integrated Seed Sector Development in Africa
<b>PO</b>	Programme Oversight
<b>PPI</b>	Policy Practice Index
<b>R&amp;I</b>	Research and Innovation
<b>RMRN</b>	Regional Multi-actor Research Network
<b>RPIn</b>	Research, Policy, and Investments
<b>RUFORUM</b>	Regional Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture
<b>SIA</b>	Soil Initiative for Africa
<b>SROs</b>	Sub-regional Organisations
<b>StEPPFoS</b>	Strengthening Evidence-Based Policy Practice for Sustainable Food Systems
<b>STI</b>	Science, Technology, and Innovation
<b>TAAT</b>	Technologies for African Agricultural Transformation
<b>TETFund</b>	Tertiary Education Trust Fund
<b>TSF</b>	Transition Support Facility
<b>USAID</b>	United States Agency for International Development
<b>YPARD</b>	Young Professionals for Agricultural Development

# Table of Contents

List of Tables	ii
List of Figures	iii
Acronyms	iv
Executive Director’s Message About FARA	1
Section 1 INTRODUCTION	3
Section 2 OVERVIEW OF PROGRESS AND PERFORMANCE Key Interventions and Achievements	6
Section 3 SUMMARY OF ACHIEVEMENTS AND PROGRESS TOWARDS OUTPUT TARGETS Innovation to Impact Partnerships and Systems (2IPS) Knowledge Management, Learning and Communication (KMLC) Research, Policy and Investment (RPIIn) Programme Oversight (PO) Budget Performance (January to December 2023)	14
Section 4 CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED AND MITIGATION STRATEGIES	28
Section 5 CONCLUDING REMARKS	59
Annex 1 CUMULATIVE PROGRESS TOWARDS MILESTONES FOR 2023	31
Annex 2. OVERALL ACHIEVEMENT OF THE FARA BUSINESS PLAN 2019-2023	33



# Message from the Executive Director



It is with great honour that I present the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) 2023 Annual Progress and Performance Report. This report reflects our collective efforts to advance agricultural research and innovation across the continent, in alignment with the CAADP Malabo Agenda and its ambitious targets.

In 2023, FARA recorded significant milestones through strategic partnerships, effective knowledge dissemination, and targeted capacity development initiatives. Our work spanned four interconnected programme clusters: Innovation to Impact Partnerships and Systems; Knowledge Management and Learning; Institutional Capacity and Future Scenarios; and Research, Policy and Investment. Together, these efforts delivered an overall technical performance of 93 percent, underscoring our commitment to harnessing science, technology, and innovation to build

resilient, productive, and sustainable agri-food systems in Africa.

As we conclude the 2019 to 2023 Business Plan cycle, this report highlights the progress achieved during the year while laying the foundation for the next phase of our strategic journey. We remain resolute in our mission to convene stakeholders, strengthen collaboration, and champion continental initiatives that will shape the future of African agriculture.

I invite you to engage with the detailed account of our interventions, achievements, and lessons learned in the pages that follow. Together, we can accelerate the transformation of Africa's agriculture for the benefit of its people and economies.

Dr. Aggrey Agumya  
Executive Director  
Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA)

## About FARA

Established in July 2002 in Maputo, Mozambique, the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) is a non-profit international organization committed to transforming agriculture across the continent. FARA envisions a productive and sustainable agricultural sector that ensures food security, supports sustainable livelihoods, and drives Africa's broader development goals. Through strategic research partnerships, FARA connects science with agricultural practice to deliver impactful, evidence-based solutions.

---

## VISION

Africa becomes a food-secure continent through partnerships that connect science to resilient agricultural livelihoods.

## FARAs Mission

Catalysing multi-actor partnership solutions that enhance the application of science to co-create sustainable and decent agricultural livelihoods. In pursuit of its mission, FARA runs the following functions:



### Policy & Advocacy

Advocacy for policy reforms as well as proven approaches and models for increasing the impact of research and innovation in terms of food security, jobs, and incomes.



### Capacity Development & Agri-Preneurship

Capacity strengthening of Individuals and Institutions across agricultural value chains.



### Knowledge Management & Outreach

Strengthening the knowledge ecosystem and facilitating knowledge and information management on innovations and good practices for improving agricultural productivity and competitiveness



### Research Management & Leadership

Promote the development and coordination of continental agricultural transformation programmes.

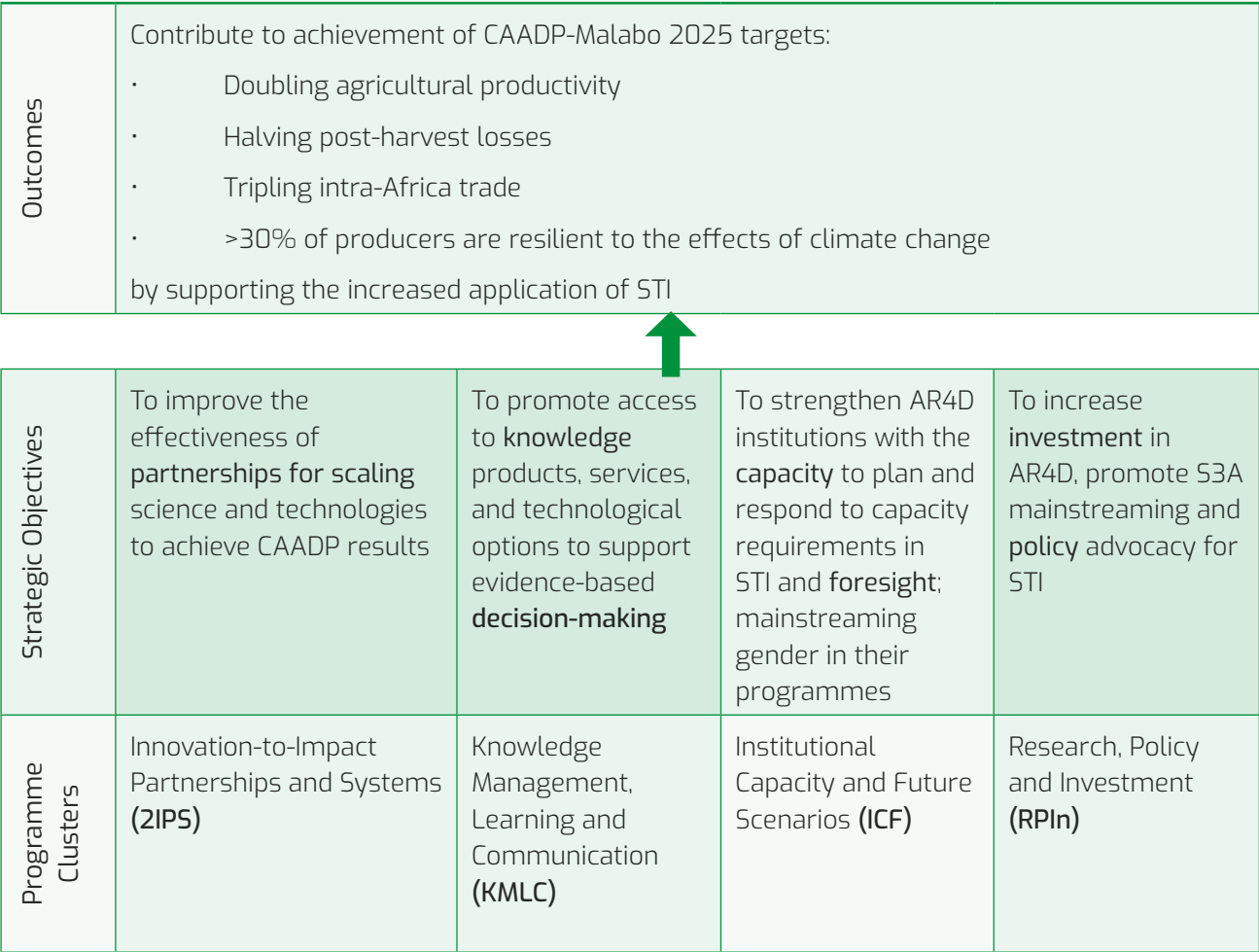
# Section 1.

## Introduction

This report details the advancements made in executing the FARA Secretariat's programme from January to December 2023. It also provides an overview of the cumulative progress of the Business Plan (BP) covering the period 2019 to 2023. FARA's strategic alignment with the CAADP-Malabo agenda and its corresponding targets is a key focus of the BP. It aims to contribute to the accomplishment of four out of the 24 CAADP-Malabo 2025 targets: doubling productivity, halving post-harvest losses, tripling intra-Africa trade, and enhancing resilience to climate change. This contribution is facilitated through the promotion of increased, sustainable, and profitable utilization of science, technology, and innovation (STI) in the realms of food and agriculture.

