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# TAAT Country Engagement: A Retrospective of Lessons Learnt and A Prospective for Future Impact



TAAT: Technologies for African Agricultural Transformation



## Disclaimer

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## Abbreviations and Acronyms

AEFPF:	African Emergency Food Production Facility
AfDB:	African Development Bank
ACLBC:	African Cereal and Legume Breeding Consortium
AKILIMO:	A digital advisory tool for cassava farming
CREW:	Climate Resilient Wheat
DRC:	Democratic Republic of Congo
ENSURE:	A project spanning multiple countries in East Africa
e-prod:	Electronic supply chain management software
FAO:	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FIP:	Forestry Investment Program in Rwanda
GAPs:	Good Agricultural Practices
GEM:	A type of parboiler technology
HQCF:	High-Quality Cassava Flour
IFI:	International Financial Institution
IITA:	International Institute of Tropical Agriculture
INERA:	Institut de l'Environnement et de Recherches Agricoles (Institute for Environment and Agricultural Research)
IsDB:	Islamic Development Bank
JICA:	Japan International Cooperation Agency
KPIs:	Key Performance Indicators
LoA:	Letter of Agreement
M&E:	Monitoring and Evaluation
NA:	Not Available
NARES:	National Agricultural Research and Extension Systems
PADCV-PTA:	Programme d'Appui au Développement des Chaînes de Valeur et Programme de Transformation de l'Agriculture (Program to Support Value Chain Development and Agricultural Transformation Programme)
PARs:	Project Appraisal Reports
PICS:	is a double liner hermetic storage bag that is chemical-free
PIDACC:	Programme for Integrated Development and Adaptation to Climate Change in the Niger Basin
PIU:	Programme Implementation Unit

PMU:	Programme Management Unit
P2-P2RS:	Project 2 of the Programme to Strengthen Food and Nutrition Insecurity in the Sahel (
ROI:	Return on Investment
SAH:	Semi-Autotrophic Hydroponics
SENASEM:	National Seed Service (in the DRC)
SEPAREF:	Sahel Emergency Preparedness and Response Facility
SNV:	Stichting Nederlandse Vrijwilligers (Foundation of Netherlands Volunteers)
TA:	Technical Assistance
TAAT:	Technologies for African Agricultural Transformation
TBD:	To Be Determined
TFSRP:	Tanzania Food Security Response Programme
TORs:	Terms of Reference
ToT:	Training of Trainers
WFP:	World Food Programme
WorldVegCenter:	World Vegetable Centre



## Executive Summary

The Technologies for African Agricultural Transformation (TAAT) has reached a pivotal moment, shifting from a rapid-response model to a long-term, systemic approach. This evolution is driven by lessons learned from leveraging over \$2.5 billion in agricultural investments and deploying 178 proven technologies across the continent. The new strategy, outlined in the Phase III appraisal, transforms TAAT from a simple "technology push" initiative into a demand-driven, co-creation partner for national and regional agricultural development.

A key finding from this analysis of three years of operational experience is the need to secure a formal, advisory role in major funding negotiations to prevent budget shortfalls and implementation delays. The initial model, while successful in rapidly deploying technology during the African Emergency Food Production Facility (AEFPF) crisis, often struggled with fragmented funding and administrative bottlenecks. For instance, projects under the AEFPF, despite influencing \$857 million, allocated only 0.48% for TAAT's technical assistance.

TAAT's new model, exemplified by the \$311 million DRC project, positions it

as a "systems architect" that is deeply integrated into national programmes. This mature approach focuses on high-value activities, such as capacity building, seed system strengthening, and the deployment of advanced technological ecosystems—including digital tools like AKILIMO and SeedTracker. This ensures that TAAT's technical assistance is not only formally budgeted for but is also essential for the successful execution of large-scale, long-term initiatives.

In short, TAAT's future is defined by a strategic pivot towards a more sustainable business model. The goal is to become an indispensable service provider that is embedded in national agricultural transformation programmes, proving its value through measurable outcomes and secure, direct funding channels. This shift is crucial for accelerating genuine and lasting agricultural transformation across Africa.

## Introduction

This document integrates the retrospective lessons from TAAT's Country Engagement with the strategic directives from its Phase III Appraisal. It captures the evolution of a program consciously shifting from a successful but operationally challenged model toward a more sustainable, country-owned, and market-driven future.

This knowledge product synthesises three years of operational experience. It charts TAAT's journey from a rapid-response emergency initiative (AEFPF) to a sophisticated architect of long-term, systemic change. The analysis is built on a foundation of internal reports, donor updates, strategic publications, key person interviews, and a holistic review of TAAT's engagements and presentations. The purpose is to distil these operational experiences into actionable insights to inform future strategy, improve efficiency, capture tacit knowledge, and demonstrate value to stakeholders.

The primary audience for this analysis is the TAAT Leadership, Programme Managers, AfDB Task Managers, and other donors. The secondary audience comprises national governments, NARES, private sector partners, and other stakeholders invested in African agricultural transformation.

## Methodology

This knowledge product was developed through a rigorous, multi-phased methodology designed to ensure a comprehensive and evidence-based synthesis of lessons learnt. The approach combined qualitative and quantitative data analysis from a wide range of sources to triangulate findings and validate insights.

### Phase 1: Scoping and Framework Development

A preliminary thematic framework was established

based on TAAT's core operational pillars: Strategy and Model Evolution, Partnership and Negotiation, Implementation and Efficiency, Monitoring and Evaluation, and Sustainability. This framework guided all subsequent data collection and analysis.

### Phase 2: Systematic Data Collection and Collation

Data was gathered from the following primary and secondary sources to ensure a holistic view:

- Programmatic Documentation: A comprehensive review of internal TAAT reports, progress updates, strategic publications, and program databases.
- Project Data: In-depth analysis of project-level data, including budget allocations, PARs, and technical annexes from all approved AEFPP and non-AEFPP engagements from 2022-2025.
- Structured Expert Elicitation: Semi-structured interviews were conducted with key TAAT personnel, including Country Engagement Officers, the Private Sector Officer, and Programme Management Unit staff, to capture tacit knowledge and on-the-ground perspectives.
- Formal Proceedings: A synthesis of the proceedings and outcomes from the TAAT Phase III strategic appraisal workshop.
- External Communications Analysis: Review of donor updates and presentations delivered by TAAT at high-level forums to understand the external portrayal of successes, challenges, and strategic priorities.

