

Objectives of the project

CAADP-XP4/ASARECA: Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme ex-Pillar 4/ Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa. African Regional and Sub-Regional Organizations for Agricultural Research and Innovation Support Project.

The objective is to support agricultural research and innovation in Eastern and Central Africa to contribute effectively to food and nutrition security, economic development and climate mitigation in Africa. This will be achieved through improving the capacity, effectiveness and positioning of ASARECA as well as National-Agriculture-Research-Systems, and by promoting collaboration and knowledge sharing among the regional and sub-regional agricultural research and extension organizations.

Background

African countries face serious climate challenges that compromise efforts to increase productivity and sustainability using science, technology and innovation. Based on the projections by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) crop yields in sub Saharan Africa are set to drop by 22% by 2050 due to effects of climate change. Key interventions to address climate change impacts entail strengthening the adaptive and mitigation capacities of the agricultural sector and mediating the science-policy nexus for promoting an enabling institutional environment. After years into the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Malabo commitments, Africa's agricultural transformation agenda still needs further work to be realized. A substantial push to country-level actions is needed, as these should be insulated from the serious threats posed by climate change. Learning from existing programs will support this goal.



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CAADP-XP4 project (African Regional and Sub-Regional Organizations for Agricultural Research and Innovation Support Project) aims to address the above challenges through supporting a science-led and climate-relevant agricultural transformation in Africa. The project will support FARA, CORAF, ASARECA, CCARDESA and AFAAS. More specifically, the project seeks to strengthen the capacity of ASARECA to deliver on their Agricultural Research for Development (AR4D) mandate and to support its member countries to implement relevant programmes of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP).

More specifically, the project seeks to strengthen the capacity of ASARECA to deliver on their Agricultural Research for Development (AR4D) mandate and to support its member countries to implement relevant programmes of CAADP. Like other ex-pillar 4 institutions, ASARECA has been facing significant challenges in delivery of its AR4D mandate within the Eastern and Central Africa (ECA) sub region. Some of these constraints include: limited organizational and technical capacities; inadequate financial resources; and weak partnerships required to effectively collaborate and network with other actors at regional, continental and global level.

The Project outputs highlighted above are neatly aligned with the four thematic thrusts of the ASARECA Strategy and Results Framework (2019-2028) and Medium Term Operational Plan I (2019-2023). The outputs are therefore implemented within the deep outlook of ASARECA strategic focus areas. These include: (i) Transformative capacity strengthening and integration, which focuses on strengthening and integration of AR4D capacities and competencies at systemic, organizational and individual levels to contribute significantly to the



attainment of inclusive and sustainable agricultural transformation; (ii) Agricultural transformation technologies and innovations, which among other things, focuses on supporting and coordinating the development and adaptation of technologies and innovations to address priority regional agricultural transformation challenges; Enabling policy environment, functional markets and transformative institutions, focusing on supporting and advocating for creation of enabling environment, functional and structured regional markets and strengthening of regional institutions; (iii) Knowledge and information management focusing on improving management and access to reliable and up-to-date knowledge and information to inform agricultural transformation decision making processes and action in the East and Central Africa (ECA) sub region. Based on the foregoing, the CAADP-XP4 project is a timely intervention in addressing institutional infrastructure capacity, production and processing, natural resources management, policy and market related challenges both at the sub-regional (coordination level) and at the national (implementation level).

The theory of change to achieve the objectives

The expected impact of the ASARECA-CAADP-XP4 project is to increase the contribution of agriculture to economic growth and inclusive development in the Eastern and Central Africa sub region through wealth creation, food and nutrition security, and resilience and sustainability (see Theory of Change). ASARECA will coordinate and manage the implementation of the CAADP-XP4 activities to deliver on the planned outputs as per its approved Annual Work Plan and Budget (AWP&B).

ASARECA's internal capacities need to be strengthened so as to deliver its AR4D mandate including its capacity to: (i) provide leadership in agricultural research strategic visioning and priority setting, (ii) strengthen and integrate agricultural research capacities at systemic, organizational and individual levels; (iii) coordinate the development and scaling up of climate-smart agricultural transformation technologies; (iv) manage and communicate agricultural knowledge and information for decision making and action; (v) support the establishment of value-adding partnerships to address priority agricultural transformation challenges; (vi) provide research evidence to support formulation, harmonization and implementation of evidence-based policies and regulatory frameworks; and (vii) support and catalyse participation of private sector in agricultural research, value chain development.

An inception meeting will be held that will bring together various stakeholders to better plan for the implementation of the project activities. The project will engage with policy makers through high-level policy dialogue and strategic meetings. Various strategies will be used for scaling up innovations including enhancing advocacy and communication to raise awareness of climate relevant Science, Technologies and Innovations (STIs), as well as strengthening the enabling environment for trade, markets and transboundary commodity movement with a focus on climate related commodities.

Besides other outcomes; the project will deliver 5 key outcomes: (i) internal capacities of ASARECA strengthened; (ii) increased ASARECA support to member countries to contribute to the delivery of CAADP results; (iii) enhanced adoption of climate smart agriculture (CSA) technologies by stakeholders to improve productivity; (iv) increased partnerships for promotion and exchange of knowledge and experiences on climate relevant agricultural R&I; and (v) a coordinated framework and infrastructure that makes available climate-relevant STI to support the National Agriculture Knowledge and Information System (NAKIS) in learning and sharing opportunities strengthened.

