

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

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Global Agricultural Information Network

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## Ethiopia

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### **AUC's Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture Strategic Plan**

**Report Categories:**

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Agricultural Situation

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National Plan

**Approved By:**

Michael G. Francom, Ag Counselor

**Prepared By:**

Michael G. Francom

**Report Highlights:**

In early November 2014, the Department of Rural Economy & Agriculture (DREA), under the African Union Commission (AUC), published on its website the Department's Strategic and Operational Plan for 2014-17. This report provides a brief summary of this plan.

### **DREA Publishes Strategic Plan:**

In early November 2014, the Department of Rural Economy & Agriculture (DREA), under the African Union Commission (AUC), published on its website [the Department's Strategic and Operational Plan for 2014-17](#). The overarching theme of this strategic blueprint is "*Transforming Africa's Agriculture for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods: Harnessing Opportunities for Inclusive Growth and Sustainable Development*." Further, this broad framework covers a wide cross section of agriculture and environment-related initiatives, among which are focused on agriculture production, food security, livestock, aquaculture, forestry, and the environment.

The plan was developed after extensive intra-department and inter-AUC consultations, and in coordination with outside stakeholders. In addition, DREA's roadmap is aligned with the higher-level AUC strategic plan for 2014-17 and mirrors the broad priorities outlined in the [Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods](#) (see pages 52-58).

To put this strategic and planning document in context, DREA prefaces its plan with a summary of the Department's achievements and lessons learned from the implementation of the previous Strategic & Operational Plan for 2009-12. The preamble also includes an overview of the key agricultural and environment trends, including opportunities and challenges across the continent.

### **Achievements & Lessons Learned from Previous Strategic & Operational Plan:**

DREA's strategic interventions are broadly categorized under two main headings: (1) agriculture, food security and rural economy; and (2) environment and natural resource management. Under the first category of agriculture-specific interventions, the most prominent achievement has been the Comprehensive Agriculture African Development Program (CAADP). CAADP has helped bring agriculture to the forefront of the development agenda and provided the needed platform for individual African countries to craft their agriculture-related investment and development plans.

In addition to the positive progress made under the CAADP initiative, DREA highlights several flagship programs as achievements, among which include the African Seed and biotechnology Programme (ASBP), the African Land Policy Initiative (LPI), and the African Monitoring of the Environment for sustainable Development (AMESD), to name just a few. More generally, DREA has been actively coordinating and implementing various activities across a range of sectors, such as plant and animal health, agricultural production, trade, value chain promotion, land policy, climate change, resilience and food security.

DREA shares several useful lessons gleaned while implementing the previous strategic plan, several of which are centered around the CAADP experience. For instance, these include the realization that economic growth is directly tied to agricultural performance and that CAADP should be an Africa-owned and led initiative. In addition, some of the other important lessons include: member states need customized support to sustain the CAADP momentum; development should be pursued through a multi-sectoral approach that includes increased investment from the private sector; and the need for evidence-based planning coupled with strong mechanisms to monitor and report on progress.

### **Setting the Stage for DREA's Strategic Plan for 2014-17:**

Most Africans still live in rural areas and are heavily dependent on agriculture for their livelihoods. Agriculture makes up the lion’s share of most African economies, many of which have experienced strong growth in recent years. However, despite recent economic advances, agriculture yields and production remain the lowest in the world for a variety of reasons, such as land degradation, climate change, post-harvest loss, as well as insufficient investment.

Further, ‘the fact that economic growth [in African] has been running parallel with declining per capita food production remains Africa’s structural paradox.’ As a consequence, Africa has become dependent on imported food and ‘the extent of dependence is becoming unsustainable!’ To improve its self-sufficiency and reverse its import dependence, Africa needs to and can double cereal yields to 2 metric tons per hectare. This increase would result in an extra 100 million metric tons of food each year, which would help alleviate poverty and hunger, while also creating an opportunity to export any surplus outside of Africa.

The continent is home to a large and growing population, combined with an abundance of natural resources, water and land. Rising economic prosperity coupled with an expanding population, which is expected to reach the same level as India and China by 2025, translates into increased food demand and a larger labor force. Many from this growing labor force, despite rapid urbanization, will work in the agriculture sector since urban markets are not prepared to absorb this influx.

To spur inclusive and sustainable growth going forward, priority interventions, backed by continued strong political leadership, should target the following elements: increased public and private investment; improved rural infrastructure (e.g. roads, water, telecommunication, etc.); acquisition of new technologies to enhance productivity and reduce post-harvest losses; empowerment of women and youth; and better management of foreign investment in natural resources; protection of the environment while building resilience against climate change events as well as economic shocks.

**DREA’s Strategic & Operational Plan, 2014-17:**

As noted, DREA’s Strategic and Operational Plan is aligned with the AUC Strategic Plan. In particular, of the eight AUC priorities, #2 links directly with the DREA plan. Priority #2 is as follows: *Expand Agricultural production, developing the Agro-processing and businesses sectors, increase market access and attain Africa’s collective Food self-sufficiency and nutrition through promotion of smallholder agriculture, sound environment and natural resource management, and climate change.* There are other cross-cutting AUC priorities, like mainstreaming youth and women participation, which are also reflected in the DREA plan.

With that as a backdrop, the DREA plan focuses on four priority expected outputs or key result areas (KRAs). The table below summarizes how these outputs/KRAs fit under the broader AUC strategy. While not shown here, under each of these four expected outputs, there are specific strategic and operational actions as well as progress indicators. These actions, which are many, can be viewed in the strategic plan itself.

<b>Table: DREA Priority, Anticipated Outcomes and Expected Outputs (KRAs)</b>		
<b>Priority as stated in the AUC Strategic Plan</b>	<b>Anticipated Outcomes</b>	<b>Expected Outputs/Key Result Areas (KRAs)</b>

Expand Agricultural production, developing the Agro-processing and businesses sectors, increase market access and attain Africa’s collective Food self-sufficiency and nutrition through promotion of smallholder agriculture, sound environment and natural resource management, and climate change.	Policies and Strategies are implemented for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• increased agricultural production, productivity, and improved food and nutrition security,</li> <li>• expanded value addition and market access, and</li> <li>• sound environmental management and sustainable development</li> </ul>	1. Member States’ implementation of CAADP priority programmes including animal resources as an instrument to boost agricultural production and productivity for food and nutrition security, and eliminating hunger and reducing poverty is supported.
		2. Programs for enhancement of agribusiness including access to productive resources and capacity of Women, Youth and persons with disabilities supported.
		3. Strengthening of policies, processes and infrastructure for market access and trade in agricultural products promoted.
		4. Implementation of Priority programmes on Environment and Natural Resources and Climate Change facilitated.

Source: DREA Strategic & Operational Plan, 2014-17

**USDA’s Role in Contributing towards DREA Plan:**

FAS along with other USDA agencies are working at a grassroots level across Africa in support of these four expected outputs. For example, USDA, in partnership with USAID, is working with AU-IBAR to strengthen animal health and disease control in Africa. Other examples of FAS support include the Borlaug and Cochran technical exchange programs, and activities under the Food for Progress Program which are focused on helping improve agricultural productivity and expand trade of agricultural products. More broadly, FAS coordinates and conducts a range of technical assistance activities in Africa and around the world. For a list of some of SPS-related activities, please see the [US technical assistance report](#) (G/SPS/GEN/181/Add.10) to the WTO.