The report outlines the strategic objectives, representing the primary programmatic thrusts of the Secretariat, as depicted in

Figure 1. The actions designed to achieve these strategic objectives are categorized into four interrelated Programme Clusters, aligning seamlessly with the strategic goals illustrated in Figure 1. To support the implementation of programme actions, essential functions such as the Programme Oversight (PO), Finance, Human Resources and Administration (HRA), and the Executive Directorate play crucial roles.



Oversight and support functions	Programme Oversight (PO)	
	Human Resources and Administration (HRA)	Finance
	Executive Directorate Unit (EDU)	

*Figure 1. The Organisation of FARA's Programme*

In the year 2023, the FARA Secretariat programme consisted of 15 bilateral projects. The projects with substantial funds remain the EU/IFAD-supported CAADP-XP4 project, the EC/OACPS-supported AIRTEA project, the CEA-FIRST, the AfDB-supported TAAT project and the NORAD-supported project on mainstreaming food system approaches contributed to all four programme clusters. The rest of the projects have a narrow scope where each mainly contributes to only one or two clusters (Annex 1).



The various projects were distributed among the four programmes, strategically aligned to fulfil the specific objectives of the Secretariat. This approach effectively mitigated the impact of programme fragmentation, ensuring the Secretariat remained resilient in addressing emerging sectoral issues. The Secretariat demonstrated proficiency in securing substantial grants and support for its primary functions on the continent. Ongoing initiatives involve actively pursuing the hosting rights for the

Secretariat of key continental endeavours such as the SIA.

The report provides a summary of significant achievements during the reporting period (section 2.1), highlighting their contributions to progress in meeting output indicator targets (section 2.2). Additionally, the report elaborates on the budget performance of the various programmes



## Section 2.

# Overview of Progress and Performance (January to December 2023)

The performance over the reporting period (January to December 2023) is presented in terms of the most significant interventions and achievements (section 3.1) and in a structured summary of the progress made towards attainment of individual indicator milestones set for 2023 (section 2.2).

### 2.1 Key Interventions and Achievements

This report is focussed on the activities and achievements considered most significant. The report is organised around seven themes.

#### 2.1.1 Formulation of Continental Initiatives and Resource Mobilisation

The Secretariat is actively implementing the Board's directives to shift from the existing fragmented structure of the programme, characterized by numerous independent and short-term projects, towards a portfolio featuring a more manageable number of integrated, large, and long-term continental projects. It was imperative that these projects receive the endorsement and ownership of the primary authorizing bodies, namely the AUC and/or AUDA-NEPAD.

A procedural framework for developing these projects is currently under examination, encompassing four key stages: (i) obtaining endorsement and ownership from the AUC and/or AUDA-NEPAD; (ii) collaborating with experts and partner institutions to formulate a visioning document; (iii) conducting structured consultations to inform project development and enhance ownership; and (iv) engaging with funders for financing project preparation and implementation. Notably, two initiatives collaboratively developed with AUC and other partners, namely the Common Africa Agro Parks (CAAPs) Programme and the Soil Initiative for Africa (SIA), have progressed significantly to stage IV, involving consultations and engagement with funders. The SIA is slated for launch in May 2024 during the Africa Fertilizer and Soil Health Summit, with USD 1.16 million secured or pledged for further development of these initiatives.

Four additional initiatives, focusing on climate-smart agriculture (CSA), mainstreaming the food systems approach in CAADP, capacity strengthening, and enhancing seed systems have been introduced into the project pipeline. The CSA initiative is titled the Africa CSA initiative (ACSAi). Input into its vision document was obtained from key partners and AUC was engaged to get its endorsement. The vision document is being crafted by experts and partners. The ACSAi will build on the partnerships and frameworks established by AUDA-NEPAD on the same subject. The Food Systems Mainstreaming initiative, co-led with AUDA-NEPAD, has received approximately USD 2 million in financing from NORAD for visioning document preparation, consultations, and long-term programme development. The Capacity strengthening initiative titled Consolidating agriculture research and innovation systems in Africa (CARISA) is aimed at enhancing the capacities of especially national systems in the generation and scaling of technologies. It is jointly led by CAADP-XP4 institutions, RUFORUM and the CGIAR. It was developed with the support of the AfDB, and a concept was submitted for consideration under the Bank's regional public good window, which is competitive. The seed systems initiative titled Partnership for Integrated Seed Sector Development (PISSA) sets out to improve farmers' access to quality seeds. It is being developed in partnership with the AUC under the Africa Seed and Biotechnology Programme and with anticipated support from the Government of the

Netherlands. Two more initiatives, centred on reducing postharvest losses and enhancing the consumption and commercialization of forgotten foods, have been identified for inclusion in the pipeline.

Unlike FARA's current projects, the initiatives under development are initiated collaboratively by FARA and partners, aligning with their core mandates. Additionally, as these projects share a common set of partners, they are designed to complement one another, forming an integrated programme.

With the introduction of these large new initiatives, the Secretariat plans to transition by reducing emphasis on small, short-term projects. During this interim period, to ensure continuity and sustain capacity, the Secretariat continues to leverage available opportunities to mobilize resources, such as responding to calls, cultivating partnerships with potential financiers, and expanding the scope of existing projects.

In this regard:



During the reporting period, an additional commitment or pledge of USD 3.6 million has been secured. However, it is important to note that, with the exception of the Tetfund-Nigeria grant, these funds do not adequately cover the Secretariat's core costs, which include staff and operational expenses. Addressing this shortfall is a priority for the Secretariat, and efforts are underway to mitigate this challenge.

## 2.1.2 Strengthening collaboration among CAADP-XP4 organizations



The objective of the CAADP-XP4 programme is to strengthen the collaborative capacities of CAADP-XP4 organizations (AFAAS, ASARECA, CCARDESA, CORAF, and FARA) to improve individual and collective efforts in ensuring effectiveness in supporting food and agriculture research and innovation systems at national level. The CAADP-XP4 programme has made remarkable strides across its five key outputs, significantly impacting the agricultural and food systems sector in Africa:

- **Output 1:** FARA partnered with other organizations targeting the strengthening of regional and sub-regional agricultural research system. It successfully enhanced capacity through human resource development, operational system upgrades, and strategic capacity plans. Despite achieving 75% of the milestone of this output, the programme successfully empowered eight continental and subregional organizations, fostering effective programme planning and implementation.



- **Output 2:** FARA's effort is focused on building partnerships for climate-relevant innovation. It established and strengthened 21 multi-stakeholder platforms, influencing 20 partner institutions. This collaborative approach facilitated knowledge sharing, capacity building, and policy advocacy, reaching various agricultural value chains, and promoting climate-smart agriculture.

- **Output 3:** concentrated on strengthening national policies, regional institutional arrangements, and market access. FARA's training initiatives, capacity building for climate-smart agriculture (CSA)-relevant policies, and support for policy reforms in 14 countries created an enabling environment to improve the generation and uptake of climate-relevant agricultural innovation.



- **Output 4:** which focuses on knowledge management, highlighted the effectiveness of interoperability initiatives and online platforms, connecting with a user base exceeding 1.5 million. This was achieved through the creation of 20 knowledge products and the organization of 38 knowledge-sharing events, among other efforts aimed at strengthening the knowledge ecosystem in agricultural research and

development. FARA's active participation in UNFCCC processes also contributed to enhancing Africa's involvement in climate discussions.

- **Output 5:** focusing on planning, coordination, monitoring, evaluation, learning, and reporting, reported 99% progress in demonstrating effective tool utilization, frequent portfolio review meetings, and stakeholder engagement in strategic planning.

Overall, the CAADP-XP4 programme's success lies in its holistic approach, encompassing capacity-building initiatives, collaborative partnerships, policy influence, and robust knowledge management strategies. These efforts have significantly contributed to the advancement and sustainability of African agriculture, benefiting a diverse range of organizations, individuals, and countries.

### 2.1.3 Facilitating engagement of African stakeholders in the co-design of One CGIAR actions in Africa



The One CGIAR reform process commenced in August 2020 with series of activities that led to the development of a communiqué followed by an action plan. Over the reporting period the arrangements were strengthened with:

1. Preparation of the plan of action by a team of CGIAR scientists and experts from the Africa Agricultural Research and Innovation organizations.



2. Launch of the Plan of action— took place at the 8th Africa Agriculture and Science Week. This was intended to increase awareness about the progress of engagement between the CGIAR and African institutions.



3. Sensitisation of stakeholders about the Plan of action and soliciting their inputs for its implementation. This was done during a side event at the RUFORUM AGM held in November 2023.

4. Initiation of the implementation of low hanging activities by integrating action plan tasks in ongoing activities that are funded. The notable one among these is the elaboration of a new CAADP research and innovation strategy. The background work on this task is the assessment of the Science Agenda for Agriculture in Africa (S3A) which was commissioned by FARA with support from DESIRA LIFT. The assessment will inform the design of the new strategy.



5. Efforts at raising funds for the implementation of the three-year action plan include the joint development

of the AfDB project tagged "Consolidating the Agriculture Research and Innovation in Africa (CARISA)" with a budget proposal of 27 million UA. The proposal is still going through the Bank's internal competitive process for funding.