### Phase 4: Validation and Synthesis

Initial findings were cross-referenced across data sources to ensure consistency and validity. The comparative table was constructed as a final synthesis tool to visually articulate the program's evolution, turning analysed data into a clear strategic narrative.

This methodical process ensures that the lessons and recommendations presented herein are not anecdotal but are derived from a robust and transparent analysis of TAAT's operational reality.

### Phase 3: Thematic and Comparative Analysis

**The collected data were analysed through the pre-defined thematic framework.**

- ◆ **Within-Case Analysis:** Individual country and project engagements were studied to identify specific patterns, challenges, and successes.
- ◆ **Cross-Case Analysis:** Data was compared across the portfolio to distinguish between isolated incidents and systemic trends. This was crucial for contrasting the emergency AEFPP model with the evolving non-AEFPP approach.
- ◆ **Trend Analysis:** Financial data and project characteristics were quantified to identify evolutions in scale, budget security, technology complexity, and TAAT's defined role over time.



## Theme 4: From Outputs to Outcomes: Unifying MEL

- ◆ Success: The PMU leads robust M&E efforts, with a clear intent to link project KPIs back to specific technologies in the e-catalogues.
- ◆ Challenge: A fragmented M&E system prevents a clear, unified tracking of how leveraged funds flow to Compacts and how impact is measured uniformly across the complex portfolio with different funders.
- ◆ Lesson: To demonstrate true value and ensure accountability, a unified results framework is non-negotiable. The program must move beyond reporting outputs (number of technologies integrated) to measuring outcomes (yield increases, income changes) directly linked to TAAT's interventions.
- ◆ Recommendation: Prioritise and resource a harmonised M&E system. This must be a core strategic objective for TAAT Phase III, as it is essential for proving ROI to donors and partners.

## Theme 5: Architecting a Sustainable Future

- ◆ Success: Initiatives like the National Seed Roadmaps and the African Cereal and Legume Breeding Consortium (ACLBC) exemplify the building of sustainable, country-owned systems and profitable private sector engagement.
- ◆ Challenge: The current funding model for the Clearinghouse itself is not self-sustaining and relies on project-based grants, creating strategic vulnerability.
- ◆ Lesson: Long-term sustainability requires an evolution from a grant-funded project to a valued service provider that both governments and the private sector are willing to co-invest in.
- ◆ Recommendation: Transition to a service-based business model. Develop a costed menu of Clearinghouse services (e.g., strategy development, partnership brokering, M&E) to be offered on a cost-share basis to governments and IFIs.

## Approved African Emergency Food Production Facility (AEFPF) Projects

This dataset provided a granular view of TAAT's country engagement within the AfDB's African Emergency Food Production Facility (AEFPF) from 2022 to 2023. Analyzing it through the lens of the established thematic framework above uncovers critical operational insights, validates previous lessons, and identifies new patterns.

### 1. Overall Impact and Scale (The "What")

The data quantifies the massive scale of TAAT's intervention during the food crisis:

- ◆ Geographic Reach: TAAT engaged with 32 projects across 34 countries under the AEFPF.
- ◆ Financial Influence: These projects represent a total budget of approximately \$857 million.
- ◆ Direct Mobilisation for TAAT: A total of \$4.14 million was directly allocated for TAAT Compact technical assistance. This is a critical figure for understanding the leverage ratio.
- ◆ Planned Reach: The projects aimed to reach over 7 million direct beneficiaries and 17.8 million indirect beneficiaries, covering over 10.2 million hectares with climate-smart technologies.

### 2. The Gap Between Integration and Implementation (The "So What")

This dataset powerfully reveals the core challenge identified in the retrospective thematics: the disconnect between project design and on-the-ground execution.

**High Integration, Variable Execution:** While technologies were written into many Projects (e.g., 4 in Côte d'Ivoire, 8 in Guinea-Bissau, 12 in South Sudan), the "Progress" column shows a starkly different reality:

- "Discussions ongoing with (Program Implementation Unit (PIU)) in DRC & Zimbabwe)
- "NA" (No information provided for many countries)
- "The country did not request TAAT technical assistance" (Togo)
- "They declined the offer of the TAAT Wheat Compact" (Burkina Faso)

#### Evidence of Negotiation Exclusion:

This data is empirical proof of the lesson: "Early engagement is not enough." TAAT's technical proposals were integrated into the Project Appraisal Reports (PARs), but the failure to secure a formal role in negotiations meant that subsequent agreements and budgets between governments and the Bank often bypassed TAAT, leaving the Compacts without the allocated funds (\$4.14m) to execute the work.

### 3. Pattern Analysis: What Worked and What Didn't

**Most Engaged Compacts:** The data shows which compacts were most frequently called upon:

- Rice (15+ projects)
- Maize (15+ projects)
- Wheat (8 projects)
- Cassava (7 projects)
- This aligns with the focus on staple crops for immediate food security.

**Successful Models:** The data points to what facilitated successful engagement:

**Strong Local Presence:** Countries where IITA/Compacts have a strong physical presence (e.g., Nigeria, Benin) showed more advanced progress.

**Pre-existing Relationships:** South Sudan and the Comoros explicitly reached agreements with national partners, suggesting that prior collaboration was key.

**Multinational Projects:** The SEPAREF project (Burundi, Comoros, Somalia, South Sudan) has a signed Letter of Agreement (LoA) with FAO, showing the effectiveness of working through structured multilateral channels.

### 4. Uncovering New, Actionable Insights

**The "Technical Assistance Budget" Mismatch:** There is a massive disparity between the total project budget (\$857M) and the budget allocated for TAAT Technical Assistance (TA) (\$4.14M). This represents a 0.48% allocation for technical assistance. This raises a critical question: Is this sufficient to ensure the effective deployment of the technologies that the \$857M is meant to deliver? This is a powerful data point for advocating for a higher percentage of TA allocation in future projects.

