

2026 – 2030 Knowledge Management Partnership Framework for AR4D in Africa

A joint AUC, AARIEI (FARA, AFAAS, ASARECA, CORAF, CCARDESA, NAASRO) & CGIAR Partners Framework with recommendations and actions from the **KM4AgD** Community of Practice

Preamble

Transforming and sustaining Africa's agrifood systems is a complex challenge that requires diverse stakeholders to work together in trusted spaces for sharing knowledge, evidence, experience and innovation. In this context, knowledge management is not merely a support function. It is a strategic enabler of agricultural transformation, helping institutions and actors learn faster, collaborate better, adapt more effectively, in the process of translating science and innovation into outcomes at scale.

The first Knowledge Management Partnership Framework for AR4D in Africa (2023–2025) laid an important foundation for collaboration among the African Union Commission, the CAADP-XP4 Consortium, CGIAR and affiliated partners. It helped frame joint action on KM leadership and governance, a culture of learning and sharing, interoperable systems, country-level partnerships, joint knowledge products, and monitoring and learning. It also encouraged the establishment of KM4AgD annual recognition, common knowledge platforms, and stronger alignment between African agricultural priorities and global research systems.

Since then, the policy and operational environment have evolved. The Kampala CAADP Declaration and the CAADP Strategy and Action Plan 2026–2035 have advanced Africa's agrifood agenda towards more resilient, sustainable and accountable systems, with greater emphasis on science, technology, innovation, learning, foresight and implementation. The Action Plan expressly provides for a CAADP Knowledge Management Support System, creating an important policy opening to institutionalise KM more firmly within continental and national delivery systems.

At the same time, practice has matured. KM4AgD processes, the African Agricultural DSpace Repository work, joint CGIAR–CAADP-XP4 workshops, and related learning initiatives have shown that knowledge management can strengthen institutional coordination, improve access to evidence, support digital repositories, deepen collaboration, and make research outputs more visible and usable. The next phase must therefore move beyond a narrow understanding of KM as repositories, dissemination or documentation alone, and reposition it as a framework for adaptive learning, implementation intelligence, capacity sharing, institutional change, and impact-oriented knowledge ecosystems.

In addition, this group should also foster a common voice from the African research community on how to move from innovation and technologies to scale to help foster momentum across the continent.

Justification for the Renewal

The renewal of this framework for 2026–2030 is justified by six strategic needs.

First, Africa's agrifood transformation agenda increasingly depends on how effectively institutions can generate, share, validate, interpret, mobilise and use knowledge to solve complex problems across production, nutrition, resilience, trade, finance and inclusion. The scale and speed of current challenges require knowledge systems that are responsive, networked and action-oriented, as well as knowledge systems that foster coherence

Second, the 2023–2025 framework provided a useful foundation, but experience now shows the need to strengthen the partnership across learning systems, implementation support, country-level institutionalisation, and evidence of value. The next phase should make KM more visible as a driver of performance and transformation rather than an auxiliary function.

Third, digital transformation has advanced rapidly. Artificial intelligence, interoperable repositories, knowledge graphs, digital extension, analytics, and collaborative platforms now offer new opportunities to improve discovery, translation, use, and feedback loops within agricultural innovation systems. These opportunities require coordinated governance, standards, capacities, and safeguards.

Fourth, there is growing recognition that indigenous and local knowledge must be better documented, validated where necessary, and engaged with respectfully alongside formal science. Recent KM4AgD work has emphasised that indigenous knowledge is often misunderstood or dismissed, yet remains central to resilience, context-responsiveness and legitimacy in African agriculture.

Fifth, a stronger partnership is needed among AUC, CAADP-XP4, CGIAR and related institutions to ensure that knowledge products, platforms, communities of practice, and learning investments are more coherent and mutually reinforcing. The operational relationship already evident in joint repositories and learning initiatives needs a clearer long-term strategic framework.

Sixth, the continent now requires better ways to demonstrate how KM contributes to outcomes. Stories of institutional change, capacity sharing, innovation scaling, better decisions, stronger extension links, and improved collaboration should become a more regular feature of the partnership. This includes the kind of experiences highlighted in KM4AgD publications and partner reflections from FARA, CORAF, CCARDESA, AFAAS, ILRI, IITA and others. The recently established CGIAR Liaison Office for Africa has a knowledge management function for the continent, which should be brought into this fold.