6. A workshop to elaborate the roadmap for implementation of the action plan will be hosted by ASARECA in Nairobi from 29 February to 1 March 2024.
7. Upon invitation from the CGIAR continental Director for Africa, the ED of FARA participated in interviews for the position of the lead person that will support the Director in steering CGIAR engagement with African partners.
8. DeSIRA-LIFT is supporting the development of the assessment of the Science Agenda as a first step towards the formulation of the CAADP research and innovation strategy—one of the action areas of the CGIAR-African Institutions action plan.



#### 2.1.4 Strengthening North-South partnerships and South-South and Triangular Cooperation

The "Long-term Europe-Africa Research and Innovation Partnership for Food and Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture" (LEAP4FNSSA), an EU-supported project that aims to establish an institutional mechanism (platform) for long-term and sustainable partnerships among African and European institutions, achieved its objective of establishing the International Research Consortium (IRC). In 2023, FARA led the preparation of a proposal in response to a competitive call for a Horizon Europe coordination support action (CSA) to operationalise the IRC. The project proposed for this CSA was tagged "CEA-FIRST" Consortium Europe Africa on Research and Innovation for Food Systems Transformation. The proposal was successful, and the EC signed the FARA-led consortium, a grant agreement for funding of up to 3.3 million euros over a period of four years. A grant for a second FARA-led CSA project named "StEPPFo5" Strengthening Evidence-Based Policy and Practice for Sustainable Food Systems under the EU-AU Partnership was similarly secured with funding of up to 2.9 million euros over four years with 16 consortium partners. The Secretariat continues to consolidate its partnerships with European institutions cultivated through the CAADP-XP4 project, notably the Knowledge for Development Partnership and through the DESIRA-LIFT support facility.

The FARA's partnership with European institutions continues to add value to FARA's various projects. The partnerships with the University of Oxford on foresight training was further consolidated with a training in Mombasa and later in Naivasha in Kenya. The endeavour led to two foresight analysis reports.

Outside Europe, the Secretariat initiated partnerships with North American organizations, namely the Catholic Relief Services (USD 0.2 million), USAID (USD 0.15 million), and BMGF (USD 0.5 million) who have committed to support the development of the Soil Initiative for Africa. The CRS and USAID have also signalled readiness to support the CSA initiative. The engagement with these organisations is expected to expand as the new initiatives take shape. Emerging partnerships include the Colorado State university on the ACSAI; the IFDC on the SIA and Africa fertilizer and soil health Action Plan; the APLU on capacity development, and US State Department on the Vision for Adapted Crops and Soils (VACS).

Under the South-South partnership, particularly with universities in Brazil, FARA developed the Africa Regional Innovation Fellowship (ARIFA) which provides training for national systems partners to obtain degrees and facilitate the exchange of knowledge and technologies between their home universities and Brazil. With Support from TETFund-Nigeria, 133 fellows enrolled in Brazilian universities were fully trained and returned to their country to contribute to research and development. Following the success of this arrangement, TETFund-Nigeria has undertaken to increase the number of fellowships by 500 and to expand the courses to include other STEM areas beyond agriculture. The fellowships seek to tap into Brazil's success in integrating science and innovation with entrepreneurship to improve the competitiveness of its agriculture.

## 2.1.5 Strengthening linkages between agri-food research/innovation and business

One of the key priorities of FARA's business Plan (2019-2023) was to strengthen the linkages between research and business, recognizing the critical role business plays in the research-to-impact pathway. Over the reporting period, the Secretariat carried out two main actions towards strengthening research-business linkages. These are:

Reflection on how to enhance the design of innovation to make it more responsive to business. FARA hosted a workshop involving all CAADP-XP4 partners and young private sector actors to brainstorm on Agribusiness Learning Alliance (ABLA) model and its operationalisation. This model is being tested under the AIRTEA project which sets out to create national and regional ABLAs.

The 8th Africa Agribusiness and Science Week (AASW) had the theme "Linking Science, Innovation, and Agri-Business for Resilient Food Systems". The event saw the participation of 832 delegates. It featured a plenary that focussed specifically on agro-industrial parks which among other objectives link business with science and business to business / research workshops, and another plenary on digitalisation to enhance intra-Africa trade. These plenaries were convened by UNIDO and FAO respectively. The field visits were aimed at showcasing successful cases of commercialisation of research and the role of research on agribusiness. They also featured an online application for match making among delegates and their organisations including match making between research institutions and businesses. Altogether matches were made, and these will be tracked to establish the impact of this element of the AASW.



## 2.1.6 The 8th Africa Agribusiness and Science Week (AASW)

The 8th AASW and the 9th FARA General Assembly were held from 5th to 8th June 2023 in Durban, South Africa. The AASW is a triennial event, but the 8th edition was held 7 years after the last one mainly because of funding constraints and COVID-19. It saw the participation of 832 delegates representing all groups of value chain actors. The delegates hailed from a total of 66 countries, 43 of which were African countries.



The partnership with One-CGIAR played out in the conference with 63 staff representing 10 CGIAR centres, including the One-CGIAR system office. The event featured the launch of the action plan to strengthen the partnership between the CGIAR and African Institutions. The science week featured 34 side events, seven parallel sessions and four plenary sessions.

The 8th AASW and the 9th FARA GA were held alongside the CCARDESA General Assembly. This marked the first time FARA and a subregional agriculture research organisation were coming together to hold their GAs during the same event. Numerous lessons were learned in this regard that will inform the joint organisation of such events.

### 2.1.7 Support to Policy Analysis, Capacity Development and Advocacy

The focus of FARA's policy work in 2023 was on building the capacity of national actors for policy analysis, courting policy support for the application of science and technology in agriculture, supporting the promotion of the intra-Africa trade, and addressing issues concerned with strengthening the science-policy nexus.

Regarding policy support, policy engagements were undertaken in the form of policy dialogues of relevant topics related to investments in agriculture and intra-Africa trade. The Secretariat hosted a policy dialogue on intra-Africa trade during the AASW which discussed the barriers and opportunities for intra-Africa trade. These policy engagements resulted in the generation of policy briefs which are being used as advocacy materials. These engagements brought together policy makers, researchers, students, and farmers which created a platform to improve the science-policy nexus.

The Secretariat is participating and hosting relevant platforms to strengthen the science-policy nexus. This includes hosting the African Seed and Biotechnology Partnership Platform and building internal capacities to partner with SROs in rolling out foresight hubs at country level. The purpose of the hubs is to harness foresight approaches in informing policy planning.

### 2.1.8 Knowledge Management (KM)

FARA's Knowledge Hub—the FARADatInformS—continues to play a crucial role as the continental observatory for Africa's Agriculture. It is linked to the knowledge hubs of the other four CAADP-XP4 Institutions. Indeed, KM along with M&E are the areas where actions by the CAADP-XP4 organisations are most integrated. FARA and CORAF jointly developed the CORAF's region experts directory interoperable with the continental database. The value of working jointly is evident from the performance of this workstream. The upgrade of the FARADatInformS in 2024 will consolidate the gains and introduce AI features to enhance the system's operations.

Three highly successful editions of the annual Knowledge Management for Agricultural Development (KM4AgD) Challenge produced 55 Knowledge Managers (2021, 2022 and 2023) from 30 countries and set the agenda for strengthening KM capacities through the establishment of continental/regional KM4AgD centres. Over 10 countries (Ghana, Cape Verde, Mali, Benin, Tanzania, Eswatini, Namibia, Mozambique, Botswana, Uganda and Burundi) out of the 30 that were supported through the KM4AgD Challenge to develop KM policies have developed plans and are at various stages of implementation. While Botswana

has successfully mainstreamed its strategy into the National Implementation plans, Ghana has made a submission for consideration into the NAIP; it is currently being revised. In collaboration with the CGIAR and the AUC in 2022 and 2023, a KM Partnership framework was adopted, and an MOU is currently being implemented by these partners. This further boosted the activities of the KM4AgD Community of Practice and strengthened outreach activities among AR4D institutions in Africa. Projects have commenced adopting the KM4AgD model for knowledge capitalization within projects (e.g. INTERFACES). There is now more cohesion in KM delivery and a strengthened knowledge ecosystem.

Regarding the dissemination of knowledge products, the Secretariat's mechanisms for publications have been strengthened by the revamped library as well as the move to connect all knowledge products to the CAADP-XP4 network. An additional 45 publications were published bringing the number of publications in the library to 389. Internal capacities to professionally package knowledge products have been developed. Meanwhile, plans have been initiated to move the database to the DSpace portal in 2024. The proposed name is AARII-Space.

The Secretariat is harnessing social media (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, YouTube) in its communication drive. Overall, patronage of its social media pages grew by about new 170,000 followers during the reporting period with about 13,000,000 engaging through these pages during the said period. This upsurge in engagement numbers is attributable to the AASW8.

