

The African Agricultural Technology Foundation (AATF) and the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) have signed a five-year Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to raise productivity, competitiveness, and resilience of agriculture in Africa through research, policy advocacy, technological development, delivery, and uptake, marking a milestone in enhancing the capacity of Africa to advance climate smart agriculture.

According to statement Wednesday, the partnerships agreement signed during the 8th Africa Agribusiness and Science Week held in Durban, South Africa will especially promote generation and uptake of Science, Technology, and Innovation (STI) to accelerate agricultural development in Africa, including diversification of agricultural technologies.

Dr. Yemi Akinbamiyo, the outgoing Executive Director, FARA, noted that the pact will support in enhancing the capacity of Africa to advance climate smart agriculture, especially improving climate change resilience among farmers in Africa.

He observed that through the agreement, the two organisations commit to promote a conducive policy environment for the access, development and delivery of agricultural technologies and products with focus on acceleration of their commercialization for a food secure Africa.

“Our joint activities would include, among others, to design and leveraging of mechanisms for exchange of technology-based innovations, information and knowledge that will empower Africa’s researchers, decision makers, influencers and technology users,” said Dr. Akinbamiyo.

According to Dr. Canisius Kanangire, the Executive Director of AATF, the partnership agreement with FARA will help raise agricultural productivity to improve livelihoods of smallholder farmers on the continent, noting that AATF is keen on transforming farmers livelihoods in Africa through scaling of agricultural technologies.

“Our strategy 2023-2027 reinforces the need for partnerships with like-minded organisations and leveraging each other’s strength to deliver our mandate to farmers in Africa. We are therefore committed to building partnerships with continental bodies such as governments, national and international research institutions, FARA and its constituent bodies, Regional Economic Communities, farmer organisations, the private sector, and all players along the agriculture value chain, to deliver agricultural value to our farmers,” he said.

He added that smallholder farmers in Africa continue to face various constraints that hinder their ability to increase their yields, improve their incomes, and contribute to food security.

According to Dr. Kanangire, the situation can change by investing in new farming technology for Africa—from better seeds to digital tools to machinery—which hold promise for transforming African agriculture into an engine of economic growth that will have benefits far beyond the farm sector.