Vision

An African agricultural research and innovation ecosystem in which knowledge is intentionally governed, shared, co-created, and applied to accelerate the transformation of agrifood systems that are resilient, inclusive, and sustainable.

Goal

To strengthen continental, regional and national collaboration on knowledge management for agricultural research for development in Africa, so that knowledge systems serve as drivers of adaptive learning, implementation intelligence, innovation scaling and policy-relevant transformation.

Specific Objectives

The framework will pursue the following objectives:

1. Strengthen KM leadership, governance, institutional coordination and capacity-sharing across the AUC, CAADP-XP4, CGIAR and partner institutions at continental, regional and national levels.
2. Reposition KM as a system for adaptive learning, implementation intelligence and decision support, supported by stronger monitoring and evidence of its contribution to agricultural transformation.
3. Expand interoperable digital knowledge infrastructure and collaborative platforms while strengthening AI readiness, fluency, institutional capacity and responsible adoption.
4. Promote the respectful recognition, documentation and integration of indigenous, local and scientific knowledge in jointly produced, high-value knowledge products and services.
5. Strengthen the coordinated dissemination of knowledge and coherence of messaging across continental policy instruments to advance sustainable and resilient agrifood systems.

Guiding Principles

The following principles will guide implementation of this framework:

- African ownership and alignment with AU and CAADP priorities
- Intentional inclusivity and co-creation
- Partnership based on mandate and comparative advantage
- Practicality, relevance and use orientation
- Interoperability, openness and accessibility
- Learning, adaptation and continuous improvement
- Respect for indigenous and local knowledge systems
- Accountability, responsibility, evidence and impact focus

These principles build directly on the earlier framework's emphasis on inclusivity, role clarity, shared systems and learning culture.

Strategic Components

Component 1: Knowledge Partnership Leadership and Governance

This component will strengthen joint leadership, clarify institutional roles, ensure regular coordination, and create a stronger enabling environment for collaboration among the participating institutions. It will retain the earlier focus on collaboration, a culture of learning and sharing, and resource mobilisation, while updating governance arrangements for the new period.

Priority areas:

- Renewed collective framework for collaboration
- Institutional roles matrix
- Regular joint planning and review
- Strengthened learning and sharing culture
- Joint and coordinated resource mobilisation
- Sustained KM4AgD recognition mechanisms
- Regular and targeted knowledge management events leveraging relevant continental convenings.

Component 2: Adaptive Learning and Implementation Intelligence

This component places greater emphasis on KM as an enabler of organisational learning, implementation support and institutional performance. It will help partners move beyond static knowledge products towards systems that foster reflection, feedback, adaptation and evidence-informed action.

Priority areas:

- Adaptive learning systems for breaking silos
- Implementation, intelligence and feedback loops
- Institutional learning from practice
- Evidence from case studies, stories and testimonials
- Stronger links between KM, delivery and policy learning

Component 3: Digital Knowledge Infrastructure, AI and Interoperability

Building on earlier commitments to DGroups, DSpace, knowledge graphs and shared platforms, this component will support stronger digital ecosystems for African agricultural knowledge. It will also place greater emphasis on AI and emerging digital opportunities.

Priority areas:

- Interoperable repositories and platforms
- Africa Agricultural Knowledge Graph
- Collaborative digital workspaces and communities
- AI-supported knowledge discovery, synthesis and translation, including readiness and fluency.
- Digital inclusion, multilingual access and low-connectivity usability.

Component 4: Capacity Sharing and Institutional Strengthening

This component will support practical capacity development and institutionalisation of KM across national, regional and continental institutions. It reflects the growing emphasis on capacity sharing, rather than one-directional capacity building alone.

Priority areas:

- National-level KM strengthening
- Peer learning and exchange
- Digital extension and knowledge brokering
- Strengthening KM functions in organograms, staffing and budgets
- Engagement with universities and knowledge schools

Component 5: Indigenous Knowledge, Inclusion and Knowledge Co-Creation

This component places greater emphasis on indigenous and local knowledge within Africa's agricultural knowledge systems. It seeks to promote respectful documentation, validation where necessary, and the integration of indigenous knowledge into broader agricultural transformation efforts.

Priority areas:

- Recognition of indigenous knowledge as a legitimate knowledge source
- Documentation and formalisation pathways
- Collaboration with local knowledge holders and farmer organisations
- Inclusion of women, youth and marginalised voices
- Possible collaboration with platforms such as the KM4D Journal and K4D Partnerships

Component 6: Knowledge Products, Services and Influence

This component will guide the development of high-value knowledge products and services that support policy, practice, learning and visibility across the continent. It builds directly on the earlier framework's focus on technical services, knowledge products and joint publication.