Additional numbers on KM include: (a) Over 14 million more stakeholders used the DataInForm5 portal to access information during the reporting period; (b) The expert directory has 1,267 professionals registered; the repository of funding opportunities disseminated an average of 300 opportunities every month with about 15% of stakeholders reporting success in securing funding based on leads provided by the monthly post.



## Section 3.

# Summary of Achievements and Progress towards Output Targets

The reporting on achievements and performance is structured according to the four programme clusters (2IPS, KMLC, ICF and RPIIn) focusing on cumulative progress towards attainment of indicator targets set for 2023. The progress is presented in the sections immediately below. The overall performance of the four clusters is rated as 93%. The Cumulative Progress towards Targets for 2023 is presented in Annex 1 and the overall progress is presented in Annex 2.

### 3.1. Innovation to Impact Partnerships and Systems (2IPS)

The broad activities (strategic thrusts) carried out in implementing this programme cluster, include:

1. Strengthening partnerships for research and scaling innovations
2. Mobilizing science to respond to emerging risks and opportunities with climate change and bioeconomy
3. Leveraging innovation to improve agribusiness performances of livelihoods for the youth

Output Targets	Achievements	Remarks
<b>Otp11: At least 20 proven technologies scaled up and out to yield commercial benefits for the value chain actors.</b>		
Otp1.1.1	Number of proven technologies scaled up and out to yield commercial benefits. 2023 Milestone: 20 Achieved to date:15 Progress: 75%	Fifteen proven technologies covering eight commodities in the TAAT compacts were scaled up and out over the reporting period.  The proven technologies are derived from the TAAT compacts. FARA leads the Capacity Development and Technology Outreach (CDTO) compact of the programme and used the IP to bring the different proven technologies to scale.
<b>Otp1.2: At least 10 functional and equitable multi-stakeholder partnerships formed or strengthened (disaggregated by type of partnership, such as N-S; S-S; and PPP, functional area such as climate change etc.).</b>		

Otp1.2.1	<p>Number of functional and equitable multi-stakeholder partnerships formed or strengthened.</p> <p>2023 Milestone: 8 Achieved to date: 8 Progress: 100%</p>	<p>Additional eight new partnerships were developed over the reporting period.</p> <p>These include the ASPB on seeds system; the ACSAi on Climate-smart agriculture; the Soil carbon consortium mainstreamed in the ORCaSa programme; the Soil Information System Community of practice; the forgotten foods Community of practice; the Africa foresight Academy.</p>	<p>The set up and operationalization of multistakeholder platforms to address pertinent issues is fundamental to FARAs operations.</p>
<p><b>Otp1.3: At least 20 research products developed and disseminated to influence policies and investment on climate change, and Bioeconomy.</b></p>			
Otp1.3.1	<p>Number of events, initiatives, and partnerships on CSA, bioeconomy, COVID-19, and other risks and opportunities developed and implemented.</p> <p>2023 Milestone: 10 Achieved to date: 9 Progress: 90%</p>	<p>A series of events were organized to achieve the milestone for the year 2023. They include the CAADP-PP on Food systems; the convening of Food systems transition, convening on forgotten foods, the PARI event on youth engagement, the Soil Initiative for Africa (SIA) event; the Climate-smart Agriculture and agroecology, etc.</p>	<p>The different convenings were organized either as a stand-alone event or as a side event of a big continental meeting like the CAADP-PP, the 8AASW, etc. The different convenings give opportunities to discuss and gather stakeholders' view on key continental issues.</p>
<p><b>Otp1.4: At least one Agribusiness Learning Alliance (ABLA) was established, and 20 private sector partners engaged to develop, launch, and operationalize the continental private sector engagement strategy.</b></p>			
Otp1.4.1	<p>Number of Agribusiness Learning Alliance (ABLA) established.</p> <p>2023 Milestone: 5 Achieved to date: 5 Progress: 100%</p>	<p>Initiated the process of establishing ABLAs in 5 countries (Liberia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, Rwanda, and Uganda)</p>	<p>Following an ABLA brainstorming workshop in Accra in August, a framework was developed for testing the business case of ABLA establishment within IPs. This has been piloted in Liberia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, Rwanda, and Uganda. This process is ongoing, and documentation done by December 2023.</p>

Otp1.4.2	<p>Number of private sector partners engaged to develop, launch, and operationalize the continental private sector engagement strategy.</p> <p>2023 Milestone: 120 Achieved to date: 119 Progress: 99%</p>	<p>Approximately 120 private sector partners engaged in FARA's interventions. FARA leveraged events and forums engaging private sector partners.</p>	<p>The engagement with the private sector is highlighted below: AIRTEA – 6 partners on business development for third-party projects. CAAPS – 9 partners in the CAAPS thematic working group.</p> <p>AAPHCE – 3 partners in FARA's side event TAAT – 30 partners in workshops in Liberia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Zimbabwe. Excludes 91 agribusinesses engaged through AASW.</p>
Otp1.5: At least five (05) new country chapters join YPARD, and 650 youth engaged in agribusiness capacity strengthening interventions.			
Otp1.5.1	<p>Number of country chapters launched.</p> <p>2023 Milestone: 15 Achieved to date: 14 Progress: 93%</p>	<p>Efforts during this reporting period focused on facilitating the transition of 19 long-serving YPARD country representatives to hand over to new country representatives. Additionally, 19 out of 37 chapters have been assigned 2 co-country representatives each to strengthen the management of the network at the country level.</p>	<p>The new country representatives will serve a renewable term of 2 years consistent with the YPARD Charter.</p>
Otp1.5.2	<p>Number of youths registered on the YPARD platform and for YPARD events.</p> <p>2023 Milestone: 650 Achieved to date: 643 Progress: 99%</p>	<p>A series of youth Africa's Information Sessions and Agri Chat were convened (attracting 340 youth), to gather suggestions for inclusion in policy briefs. An AgriYouth Africa Initiative platform was also launched to promote youth-led capacity development initiatives.</p>	<p>These needs are mainly within the context of information gaps, skills, technology, and agribusiness within their respective countries. The suggestions for policy briefs advocate enhanced access to capacity development opportunities (like mentorship)- while highlighting the youth perspective regarding agriculture transformation in Africa.</p>
<b>OVERALL PROGRESS: 94%</b>			

### 3.2. Knowledge Management, Learning and Communication (KMLC)

<p>The broad activities (strategic thrusts) carried out in implementing this programme cluster, include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Developing and maintaining an interoperable Agricultural Research and Innovation Data Management System - FARADatInformS</li> <li>2. Developing and maintaining an observatory for Agricultural STI (Knowledge &amp; information products including implementing FARA's Flagship on the Africa Report on Research &amp; Innovation- AfARR)</li> <li>3. Facilitating and promoting knowledge &amp; information dissemination, and Communication among ARI actors (for learning, visibility and publicity on issues including Land, Water, Diseases &amp; Pests)</li> </ol>			
Output Targets		Achievements	Remarks
<p><b>Otp2.1: At least 2 million ARI actors reached through FARA online platforms (Websites, blogs, Dgroups, webinars, social media, etc.).</b></p>			
Otp2.1.1	<p>Number of value chain actors reached through FARA platforms (websites, Dgroups, databases and social media platforms)</p> <p>2023 Milestone: 2,000,000 Achieved to date: 2,099,651 Progress: 100%</p>	<p>The FARA online platforms continue to provide various stakeholders with the necessary knowledge and information services relevant to the impact it makes on their sustenance. Boosted by the AASW8: Facebook at 41%, Instagram at 33%, Twitter at 13%, LinkedIn at 12%, FARA KM hub at 0.72%, and YouTube at 0.2%,</p>	<p>The AASW8 provided significant mileage for FARA's activities and strengthened the knowledge and dissemination network. The Hashtag #AASW8 alone (without boosting) reached 13,300,000 direct users across the world within 3 months.</p>
Otp2.1.2	<p>Number of Platforms integrated into FARADatInformS (Part of Continental Data Capture Strategy)</p> <p>2023 Milestone: 13 Achieved to date: 13 Progress: 100%</p>	<p>The TAAT CDTO-sponsored technologies database <a href="http://agri-technologies.faraafrica.org/">http://agri-technologies.faraafrica.org/</a> was integrated into the FARADatInformS in line with the interoperability drive. Also, the CORAF experts' directory developed with technical support from FARA has been made interoperable with FARADatInformS, allowing data sharing.</p>	<p>FARADatInformS continues to serve as one-stop-shop for the CAADP-XP4 consortium, offering integration and alignment and providing interoperable opportunities for partnerships, including projects.</p> <p>Its availability, accessibility, interoperability and usability of the tools, services and options offer support for decision-making and sustainability.</p>
<p><b>Otp2.2: At least 5,000 experts (African &amp; non-African) available in a database that is accessible by AR4D users.</b></p>			