**The "Seed Procurement" Trap:** Many projects (e.g., Cameroon, Chad, DRC, Senegal) list TAAT's role as "Technical support for seed procurement." This is a high-risk, low-value activity that can consume immense resources. The case of Burkina Faso (which

declined TAAT wheat and signed directly with a national institute, INERA) shows the peril of this role—TAAT can easily be cut out. This validates the Phase III shift toward higher-value services, such as seed roadmap development and capacity building.

**The Power of Specificity:** Projects with highly specific Terms of Reference (TORs) for TAAT (e.g., Mali, Sudan, Guinea-Bissau) were more likely to have advanced to the "discussion" stage. Vague TORs (e.g., "Providing Climate Smart Technologies" in Liberia) correlated with no progress reported.

### 4. Recommendation Reinforcement: This data makes a compelling case for:

- **Mandatory Technical Assistance Lines:** Advocating for a minimum percentage of sovereign loans to be ring-fenced for technical assistance and capacity building.
- **Direct Contracting:** Pushing for direct contracts between the AfDB and TAAT Compacts to bypass slow and unpredictable government disbursement channels.
- **Specificity in PARs:** Ensuring that TAAT's role in PARs is defined by specific, high-value capacity-building activities, not vague support or pure procurement.



## 5. Synthesis: Key Takeaways

This data provides the evidence base for the lessons previously identified:

- 1. Lesson Validated:** The primary barrier to impact is not a lack of demand or poor technology, but operational and contractual bottlenecks after project approval.
- 2. New Insight:** The technical assistance component is critically underfunded relative to the overall investment, risking the failure of the entire investment by not ensuring technologies are used correctly.
- 3. Strategic Imperative:** TAAT must avoid being cast in the role of a "procurement agent." Its unique value is in system strengthening (seed roadmaps, policy, training), not in buying and moving seeds. The Phase III focus on this is correct and necessary.

## Approved non-AEFPF Projects from 2022-2023

This data is crucial as it captures TAAT's strategic parallel engagements alongside the emergency AEFPF response. Analysing it reveals a distinct and more sophisticated operational model. This

portfolio reveals that while the AEFPF addressed immediate fires, TAAT was simultaneously laying the groundwork for long-term, resilient agricultural systems. The projects are more focused on long-term systemic change rather than emergency response. There's a strong emphasis on capacity building, seed systems, and climate resilience.

The financial leverage is significant, but the TA allocation is still relatively low. The implementation status shows mixed progress, with some projects well-documented and others lacking evidence. Thematic projects, such as regenerative agriculture and policy work, are emerging, which is a positive sign.

The analysis is structured around these themes: strategic focus, financials, implementation, and thematic evolution. The goal is to highlight both the strengths and the areas for improvement in this portfolio. The following are the key insights:

## 1. Dominance of Long-Term, Systemic Development Agendas

The projects are fundamentally different from the emergency AEFPF model. They are multi-year (2023-2028 is a common duration) and focus on foundational change.

- **Evidence:** Projects explicitly target seed system development (Ethiopia CREW, P2-RSP2), policy reform (implicit in capacity building), climate resilience (all projects), and regenerative agriculture (Benin, Nigeria JICA/Sasakawa). This is a clear shift from input distribution to system strengthening.

## 2. TAAT's Role is Overwhelmingly that of a Capacity Builder and Knowledge Partner

The "Areas of TAAT Technical Assistance" column is strikingly consistent and advanced, involving the TAAT Compacts.

- **Primary Focus:** Capacity Building. This is the most frequently mentioned role, e.g., "Capacity building of research and extensionists" (South Sudan), "ToT of extension agents" (PIDACC/Zambezi), and "Capacity building on seed system development" (P2-RSP2).
- **Strategic Focus:** System Strengthening. E.g., "Strengthening the national wheat seed system" (Ethiopia CREW), strengthening national

seed systems in Sierra Leone, Cameroon, the Ivory Coast, and Kenya.

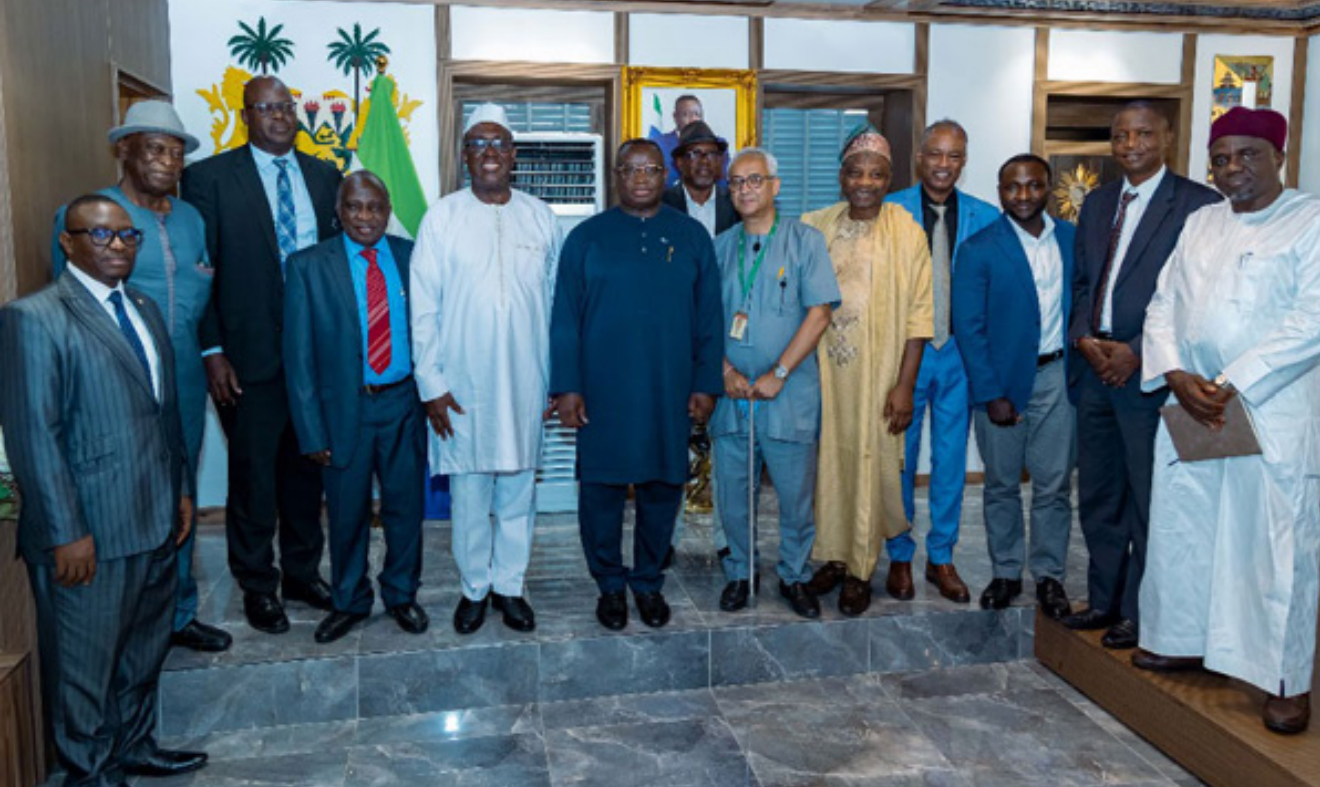
- **Knowledge Focus:** Developing training materials (Rwanda FIP), promoting climate information via digital tools (Guinea).