Priority areas:

- Extension guides, briefs and implementation notes
- Annual or periodic knowledge reports
- Strengthened expert directories and linked hubs
- Lecture series and publication of webinar outputs
- Stronger visibility for innovations, journal outputs and good practice
- Collaborate to develop and release the annual Knowledge Report for Africa in collaboration with the Global Knowledge Index releases
- Jointly establish the KM4AgD Journal in collaboration with the KM4Dev

Component 7: Responsible and inclusive AI use for agricultural KM

This component is to strengthen the readiness of African agricultural research and innovation institutions to adopt and use artificial intelligence as a core enabler of knowledge discovery, synthesis, translation, decision support, learning and innovation scaling.

Priority areas:

- Strengthen institutional readiness and governance for AI adoption.
- Build AI skills among agricultural research and innovation actors.
- Improve access to quality data, digital infrastructure and computing resources.
- Promote ethical, secure, transparent and inclusive AI practices.
- Apply AI to knowledge management, decision-making, learning and innovation scaling.

Component 8: Knowledge Products, Services and Influence

This component updates the earlier monitoring and learning pillar by placing greater emphasis on demonstrating value and contribution to transformation outcomes, rather than on activity tracking.

Priority areas:

- Updated KM indicators for MEL
- Mapping of ecosystem actors
- Case studies and success documentation including AI readiness and fluency
- Tracking KM contribution to scaling and institutional change
- Continued KM4AgD challenge, webinar and conference learning spaces

Governance Arrangements

The framework will be implemented through a collaborative governance structure involving:

- African Union Commission (AUC - DARBE): continental policy anchoring, CAADP alignment and legitimacy
- CAADP-XP4 Consortium (Coordinated by FARA, supported by CCARDESA, CORAF, ASARECA, AFAAS & YPARD): regional coordination, implementation support, community and country linkages
- CGIAR (convened by ILRI & IITA): technical depth, global networks, tools, digital infrastructure and capacity sharing
- KM4AgD CoP: Participatory learning, peer exchange, validation, feedback and community mobilisation representing the 55 African countries
- Strategic Partners: including AARIEI, K4DP, KM4Dev, AAU, RuFORUM and universities, farmer organisations, media, private sector, development partners and knowledge communities

Implementation Arrangements

Implementation will be guided through:

- Annual joint planning
- Thematic working groups where necessary
- Regular coordination meetings
- Consultation webinars and learning sessions
- Shared digital platforms and repositories
- Joint resource mobilisation efforts
- Periodic partner review and adaptation

Monitoring, Learning and Evaluation

- The framework will adopt a practical MEL approach combining:
- Agreed KM indicators
- Periodic reflection and learning reviews
- Documentation of case studies and stories of change
- Evidence of institutional uptake and influence
- Progress reporting against agreed priorities

Indicative Early Priorities for 2026–2027

The initial phase of implementation may prioritise:

- Formal endorsement and launch of the renewed framework
- Km4agd consultation webinar and partner validation process
- Refinement of the roles matrix and workstreams
- Strengthening of the African agricultural knowledge infrastructure
- An initial adaptive learning and capacity-sharing agenda
- Flagship case studies demonstrating km's contribution to agricultural transformation
- An initial workstream on indigenous knowledge and publication pathways

Expected Results by 2030

By 2030, the partnership should contribute to:

- Stronger institutionalisation of KM across AR4D institutions
- More coherent collaboration among AUC, CAADP-XP4, CGIAR and partners
- Stronger and more accessible African agricultural knowledge infrastructure
- Better capacity sharing and learning systems at national and regional levels
- Improved recognition and use of indigenous and local knowledge
- Stronger evidence that KM contributes to innovation scaling, implementation and transformation outcomes
- A more vibrant culture of collaboration, reflection and knowledge exchange in African agrifood systems

ENDORSEMENT(S)

The African Union Commission, the CAADP-XP4 Consortium, CGIAR (ILRI/IITA) and the KM4AgD Community of Practice) have endorsed this framework as a shared strategic guide for collaborative implementation during the 2026-2030 period, subject to their respective institutional mandates and governance procedures.

By endorsing this framework, the signatory institutions affirm their commitment to collaborate within their respective mandates to advance its implementation, promote mutual learning, and contribute to its periodic review and refinement.