Otpt2.2.1	<p>Number of experts (African &amp; non-African) available in a database that is accessible by AR4D users.</p> <p>2023 Milestone: 3,500 Achieved to date: 3,384 Progress: 96%</p>	<p>Experts from the AR4D stakeholders' directory are 368, Certified Knowledge Managers are 88; commodity value chains practitioners and IP facilitators 1,585; Foresight practitioners are 555; experts in Forgotten Foods are 574 and 189 for AIRTEA implementation Third Parties.</p> <p>CORAF new site has 25 registered so far.</p>	<p>The Continental Experts Directory offers opportunities for networking, co-creation and collaboration among African experts across countries. While CCARDESA, ASARECA, and AFAAS have yet to fully operationalise this, CORAF has fully developed <a href="https://coraf.faraafrica.org/">https://coraf.faraafrica.org/</a> and made the portal interoperable with FARA.</p>
Otpt2.2.2	<p>Number of Communities of Practice interacting on key issues</p> <p>2023 Milestone: 9 Achieved to date: 9 Progress: 100%</p>	<p>Based on demand, 3 more communities were created and are currently functional. These include the INTERFACES Project "Community on Land Use in Africa", the CAAPs "Community for the Africa Agro-parks" and the "National AR4D Community for Botswana", coordinated by the National Agricultural Research and Development Institute.</p>	<p>FARA Africa Community, popularly known as Dgroups, is host to over 70 communities and sub-communities addressing subject areas, commodities, projects and specialised communities. With over 40,000 members, it continues to offer the African AR4D communities' options for engagement, collaboration and networking.</p>
<p><b>Otpt2.3: At least 200 knowledge products and technologies (Flagships, FRRs, FDNs, FPBs, Technical Papers, Analyses, Briefs, Good practices, Stories, etc) produced and disseminated to the last mile via FARADatInforms by FARA, SROs, AFAAS and National Partners.</b></p>			
Otpt2.3.1	<p>Number of knowledge products generated and disseminated by FARA, SROs, AFAAS and National Partners.</p> <p>2023 Milestone: 150 Achieved to date: 155 Progress: 100%</p>	<p>45 new knowledge products were produced, published and disseminated to all network members of the Forum.</p>	<p>In general, 82 (45 published) knowledge products were developed within the period. 37 of them are at various stages of the publishing process. In all, over 360 publications in different categories are published and publicly accessible via <a href="https://library.faraafrica.org/">https://library.faraafrica.org/</a></p>

Otpt2.3.2	<p>Number of proven agriculture technologies and practices documented and disseminated in different languages through FARADatInformS.</p> <p>2023 Milestone: 20 Achieved to date: 16 Progress: 80%</p>	<p>Together with IITA and under TAAT, the Semi Autotrophic Hydroponics (SAH) for Cassava Multiplication was scaled among FARA stakeholders in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It allows the production of materials that are entirely free of pests and diseases, unlike traditional cassava stem-cutting methods, which are also translated.</p>	<p>The packaging and dissemination of proven agricultural technologies are published to address the diverse nature of AR4D stakeholders in Africa.</p> <p>While <a href="https://agri-technologies.faraafrica.org/">https://agri-technologies.faraafrica.org/</a> hosts the technologies database, FARA library <a href="https://library.faraafrica.org/technologies/">https://library.faraafrica.org/technologies/</a> provides both PDF and printable versions publicly accessible.</p>
<p><b>Otp2.4: At least 200 information and communications products developed individually/jointly and disseminated (including programme reports, Newsletters, banners, flyers, videos, Press Releases, etc.) to facilitate information exchange and delivery</b></p>			
Otpt2.4.1	<p>Number of communications products produced and shared</p> <p>2023 Milestone: 200 Achieved to date: 201 Progress: 100%</p>	<p>50 communication and visibility materials, including infographics, artwork, concept notes, briefs, news items and videos, were produced and disseminated.</p>	<p>FARA's Knowledge management and communications functions support the publicity of initiatives, projects, partners and relevant events, contributing to general adoption/adaption and understanding of AR4D issues in Africa.</p>
Otpt2.4.2	<p>Number of monthly funding opportunities and upcoming events produced &amp; shared</p> <p>2023 Milestone: 60 Achieved to date: 53 Progress: 88%</p>	<p>12 monthly catalogues of funding opportunities and upcoming events were assembled and disseminated to stakeholders. This continues to receive more clicks and views in FARA portals with an average of 5,000 views monthly, and a largely sought-after newsletter. 15% success factor was recorded by partners who submitted proposals for grants.</p>	<p>FARA invests in strategic content mining and partnerships that allow us access to premium funding opportunities from Development Aid, Terra VIVA and Funds4NGOs. This allows FARA to mine content relevant to AR4D in Africa and make it available for interested stakeholders to bid for grants.</p>

<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Otpt2.4.3</p>	<p>Number of learning events organized (Webinars, workshops, conferences, training, etc.)</p> <p>2023 Milestone: 30 Achieved to date: 30 Progress: 100%</p>	<p>One major event was organized and/or hosted by FARA in collaboration with partners. During the AASW8 and the KM4AgD 2023, Uganda, Botswana, Cameroun, Ghana and Cape Verde presented lessons from the implementation of their countries' KM strategies.</p>	<p>In 2023, the AASW8 was the main event that brought together 1,640 delegates, contractors, and security personnel from 66 countries, 43 of which were African states. 34 side events, 6 parallel sessions, and plenaries were organized to promote science, innovation, and agribusiness for accelerated and sustained livelihoods in Africa.</p>
<p><b>OVERALL PROGRESS: 96 %</b></p>			



### 3.3. Institutional Capacity and Future Scenarios (ICF)

The broad activities (strategic thrusts) carried out in implementing this programme cluster, include:

1. Identifying institutional capacity needs and relevant tools for bridging capacity gaps
2. Responding to priority capacity needs for science, research management, outreach, agribusiness, foresight, gender mainstreaming & leadership
3. Strengthening Institutional capacities for future scenario analysis for improved long-term planning
4. Building institutional capacity for mainstreaming gender

Output Targets	Achievements	Remarks
----------------	--------------	---------

**Otp3.1: Needs assessment and capacity action plans and instruments developed for 47 African countries covering at least 5 priority value chains developed.**

Otp3.1.1	<p>Number of countries in which capacity action plans and instruments are developed (disaggregated by priority value chain)</p> <p>2023 Milestone: 30 Achieved to date: 29 Progress: 97%</p>	<p>Access to instruments for strengthening capacities for scaling value chains-specific-technologies - Supported assessment process on TAP, building a case for practical application. Supported training on resource mobilization tools to strengthen CAAD-XP4 institutions - Cassava, Potato, Aquaculture, Soybean, Rice, Wheat, Maize, Sorghum &amp; Millet.</p>	<p>Impact countries: Ghana, Mali, Nigeria, Niger, Chad, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Liberia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea Bissau, South Sudan,</p> <p>Engaged: Ethiopia, Benin, Egypt, Togo, Côte d'Ivoire, South Africa, Comoros, Madagascar, Botswana</p>
----------	--	---	---

**Otp3.2: Capacity for science, research management, outreach, agribusiness, foresight, gender mainstreaming & leadership among 5,000 professionals from 60 African AR4D institutions and private sector strengthened.**

Otp3.1.1	<p>Number of institutions benefitting from capacity development interventions disaggregated by capacities for science, research management, outreach, agribusiness, foresight, gender mainstreaming &amp; leadership covering 5,000 professionals</p> <p>2023 Milestone: 30 Achieved to date: 28 Progress: 93%</p>	<p>Training on IP Nigeria - 161 institutions -SSTC network - FAUBAI, EMBRAPA, CAPES,</p> <p>Portugal -13 Institutions - M&amp;E train. TAAT - AU framework for aflatoxin control - Partnerships for Integrated Seed Sector in Africa-PISSA -719 professionals directly trained -IP training DRC, Liberia &amp; Zimbabwe benefitted 184 professionals - 27 institutions.</p>	<p>ARIFA:</p>
----------	--	---	---------------

**Otp3.3: Institutional capacities for future scenarios analysis & and long-term planning strengthened in 60 African AR4D institutions.**

Otpt3.3.1	<p>Number of institutions benefiting from foresight capacity interventions.</p> <p>2023 Milestone: 60 Achieved to date: 59 Progress: 98%</p>	<p>Corporate foresight process for FOFA-DTT -Future of youth employment in Africa's agri-food systems -13 Foresight hubs in the CORAF sub-region -Capacity development workshop for foresight for food system change leaders, - Regional Foresight working group in partnership with FAO</p>	
<p><b>Otpt3.4: Capacity for mainstreaming gender facilitated in 60 AR4D Institutions.</b></p>			
Otpt3.4.1	<p>Number of institutions adopting and developing gender mainstreaming tools</p> <p>2023 Milestone: 30 Achieved to date: 29 Progress: 97%</p>	<p>Approximately more than 30 institutions across Africa have been engaged to support gender mainstreaming efforts in their institutions. FARA's increased partnership with women-led initiatives led to an over-achievement of its targets.</p>	<p>Two gender sessions have been organized to strengthen the capacity of stakeholders and knowledge sharing. One session was convened at the AUC-AAPHCE in September, and the other session was convened at the FAO-TAP 10th Partners Assembly in November. FARA also participated as a co-convenor of the International Rural Women's Day in Africa.</p>
<p><b>OVERALL PROGRESS: 97 %</b></p>			