## 3. Significant Financial Leverage, but with a Familiar Challenge

The scale of investment influenced is substantial, but the old challenge of securing a clear Technical Assistance budget persists in some cases.

- **Total Investment Influenced:** The listed projects represent over \$400 million in total investment.
- **TAAT Budget Allocation:** A clearer \$1.71 million is specifically allocated to TAAT across the projects that reported it (Ethiopia, P2-RSP2, JICA/Sasakawa, and the Sahel countries).
- **The «?» and «NA» Challenge:** The comments like "Specify the budget for TAAT if any" (Rwanda) and "NA" (for several Sahel countries) highlight the ongoing issue of TAAT's technical assistance being recognised in the project design but not always securely and explicitly budgeted for, creating implementation risk.

## 4. Advanced and Diverse Technology Bundling



The technologies integrated are not just seeds; they are complex packages and cross-cutting solutions.

- **Beyond Seeds:** The projects include Aflasafe for mycotoxin control, agroforestry techniques, composting technologies, post-harvest technologies, and regenerative agriculture packages.
- **Thematic Integration:** The Rwanda FIP project is a standout example, bundling cassava (Semi-Autotrophic Hydroponics technology (SAH), high-iron beans, potatoes, and soil fertility technologies into a cohesive agroforestry and sustainability framework.

## 5. The Emergence of "Regenerative Agriculture" as a Key Thematic Focus

A new, strategic thematic area appears, signaling market and donor trends.

- **Evidence:** Two dedicated projects (Benin and Nigeria JICA/Sasakawa) focus specifically on "Improving Rice Productivity by Decarbonising Cultivation" and "Evidence-based regenerative agriculture". This positions TAAT at the forefront of climate-smart and green growth agendas in the agricultural sector.

## 6. The Sahel Project (P2-PRS 2): A Model for Regional Engagement

The multinational P2-PRSP2 project is a critical data point, showing both a successful model and a stark contrast in implementation.

## 7. Clearer Implementation Pathways Where Details are Specific

Projects with clearly defined roles and technologies from the outset show more progress.

- **Successful Design:** For The Gambia, the project has a clear scope (capacity building on seed systems), a defined technology bundle (8 technologies), and a specific TAAT budget (\$0.47M). This is the model that works.
- **Implementation Gap:** For other countries in the same project (e.g., Guinea-Bissau, Chad, Togo), the data shows "NA" for technologies and budget. This suggests a breakdown between the regional project design and country-level implementation, a common challenge that TAAT must navigate in multinational efforts.
  - **Evidence:** Projects with signed agreements (Benin, Nigeria JICA/Sasakawa) and detailed technical annexes (Ethiopia CREW, P2-RSP2 for Gambia) are marked "OK," indicating a clear path to implementation. Where details are "missing" (Tanzania TFSRP, specifics for some Sahel countries), the implementation status is uncertain.

## 8. Synthesis: The Non-AEFPF 2022-2023 Portfolio as a Strategic Bridge

This analysis reveals that during the AEFPP emergency, TAAT was already operating a more strategic, long-term track. The non-AEFPF projects from this period are characterised by:

- **A Focus on Thematics:** Climate resilience, regenerative agriculture, and seed systems are the central pillars, not just commodity productivity.
- **A Higher-Value Role:** TAAT is engaged as a capacity builder and system facilitator, not a procurement agent.

- **The Persistent Budgeting Challenge:** While the model is more advanced, the struggle to secure explicit, country-level TA budgets within larger projects remains a key operational hurdle.

- **The Blueprint for the Future:** The successful projects in this list (Ethiopia CREW, Rwanda FIP, Benin Decarbonising) directly pave the way for the even more mature 2024-2025 non-AEFPF model that we explore further below, which features projects like the \$311M DRC program.

The 2022-2023 non-AEFPF data show TAAT successfully pioneering its sustainable transformation model in



parallel to firefighting. It proves the program has the strategic vision to move beyond emergencies. The key learning is that securing the implementation model is just as important as designing the strategic intervention. The main recommendation remains: Institutionalise mechanisms to ensure the high-value technical assistance proposed at the design phase is concretely budgeted and contracted at the implementation phase.

## Approved Non-AEFPF Projects Dec 2023 – 2024

The first thing that stands out is the massive scale of the DRC project, which involves \$311 million and 15 technologies. That's a clear indicator of TAAT's evolving role as a systemic partner rather than just a technology provider. The ENSURE project is another highlight, with its vast scope across 7 countries and 82 technologies, showing TAAT's ability to handle complex, multi-compact engagements.

The projects are heavily focused on capacity building and system strengthening, like training technicians and strengthening seed certification systems. This aligns with TAAT's shift

toward long-term impact rather than short-term fixes. The budgets here are more explicit and integrated, which suggests better planning and fewer implementation hurdles compared to earlier projects.