### 3.4. Research, Policy and Investment (RPIIn)

The broad activities (strategic thrusts) carried out in implementing this programme cluster, include:

1. Improving Science-Policy Environment to enhance impact of AR4D
2. Support actions to increase investments in AR4D through resource mobilization
3. Support implementation process to mainstream S3A into NAIPS

Output Targets		Achievements	Remarks
<b>Otp4.1: At least 40 African countries self-assessing existing policies and their implementation using PPI tools.</b>			
Otp4.1.1	<p>Number of African countries self-assessing existing policies and their implementation using Policy Practice Index tools.</p> <p>2023 Milestone: 20 Achieved to date: 20 Progress: 100%</p>	<p>Zimbabwe assessed various policies affecting the food system in the various countries. These policies include trade policies, agricultural extension policies, and policies related to organic agriculture.</p>	<p>The results for the analysis for southern Africa were presented to stakeholders during the AASW in Durban.</p>
<b>Otp4.2: At least 10 policy briefs developed to support advocacy, policy harmonization on emerging issues and at least 4 high-level policy engagement to discuss policy briefs.</b>			
Otp4.2.1	<p>Number of policy briefs produced and disseminated (Water, land, nutrition, and sustainable financing) to support policy dialogues facilitated on critical issues on AR4D (Water, land, nutrition and sustainable financing)</p> <p>2023 Milestone: 10 Achieved to date: 10 Progress: 100%</p>	<p>The policy briefs were developed on the trade of agricultural inputs and commodities and the role of ICT in agricultural extension and advisory services.</p>	<p>The policy briefs on the role of ICT in agricultural extension and advisory services were jointly developed with AFAAS.</p>
Otp4.2.2	<p>Number of high-level policy engagements held to discuss policy briefs</p> <p>2023 Milestone: 10 Achieved to date: 8 Progress: 80%</p>	<p>FARA participated in 2 high-level policy engagements including Ministerial Summits and high-level policy dialogues during the period.</p>	<p>FARA was engaged in high-level policy dialogue on the level of European investment in Africa AR4D through the CAADP-XP4 Project during the ASARECA Ministerial Conference. Similarly, FARA was engaged in policy discussions on promoting intra-Africa trade during the AASW.</p>
<b>Otp4.3: At least 10 continental programmes developed, and resources mobilized to respond to emerging challenges and test new paradigms.</b>			

Otp4.3.1	<p>Number of continental programmes developed to respond to emerging challenges and test new paradigms.</p> <p>2023 Milestone: 15 Achieved to date: 12 Progress: 80%</p>	<p>StEPPFoS, CEA-FIRST, CARISA, PISSA, Soil Initiative for Africa Action Plan, AIFV, Regional Multi-actor Research Network on agro ecological approaches, CAAPs-Priority 1 was developed during the period under reporting.</p>	<p>These programmes are at different stages of development and implementation, ranging from data capture for the preparation of agreement to the organization of inception meetings.</p>
Otp4.3.2	<p>Monetary value (\$) of resources mobilized as investments in AR4D</p> <p>2023 Milestone: 23 Achieved to date: 24 Progress: 100%</p>	<p>StEPPFoS - 2.9M, CEA-FIRST-3.4M, Agroecology - 2M, AIFV-0.5M</p>	<p>These resources are important to support FARA in carrying out its mandate as a leading AR4D organization on the continent.</p>
<p><b>Otp4.4: All programmes (SISTA, TAAT, LEAP4FNSSA, AARP, etc...) hosted at FARA are well coordinated (ranked at least moderately satisfactory in partners' rating systems).</b></p>			
Otp4.4.1	<p>Percentage of programmes hosted at FARA that are well coordinated and ranked at least moderately satisfactory in partners' rating systems.</p> <p>2023 Milestone: 100 Achieved to date: 2 Progress: 100%</p>	<p>The LEAP4FNSSA project which was coordinated by FARA ended successfully during the period.</p>	<p>The project was considered as successful and well-coordinated. FARA has leveraged this success to consolidate its role as a coordinator in subsequent EU projects such as StEPPFoS, CEA-FIRST, and the Regional Multi-Actor Research Network (RMRNs) on Agroecology.</p>
<p><b>Otp4.5: S3A mainstreamed in at least 25 national processes (e.g. NAIPs) and implemented to achieve CAADP goals.</b></p>			
Otp4.5.1	<p>Number of national processes in which S3A is mainstreamed to achieve CAADP goals</p> <p>2023 Milestone: 4 Achieved to date: 2 Progress: 50%</p>	<p>Through the AIRTEA Project by FARA and its consortium partners, the application of science in agriculture is being realized in Rwanda, Kenya, and Uganda. Results from these three countries have shown increase in productivity of crops, livestock (dairy cattle) as well as fish (catfish) through the application of science and technology.</p>	<p>The project is being implemented by a consortium of FARA, ASARECA, and EAFF. It has demonstrated the need for collaboration among AR4D Organizations for greater impact of efforts.</p>

Otp4.5.2	<p>Number of mainstreamed S3A actions implemented.</p> <p>2023 Milestone: 4 Achieved to date: 3 Progress: 75%</p>	<p>S3A actions implemented include digital extension, planting of improved crop varieties, development of new crop varieties by researchers, provision of research infrastructure, training of farmers on good agronomic practices, etc.</p>	<p>These actions have resulted in increased productivity of crops, livestock (dairy cattle) as well as fish (catfish). Also, farmers' practices and farmer-market linkages have improved over the years.</p>
<b>OVERALL PROGRESS: 86%</b>			



### 3.5. Programme Oversight (PO)

Programme oversight comprises management and support functions necessary for the successful delivery of the results expected from the programme clusters. The functions include, overall management, planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting, quality assurance and grant management. The progress registered by programme oversight is summarised in the Table 1.

*Table 1 Progress registered by Programme Oversight*

Function	Achievements
Review and Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developed a comprehensive 2023 work plan for all projects, accommodating activities in both ongoing and new projects such as INTERFACES, CAAPs, etc. Some aspects of the work plan were captured through the FARA MEL, while others were compiled using Microsoft Word and Excel due to prevailing circumstances.</li> <li>Coordinated the Secretariat's involvement in the portfolio review and planning of CAADP-XP4 activities for 2023, ensuring seamless collaboration with partners in the process.</li> <li>Led planning and preparation of the continental initiatives.</li> </ul>
Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Utilized an automated web-based Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) system to consistently update and monitor the progress of all FARA programmes, including collaborative initiatives with partners.</li> <li>Finalized Monitoring and Evaluation (M&amp;E) tools within the FARA MEL for automated data collection specifically designed for AIRTEA project. These tools were made accessible to third-party institutions involved in AIRTEA project.</li> <li>Conducted regular monitoring and reporting of M&amp;E data for CAADP-XP4 projects. Compiled comprehensive reports and analytics through the FARA MEL which were subsequently submitted to IFAD.</li> <li>Provided training to the CORAF Secretariat team and Member States on the utilization of the CAADP-XP4 MEL platforms. This training contributed to increased adoption of the MEL to manage institutional projects, as evidenced by heightened usage in NARIS in the West African Region.</li> </ul>
Oversight Management, Quality Assurance, and Grant Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All grants' reports submitted to donors.</li> <li>Check list on grants reporting developed.</li> <li>Trained 36 institutions in Kenya, Uganda, and Rwanda on EC grant reporting.</li> <li>Supported the quality assurance process to secure Euro 1,3500,000 sub-grant.</li> <li>Provided grant quality assurance support to the technical cluster leaders.</li> <li>Supported the development of StEPPFoS, CEA-FIRST, AIFV.</li> <li>Secretariat compliance process and tools developed.</li> </ul>

### 3.6. Budget Performance (January to December 2023)

The overall organizational performance is 93% cumulative sum of the milestone set from 2019-2023 (Table 2). The budget performance of 70% reflects the funds that are already accounted for; some funds with the grantee are yet to be retired. Some of the budgeted activities were funded by partner organizations providing FARA with the opportunity to reallocate its funds to support activities in 2024. The food system study supported by NORAD did not receive the 2nd tranche fund from AU-NEPAD, while the fund support received from the BMGF remains unutilized due to the postponement of the Africa Fertilizer and Soil Health Summit to May 2024.