The themes of digitalisation and climate resilience are strong across the board, especially with tools like AKILIMO and RiceAdvice. The mention of policy engagement in Angola's project is also noteworthy—it shows TAAT is operating at a strategic level.

These are the most revealing yet. They showcase TAAT's full evolution into a dominant force for large-scale, systemic agricultural transformation. The projects are bigger, more complex, and more strategically integrated than ever before. Overall, this dataset portrays TAAT as maturing into a key player in sustainable agricultural transformation, with a clear focus on scalability, systemic change, and measurable impact. Here are the key insights:

### The Era of Systemic Transformation

This portfolio represents a quantum leap in scale, complexity, and strategic ambition. It moves beyond individual projects to encompass entire national agricultural transformation programs.

## 1. Unprecedented Scale and Strategic Depth

The projects in this period are not just interventions; they are comprehensive, national-level transformation programs.

- **Evidence:** The DRC's PADCV-PTA project, with a staggering \$311 million budget, is designed to support the country's entire Programme De Transformation de l'Agriculture. This signifies a shift from TAAT supporting projects to TAAT being a core pillar of the national agricultural strategy.

## 2. Mastery of Complex Technology Bundling and Integration

The number and complexity of technologies integrated are orders of magnitude greater than in previous periods.

- **Evidence:** The ENSURE Phase 2 project integrates a massive 82 technologies across 12+ value chains in 7 countries. This is no longer a simple toolkit; it is a complete technological ecosystem being deployed at a regional scale. The DRC project's 15 technologies are also highly advanced, including digital tools (AKILIMO, SeedTracker, RiceAdvice), bio-control (AflaSafe), and processing tech (GEM parboiler, HQCF).

## 3. TAAT's Role is Now Unequivocally "Systems Architect"

The "Areas of TAAT Technical Assistance" column consistently indicates that TAAT is operating at the highest strategic level.

- **Capacity Building at Scale:** "Training of trainers," "Capacity strengthening of SENASEM [national seed service]," "Training of SNV technicians on mechanisation."
- **Policy & System Influence:** While not explicit, strengthening a national seed service (SENASEM in DRC) is a deeply systemic and policy-relevant intervention.
- **Digital Transformation:** A core part of the mandate is now deploying digital tools (early warning systems, digital advisories) as part of the national infrastructure.

## 4. Full Embrace of Regional and Multi-Country Approaches

TAAT is increasingly acting as a continent-wide facilitator, harmonising approaches across borders.

- **Evidence:** The ENSURE project spans 7 countries in East Africa. This allows TAAT to create regional synergies, share best practices, and leverage economies of scale in technology deployment, moving beyond a purely country-by-country model.



## 5. Significant and Secure Financial Leverage

The financial scale is monumental, and the budgeting for TAAT appears more secure and integrated.

- **Total Investment Influenced:** The listed projects represent over \$483 million in total investment.
- **Strategic Allocation:** While the exact TAAT budget isn't listed for all, the detailed description of its role in the PARs and technical annexes for major projects like DRC and ENSURE suggests a more formalised and secure integration into the project's financial structure from the outset. This addresses the "NA" challenge seen in earlier periods.

## 6. Thematic Maturity: Digitalisation and Climate Resilience are Core

The projects are fully aligned with the latest global agendas, embedding them as core components rather than add-ons.

- **Digital Agriculture:** Tools like AKILIMO, RiceAdvice, WeedManager, and SeedTracker are standard components, indicating a mature digital strategy.
- **Climate Resilience:** This is no longer a separate project but a foundational element of all interventions, from climate-smart varieties to regenerative practices and early warning systems.



## 7. The Pinnacle Example: The DRC Project as the Blueprint

The DRC's PADCV-PTA project is the gold standard and should serve as the definitive case study for all future TAAT engagements. It embodies every lesson learned:

- **Country Ownership:** Directly supporting a national transformation program.
- **Systemic Intervention:** Strengthening the national seed service (SENASA).
- **Advanced Technology Bundling:** 15 sophisticated technologies.
- **Capacity Building:** Multi-level training programs.
- **Massive Scale:** \$311 million budget.

## 8. Synthesis: The 2023–2024 Portfolio as the New Benchmark

This analysis reveals that TAAT has successfully completed its strategic evolution. The non-AEFPP projects from this period are characterised by:

- **From Projects to Programs:** Engaging with multi-year, national transformation programs rather than isolated projects.
- **From Components to Ecosystems:** Deploying comprehensive technological ecosystems (80+ technologies) instead of individual technology toolkits.
- **From Implementation to Architecture:** Acting as a system architect and capacity builder for national institutions, not just an implementer.
- **From National to Regional:** Mastering the coordination of complex, multi-country engagements.
- **From Uncertainty to Integration:** Achieving a more secure and formally integrated role within large-scale IFI investments.

The data for December 2023-2024 represent the pinnacle of TAAT's Country Engagement model. It demonstrates a mature, confident, and highly impactful organisation that is now an indispensable partner for governments and IFIs aiming for genuine agricultural transformation. The key learning is that this level of impact is achievable when TAAT is engaged as a strategic co-designer from the very inception of a national programme.

The main recommendation is to formalise this "DRC Model" as the standard operating procedure for all major engagements, ensuring that this level of depth, integration, and systemic impact becomes the norm, not the exception.

### Approved Non AEFPP Projects April 2024 – 2025: The Model Perfect

The data clearly evolves from the earlier AEFPP model, with a more strategic focus, larger budgets, and explicit TAAT involvement. The key themes here are the shift from emergency response to systemic development, the maturation of TAAT's role, and the significant financial leverage.

The analysis is structured to highlight these points: the scale and strategic intent, the nature of TAAT's role, the financial aspects, and the thematic focus. The DRC project stands out as a benchmark, and the analysis connects this data to the broader narrative of TAAT's evolution, contrasting it with the AEFPP approach.

This portfolio represents the most mature and successful expression of TAAT's engagement model. It demonstrates a complete departure from the challenges of the AEFPP era, showcasing a strategic, well-funded, and deeply integrated approach to agricultural transformation.



## 1. Unprecedented Scale and Strategic Depth

The most immediate insight is the massive scale of influence TAAT has achieved.

- **Total Investment Influenced:** \$1.71 Billion across 21 countries.
- **Strategic Nature:** This is not emergency funding; it is a long-term, development-focused investment in systemic change. Projects are designed for sustainability, with implementation periods often spanning five years or more.
- **Programmatic Approach:** Projects like the DRC's PADCV-PTA (\$311M) are not standalone interventions but are explicitly designed to support the country's national "Programme de Transformation de l'Agriculture". This signifies TAAT's role as a core strategic partner in national agendas.

## 2. Mastery of Complex, Systemic Technology Bundling

This portfolio moves far beyond simple seed distribution to integrating sophisticated technological ecosystems.

- **Advanced Integration:** The projects integrate 117 distinct technologies. This is not a scattergun approach but a deliberate bundling of complementary technologies.
- **Digital Transformation:** Digital tools are now a standard, core component. The list includes AKILIMO, RiceAdvice, WeedManager, SeedTracker, and e-prod (a digital supply chain management software).

- **Full Value-Chain Coverage:** Technologies span the entire spectrum:
- **Production:** Climate-resilient varieties, GAPs, SAH.
- **Processing:** GEM parboiler, HQCF, fish feed formulation, biogas production.
- **Markets:** Cassava Business Connector, PICS bags for storage.
- **Policy & Systems:** Support to Seed Certification Committees, development of national crop variety catalogues.

### 3. TAAT's Role: From Implementer to Systems Architect and Funded Partner

The data shows a complete resolution of the "vagueness" that plagued earlier phases. TAAT's role is now clearly defined, high-value, and, crucially, funded.

- **Secured Budgets:** A total of \$12.62 million is explicitly allocated for TAAT Technical Assistance. This is a quantum leap from the AEFPP's uncertain "NA".
- **Precise Budget Allocation:** The highest level of maturity is evident in projects like the DRC's PADCV-PTA, where the \$2.76M TAAT budget is precisely split between implementing Compacts (IITA: \$1.8M, AfricaRice: \$0.7M, AATF: \$0.26M). This eliminates ambiguity and ensures accountability.
- **High-Value Mandate:** TAAT's primary role is consistently capacity building and system strengthening: "Strengthening the national wheat seed system" (Ethiopia), "Capacity strengthening of SENSEM" (DRC), "ToT of extension agents" (Zambia).

### 4. The Dominance of Seed Systems and Policy Work

Most of the projects have a core component focused on the foundational element of agricultural transformation: the seed system.

- **Evidence:** Ethiopia CREW, South

Sudan RALP, P2-RSP2 (Gambia), BRIDEP (Burundi), and the Angola PBO and the Eastern Regional Agriculture Value Chains Development Project, all have explicit seed system development as a primary objective.

- **Policy Engagement:** The Angola PBO is a pure Policy-Based Operation focused on seed policy reform, representing the highest level of strategic engagement— influencing the rules of the game itself.

### 5. The Rise of Regional Integration and Thematic Focus

The portfolio showcases a strategic focus on multi-country initiatives and niche themes.

- **Regional Projects:** \$601M of the total is allocated to regional projects like ENSURE (7 countries) and the Sahel P2-RSP2 project. This allows for harmonisation of approaches and creates regional markets.
- **Thematic Leadership:** Projects are now focused on leading-edge themes like Regenerative Agriculture (JICA/Sasakawa), Decarbonization (Benin rice project), and Bioenergy/Biogas production (Benin IsDB), positioning TAAT at the forefront of global agricultural discourse.

### 6. The DRC Project: The Gold Standard Benchmark

The Projet D'appui au Développement des Chaines de Valeurs (PADCV-PTA) in the DRC is the definitive case study that should serve as the benchmark for all future engagements.

- **Scale:** \$311 Million budget.
- **TAAT Budget:** A significant and explicit \$2.76 Million allocated.
- **Scope:** Integration of 15 advanced technologies across multiple value chains.
- **Model:** Perfect alignment with the ideal state: deep country ownership, system-wide capacity building, and a clear, multi-compact implementation plan with secured funding.

### 7. Synthesis: The Non-AEFPP 2024-2025 Portfolio as the Ideal State

This analysis reveals that TAAT has successfully operationalized its refined model. This portfolio is characterized by:

- 1. Strategic Integration:** TAAT is embedded as an essential partner in national transformation programs, not an external consultant.
- 2. Financial Clarity:** The problem of "NA" budgets has been solved. TAAT's technical assistance is now a clearly costed, non-negotiable component of project design.
- 3. Systemic Impact:** The focus is on creating lasting change by strengthening the key institutions (seed services, NARES) that will sustain progress long after the project ends.

- 4. Technical Sophistication:** The ability to bundle and deliver complex suites of technologies is now a core, proven competency.

This portfolio is the antithesis of the AEFPP. It is the result of lessons learned and successfully applied. It demonstrates a powerful, sustainable, and impactful model for agricultural transformation in which TAAT acts as a strategic architect, not just an implementer. The challenge now is not to fix the model but to routinely replicate the "DRC Model" across all future engagements to achieve transformative impact at scale.

### Comprehensive Comparison: AEFPP vs. The Three Phases of Non-AEFPP Projects

From the prior analysis, the AEFPP serves as the perfect contrast to highlight TAAT's evolution— it's the "before" picture that makes the "after" (non-AEFPP maturity) more impactful. This section, therefore, creates a compelling arc: problem (AEFPP challenges) → solution (non-AEFPP evolution) that validates the strategic pivot and highlights the value of the lessons learned. This final comparison synthesises the entire journey, using the AEFPP as the baseline to measure TAAT's strategic evolution.

### The Overarching Narrative: From Emergency Firefighting to Systemic Architecture

The fundamental contrast is between two different models of engagement: one designed for immediate rescue and the other for long-term development.