*Table 2. Technical and Budget Performance for Programmes as at 31 December 2023*

Achievements	Budget	Expenditure	Variance	Burn Rate
	US\$	US\$	US\$	%
PROGRAMME Activities	3,415,970	2,377,789	1,038,181	70
PC 1: Innovation to Impact Partnerships & Systems (2IP5)	1,003,575	570,047	433,528	57
PC2: Knowledge Management, Learning and Communications (KLC)	240,193	73,220	166,973	30
PC3: Institutional Capacities for Future scenarios (ICF)	690,775	445,068	245,707	64
PC 4: Research, Policy and Investment (RPI)	1,195,369	1,039,273	156,097	87
PO: Oversight Management, Administration, Planning, M&E, Quality Control	286,056	250,180	35,876	87

## Section 4.

# Challenges Encountered and Mitigation Strategies

The challenges encountered over the five-year implementation of the business plan and more specifically in the last year of its implementation (year 2023), are explicated below:

- **Inadequate funding:** The funding situation for the Secretariat reflects the dwindling funding for research and development efforts in African agriculture. While the problems in African agriculture top the list of the regions in the world, funding for research and development from the continent itself falls far short of what is required. This has heightened the dependence on donors and development partners from other countries and continents who are also affected by the emergence of new issues that require urgent funding. The diversion of funds to global issues such as migration, climate change, wars, and humanitarian crises has affected the flow of funds. This calls for a more sustainable funding mechanism for development facilitation organizations such as FARA. In the business plan, the FARA Secretariat gives a lot of attention to applications for competitive grants from various development partners such as the European Union, IDRC GIZ, etc. The cost of the effort to get some of these grants that are seldomly successful and manage the projects are arduous leaving the secretariat to operate on a shoestring financial mode. A more sustainable funding mechanism includes the development of an endowment for supranational organizations in African agricultural research.
- **Staffing gaps:** The shortfall in core funding has not allowed the Secretariat to take on additional staff to support the implementation of new grants. As a result, staff are overstretched, a situation that affects morale, the quality of outputs as well as health. To ease the workload, interns and junior consultants have been engaged. Other measures aimed at engaging senior professionals in partner institutions on cost-effective terms are being considered.
- **The fragmented nature of the programme** due to its composition as an amalgamation of numerous independent projects, many of them small and short-term. This has increased the amount of time technical staff devote to project administration and the complexity of the programme. Moreover, some key core activities such as mainstreaming of the Science Agenda are unfunded. To address this challenge, the Secretariat is making concerted efforts to develop large long-term projects, in collaboration with CAADP-XP4 institutions. It has also designated the grants and compliance manager to provide project and grant management support to all the projects.
- **Global changes:** The agricultural sector has experienced more frequent changes in recent times than ever; these changes are at the global level and exerting pressure on the process and content of the continental strategy. While Africa is still battling with issues of farm productivity, trying to develop a functional seed system and to resolve the problem of cost and supply of inputs; the global world is pushing for a change of farming system to like of agroecology, regenerative agriculture, and other 15 variants with pressure on Africa to engage in this change in its farming system. The food system notation also aims to drive sectoral development in a new direction. The FARA Secretariat embraces the different changes and fits them into its existing programme clusters; it also positions itself to convene the stakeholders in Africa and provide the continental voice.

## Section 5.

# Concluding Remarks

The Secretariat has made several significant achievements toward its 2023 indicator targets with an overall performance of 93% and 70% budget utilization. The FARA Secretariat is gradually reducing the discrepancy between technical and budget performance. The erstwhile low budget utilisation figure was attributed to assumptions made in crafting the budget, plus the lag in reporting expenditures of sub-grants and the scheduling of some high expenditure activities in the second half of the year. For these reasons, it does not signal problems with programme implementation.

The Secretariat aims to focus more attention to sustainable financing of its programme. The attention will include working towards strong partnerships within the context of the CAADP-XP4 consortium and the CGIAR partnership with African institutions, a compelling value proposition and a refreshed science agenda for CAADP. The FARA Secretariat has in recent years gained greater acceptance as the convenor of agricultural research and innovation stakeholders and continental actions. It is thus positioned to host the Secretariat of key continental initiatives (CAAPS, Soil Initiative for Africa, Seed Systems initiative, CARISA, Foods Systems initiative etc.). This role is overdue, and the Secretariat will take this up over the next business plan to complete the second half of its strategy.

The statistics of performance towards the various targets set for the year 2023 in the Business plan indicated that milestones for the business plan were sufficiently accomplished.

### Annex 1: Projects Constituting FARA's Programme and Summary Expenditure Jan – Dec 2023

Sr/n	Funding Sources/Project	Expenditure USD
1	EC/IFAD – CAADP-XP4	1,070,933
2	ACP IF/AIRTEA	569,546
3	NORAD/AUDA-NEPAD	107,847
4	AFDB/TAAT II	139,055
5	BMGF – SIA	108,684
6	AFDB/TSF	142,739
7	TETFUND/ARIFA	174,907
8	CAAPS	155,689
9	BMZ/ZEF – PARI	177,353
10	EC/ISIS - Soils4Africa	22,803
11	ORCaSa	1,488
12	INTERFACES	36,833
13	YPARD	19,740
14	USAID/UG Project	1,734
15	CEA-FIRST	467,348

16	Secretariat Support	833,383
17	Other Miscellaneous Closed Projects	397,299
	Total	4,427,381



## Annex 1 Cumulative Progress towards Targets for 2023

The graphs below (Figures 2 to 5) summarize the cumulative progress of each cluster towards milestones for 2023, and progress towards indicator targets for the end of the business plan period (2023). They also show the progress registered in 2023 alone.

### a. Innovation to Impact Partnerships and Systems (2IPS)

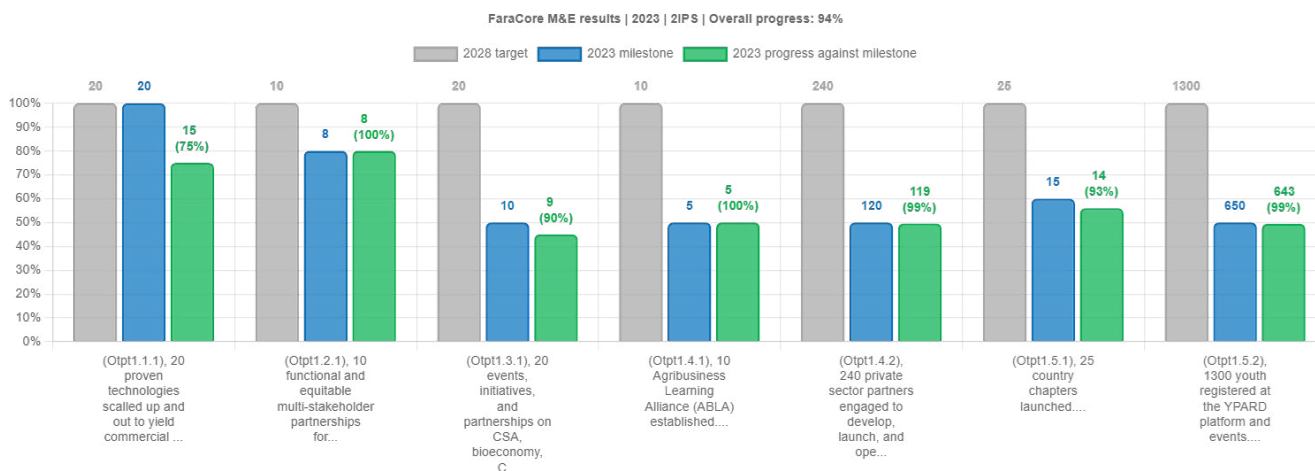


Figure 3 Cumulative progress towards 2IPS's 2023 milestones

### b. Knowledge Management, Learning and Communication (KMLC)

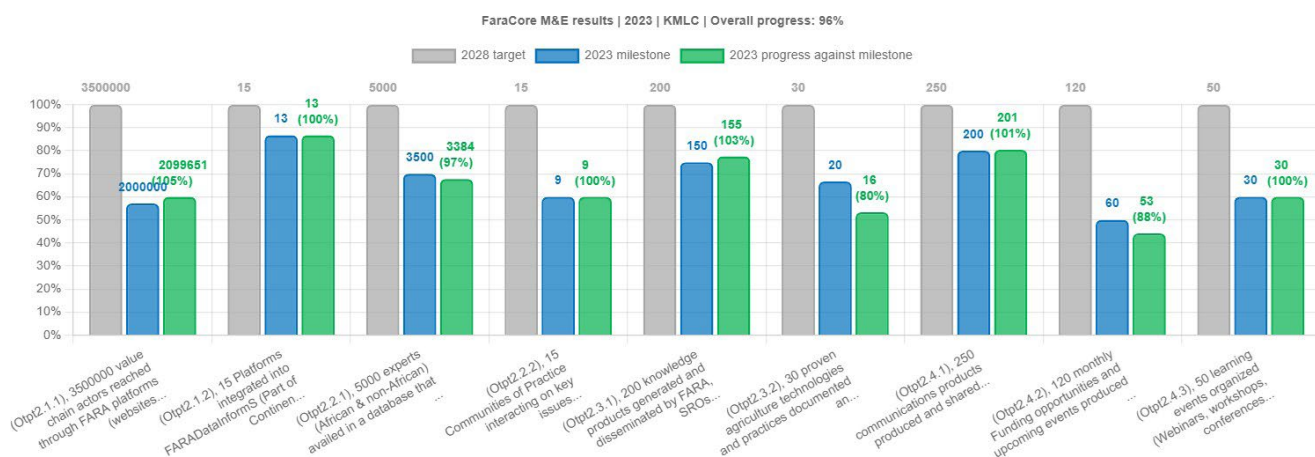


Figure 4 Cumulative progress towards KMLC's 2023 milestones

c. Institutional Capacity and Future scenarios (ICF)