Dimension	AEFPF (2022-2023) The Baseline	Non-AEFPF Phase 1 (2022-2023) The Foundation	Non-AEFPF Phase 2 (2023-2024) The Transformation	Non-AEFPF Phase 3 (2024-2025) The Mature Model
Strategic Driver	Reactive (Global Crises)	Proactive (Systemic Challenges)	Proactive (National Agendas)	Proactive (Sustainable Development)
Core Objective	Rapid Caloric Production	System Strengthening & Resilience	Systemic Transformation	Consolidation & Deep Integration
TAAT's Role	Procurement Support (Often excluded)	Capacity Builder (Advisor)	Systems Architect (Integrator)	Lead Partner & Policy Influencer
Tech Approach	Simple (Seeds, Varieties)	Bundled (4-8 Tech Packages)	Complex Ecosystems (15-82 Technologies)	Advanced & Niche (Bioenergy, Digital)
Budget Security for TAAT	Highly Vulnerable (0.48%) ("NA", unsecured)	Inconsistent ("NA", "?" common)	Implicitly Secure (In PARs/Annexes)	Explicit & Secure (\$12.62M allocated)
Sustainability	Very Low (Input-focused)	Medium (Capacity-focused)	High (System-focused)	Very High (Ownership & Policy)
Key Lesson Demonstrated	Design without implementation commitment fails.	The right intent is hampered by an unclear model.	Scale is possible with a clear role.	Impact is achieved with a secure, funded mandate.

## Synthesis: The Arc of Transformation

### 1. The AEFPF was the Catalyst for Change:

The operational failures of the AEFPF—the "implementation gap," the "0.48% problem," and the vague roles—were not just problems; they were the necessary catalyst that forced a strategic reevaluation. The non-AEFPF portfolio is the direct answer to these challenges.

### 2. Data Shows a Clear Resolution of Past Flaws:

- **Then (AEFPF):** Projects listed "NA" for budget and status.
- **Now (Non-AEFPF Phase 3):** Projects have explicit budgets split between TAAT Compacts (e.g., DRC: IITA \$1.8M, AfricaRice \$0.7M).

This is the most powerful evidence of learning and adaptation.

### 3. The Trajectory is from "Doing" to "Enabling":

- ◆ **AEFPF:** TAAT was trying to do things (distribute inputs) but lacked control.
- ◆ **Non-AEFPF:** TAAT now enables others to do things (build seed systems, create policy), which is a far more powerful and sustainable leverage point.

### 4. Comparison Validates the New Model:

Contrasting the AEFPF's struggles with the non-AEFPF's successes proves that the shift in strategy was not just theoretical—it was necessary and effective. It demonstrates that the mature 2024-2025 model is financially more secure, operationally more robust, and more impactfully sustainable.

The challenges experienced during the AEFPF were not a failure but an invaluable learning experience. They provided the irrefutable evidence needed to drive a strategic pivot towards a more deeply embedded, financially secure, and systemically focused model of engagement. The non-AEFPF portfolio, culminating in the mature 2024-2025 phase, is the successful result of that learning. Therefore, the number one recommendation for future agricultural development is to skip the AEFPF model entirely and begin from the principles of the mature non-AEFPF model: co-design, systemic focus, and secured funding for technical assistance to build resilient food systems.

### In Pipeline – Applying Lessons to Forge Tomorrow's Transformations

The ultimate validation of any learning process is its application to future endeavors. Having established the

strategic evolution from the reactive AEFPP model to the mature, systemic non-AEFPP approach, the critical question is how these lessons are being operationalized. The analysis of "Projects in Preparation" provides the answer: this pipeline is not a continuation of the old model but the deliberate implementation of the new one on a grand scale. This final chapter completes the narrative arc, moving the story from 'what we learned' to 'how we are applying these lessons to confidently shape the future,' offering a clear window into how TAAT is proactively designing the next wave of agricultural transformation.

## 1. The Pipeline Validates the Evolved Model

The "Projects in Preparation" data shows that the strategic pivot is now the default starting point for new engagements.

- **From Reactive to Proactive:** Unlike the AEFPP, which was a reaction to global crises, this pipeline consists of proactively designed investments focused on long-term systemic development (e.g., Kenya Accelerated Maize Production Action Plan, Nigerian Soybean Action Plan).
- **From Vague to Specific:** The tentative technical assistance descriptions are already far more specific and strategic than the vague "capacity building" often seen in early projects. They explicitly mention "strengthening the national seed system," "EGS production," and "policy technical assistance on Seed Roadmaps."
- **Securing the Role Upfront:** By being embedded in Preparation and Appraisal Missions (e.g., for the DRC PADCV-PTA, Cameroon's Plaine

Centrale), TAAT is ensuring it has a "seat at the table" during the design phase, directly addressing the core failure of the AEFPP.

## 2. Unprecedented Scale and Country Ownership

The pipeline reveals a massive scaling up of ambition, now led by country-owned visions.

- **Massive Financial Scale:** The pipeline represents over \$2.6 billion in anticipated investments, demonstrating huge confidence in the model.
- **Country-Led Action Plans:** Countries are not just receiving projects; they are driving them. The presence of nationally developed "Accelerated Production Action Plans" in Kenya (\$424M), Nigeria (\$122M), and The Gambia (\$942M) shows that TAAT's previous capacity-building and advocacy efforts have empowered countries to define their own transformational agendas, with TAAT as a key technical partner.

## 3. Deepening Thematic Focus

The pipeline shows a clear emphasis on the advanced, systemic themes that characterised the mature non-AEFPP phase.

- **Regional Integration:** Mega-regional projects like the REWARD project (15 ECOWAS countries, \$600M) are a top priority, promoting harmonisation and economies of scale.
- **Cross-Cutting Technologies:** The focus extends beyond production to include digital tools (e.g., Community Pass ICT platform), processing (e.g., GEM parboiling, ASI thresher), and policy (e.g., seed roadmaps), continuing the

trend of complex technology bundling.

- **Sustainable Practices:** Concepts like regenerative agriculture and decarbonization are now integrated into project concepts from the outset.

## 4. The Lingering "TBD" – The Final Frontier

The analysis also reveals the last remaining challenge to be solved.

- **The «To Be Determined» Risk:** The numerous "tbd" entries for technologies and budgets highlight that the design phase is still fluid. The critical task is to ensure these "tentative" TA components become explicit, costed line items in the final legal agreements.
- **Recommendation:** This underscores the need for a proactive, systematic process to track these projects through to approval, ensuring the hard-won lessons of secured budgeting are not lost in the final negotiation stage.

## Conclusions

The TAAT program's journey from 2022 to the present represents a masterclass in operational learning and strategic adaptation. The analysis leads to one overarching conclusion: TAAT has successfully evolved from a responsive technology broker into a proactive architect of systemic agricultural transformation.

This evolution is marked by a definitive pivot away from the challenges of the emergency AEFPP model—characterised by operational bottlenecks, underfunded technical assistance, and a vulnerable "technology push" approach. The non-AEFPP portfolio, culminating in the

mature 2024-2025 phase, demonstrates a new, proven model defined by country ownership, strategic integration, secured funding, and a focus on strengthening the foundational systems (seed, policy, digital) that sustain growth long after projects end.

The powerful contrast between the AEFPP's 0.48% technical assistance allocation and the mature model's explicit \$12.62 million in secured TAAT funding is the ultimate evidence of this learning. The DRC PADCV-PTA project stands as the definitive benchmark, embodying every lesson learnt and proving that deep, impactful, and sustainable transformation is achievable when TAAT is engaged as a strategic co-designer from the outset.

The future pipeline confirms that this evolved model is not an exception, but rather the standard, applied at an unprecedented scale across Africa. The challenge is no longer about designing the right model, but about consistently executing it.

## Recommendations

To consolidate this success and maximise future impact, the following actions are critically recommended:

### 1. Institutionalise the 'DRC Model' as the Standard Operating Procedure.

- ◆ **Action:** Formalise the engagement principles demonstrated in the DRC project—deep country ownership, explicit TAAT budgeting in project legal agreements, and a mandate as a system-strengthening partner—as the non-negotiable blueprint for all major country and regional engagements.

### 2. Formalise TAAT's

## Role in Sovereign Loan Negotiations.

- ◆ **Action:** Advocate to the African Development Bank (AfDB) and other IFI partners to mandate TAAT's inclusion as a formal technical advisor on project preparation and negotiation missions. This is essential to safeguard the integrity of the technical design and ensure TAAT Compact activities are fully resourced from the start.

## 3. Establish a Dual-Track Funding Mechanism with AfDB.

- ◆ **Action:** Work with AfDB task managers to structurally separate funding streams within sovereign loans: channeling investment funds through government systems while establishing direct contracts between the Bank and TAAT Compacts for technical assistance. This will bypass debilitating disbursement delays and protect implementation efficiency.

## 4. Prioritise and Resource the Harmonized M&E System.

- ◆ **Action:** Dedicate immediate resources to the development and roll-out of a unified results framework. This system must move beyond output tracking to clearly attribute outcome-level

impact (yield, income, resilience) to TAAT's interventions, providing the necessary data for accountability and storytelling to donors.

## 5. Transitioning the Clearinghouse to a Sustainable Service Provider Model.

- ◆ **Action:** Develop and socialise a costed menu of Clearinghouse services (e.g., national seed roadmap development, investment case preparation, partnership brokering, specialised M&E) to be offered on a cost-share basis to governments and IFIs, reducing reliance on project-based grants.

## 6. Proactively Manage the Future Pipeline to Eliminate "tbd".

- ◆ **Action:** Implement a systematic process to track "Projects in Preparation," assigning clear ownership to ensure that tentative TAAT roles and "tbd" budgets are converted into explicit, costed line items in final legal agreements, securing the value created during the design phase.



## Country Engagement: Brokering proven innovations in support of country agricultural investments

TAAT Clearinghouse, International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), Benin Republic

### Introduction

- The TAAT Clearinghouse Country Engagement supports the AfDB Feed Africa Strategy.
- Contributes to the design of large-scale agricultural investment projects funded by AfDB and other IFIs,  
Through Country Engagement, the Clearinghouse:
  - Engages decision-makers to integrate TAAT-vetted innovations into national and regional large-scale agriculture investment projects
  - Mobilize CGIAR experts to collaborate with partners to deploy innovations
  - Ultimately, the Clearinghouse contributes to enhancing the performance of IFIs' financed agricultural investments.

### Approach

The strategic approaches for country engagement are anchored on new streamlined processes:

#### Strategic Approaches and Tools to facilitate TAAT-2 Country Engagement

Restructured TAAT Country Engagement Teams, Roles and Capacity Building	Streamlined internal processes to develop a compelling value proposition	Mechanism for integrating TAAT Technologies and provide implementation support	Establish tools and processes to catalyze scaling of TAAT technologies	Establish strategic partnerships at all levels to deliver technologies and innovation
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### Progress of Country Engagement

- A team of 9 country engagement officers leading TAAT technology brokerage in Eastern, Western, Central and Southern Africa and across countries.
- Large-scale national and regional agricultural investments influenced (~US\$ 2.7 billion) by integrating TAAT-vetted productivity-enhancing innovations and catalyzing their scaling in RMCs

- 21 projects financed by AfDB through the African Emergency Food Production Facility (AEFPF) for US\$ 857 million across 24 countries
- 20 national and regional AfDB ADF projects for US\$ 1.8 billion in investments across 23 countries

- Support to seed systems through:
  - Seed gap assessment for 33 countries for all priority value chains for AEFPP projects;
  - Provision of technical specifications, standards and potential suppliers for seed procurement;
  - 7 national seed business summits organized for the development of national seed roadmaps and investment plans with the TAAT Policy compact, TASA and AGRA;
  - Catalyze capacity building of seed system stakeholders in 19 countries in the context of AEFPP.
- Additional resources mobilised for TAAT compacts operations:
  - €5 million mobilised through AfDB's bilateral funders, such as the Federal Republic of Germany, for the implementation of TAAT II
  - 18 proposals prepared and submitted for different funding opportunities at AfDB and other IFIs.

### Conclusion

- The Clearinghouse technology brokerage has enabled the integration of TAAT-vetted innovations alongside implementation support into numerous large-scale investment projects financed by the AfDB and other IFIs, including IsDB and the World Bank.
- Through this new approach, the TAAT Clearinghouse has positioned itself to meet the rising demand for TAAT innovations to increase productivity and ensure higher incomes and food sovereignty



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# TAAT Technologies for African Agricultural Transformation

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