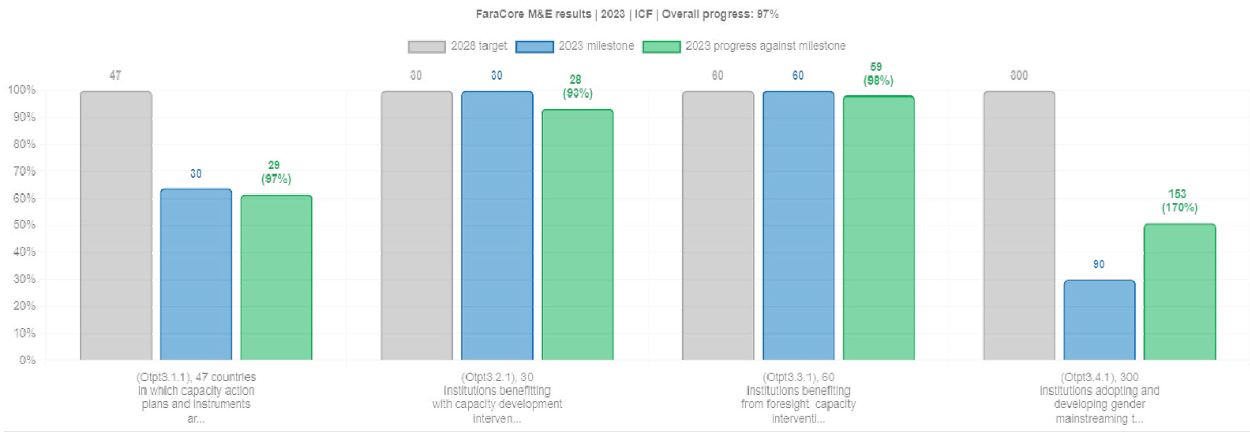


Figure 5 Cumulative progress towards ICF's 2023 milestones

d. Research Policy and Investment (RPI)

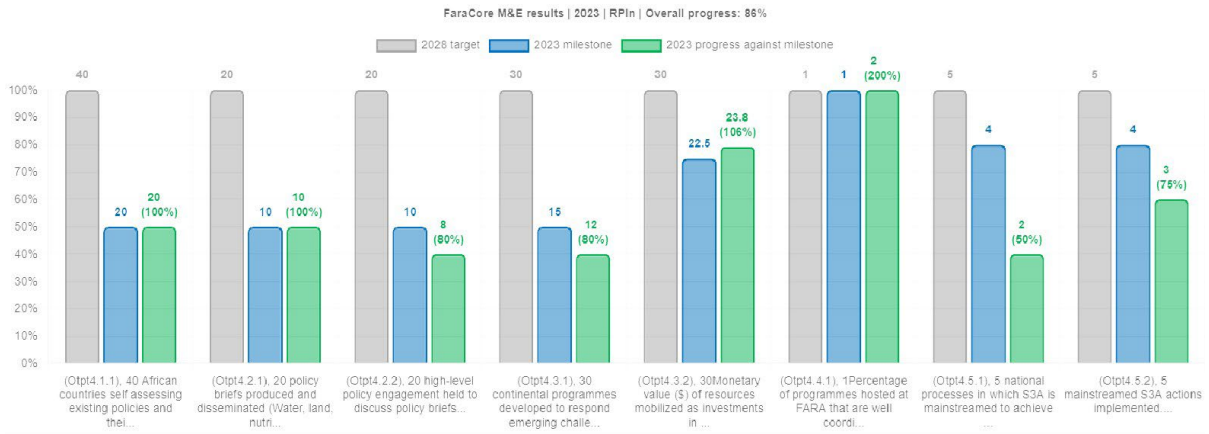


Figure 6 Cumulative progress towards RPI's 2023 milestones

## Annex 2. Overall Achievement of the FARA Business Plan 2019-2023

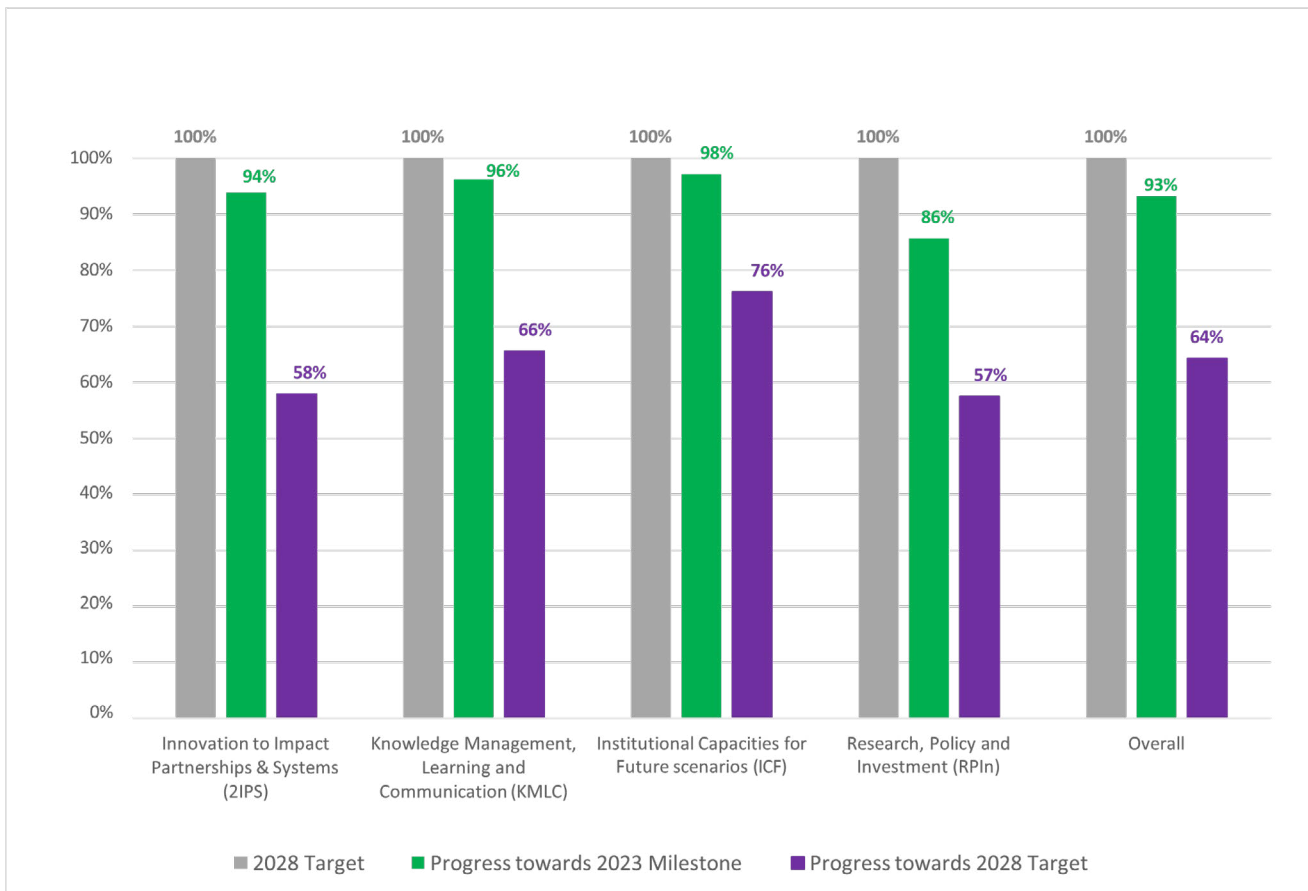



Figure 7. Overall Achievement of the FARA Business Plan 2019-2023





**FARA** 


**ADDRESS**


 No. 7 Flower Avenue, New Achimota Mile 7

 PMB CT 173, Accra, Ghana

 Tel: + 233 302 772823 | 302779421

 Fax: + 233 302 773676

 Email: [info@faraafrica.org](mailto:info@faraafrica.org)

 Website: [www.faraafrica.org](http://www.faraafrica.org)