The internal capacities of ASARECA will be achieved through the generation of the following outputs: (i) upgrade of operational systems for ASARECA Secretariat; (ii) implementation of a staff development program; (iii) establishment of a digital filing system and (iii) procurement of ICT equipment and software. The upgrade will entail revamping and maintaining the financial management; monitoring, evaluation and learning; knowledge management and procurement systems.

The outcome on **increased support to member countries to contribute to the delivery of CAADP results** will be achieved through: (i) training of national stakeholders in policy analysis, formulation, advocacy and resource mobilization; (ii) technical backstopping for member countries to facilitate adoption of the guidelines; (iii) development and promotion of guidelines for inclusion of relevant climate STI indicators in National Agricultural Investment Plans (NAIPs) for use by member countries, regional and continental institutions; (iv) implementation of mentorship and exchange programs for national stakeholders; and (v) training country stakeholders on resource mobilisation and management in partnership with international experts.

During project implementation; adaptation or generation of climate relevant technologies and innovations; as well as dissemination of climate relevant STIs will be facilitated thereby contributing the delivery of the outcome on **enhanced adoption of CSA technologies** to improve productivity.

Increased partnerships for promotion and exchange of knowledge and experiences on climate relevant agricultural R&I will be achieved through generation of the following outputs: (i) mobilization of international expertise for knowledge and information exchange; (ii) collaboration with international organisations to strengthen the capacities of the targeted organisations; (iii) country stakeholders trained on resource mobilisation and management in collaboration with international experts; (iv) partnerships on climate-relevant satellite data/ information provision from the European partners brokered; (v) linkages for international cooperation established and operationalised; (vi) web portals for funding opportunities established; (vii) regional case studies on effective partnerships for innovation implemented; and (viii) action plan based on the findings of the case studies to inform the operations of the multi-stakeholder partnerships developed and implemented.

The last outcome on **strengthened coordinated framework and infrastructure** – that makes available climate-relevant STI to support NAKIS in learning and sharing opportunities - will be achieved through: (i) development and operationalization of Knowledge Management (KM) strategies including guidelines for data capture at national, regional and continental level; (ii) operationalization of a CSA alliance Forum at regional and continental levels in partnership with other stakeholders; (iii) operationalization and maintenance of an interoperable KM platform.

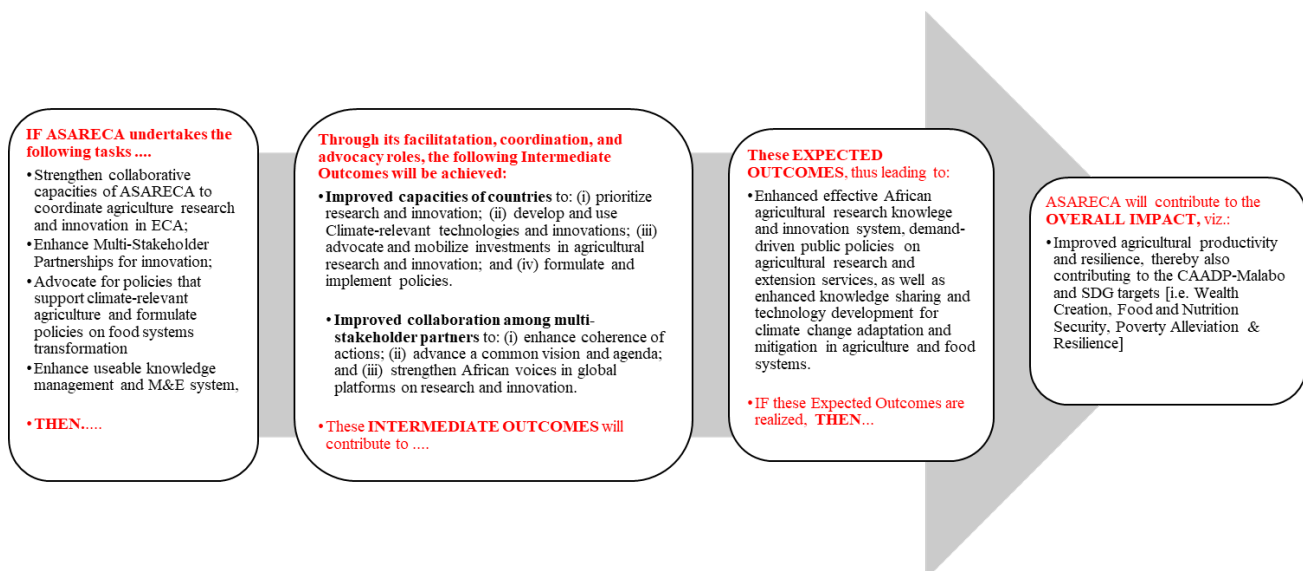


Figure: ASARECA-CAADP-XP4 Theory of change

Main Activities

The main activities of the CAADP-XP4 project include:

- ✓ develop tools for capacity gap assessments;
- ✓ carry out capacity gap assessments in ASARECA member countries;
- ✓ develop capacity development plans;
- ✓ conduct training of staff in various disciplines;
- ✓ develop Capacity Development Plan;
- ✓ coordinate mentorship and exchange programs for selected member countries;
- ✓ convene training workshops for 30 participants targeting policy makers;
- ✓ consolidate training reports for sharing with stakeholders;
- ✓ provide technical support to facilitate adoption of the guidelines at national level;
- ✓ backstop at least 6 countries to include relevant climate STI indicators in NAIPs;
- ✓ undertake mapping of the National Agricultural Research Institutes (NARIs) and other country partners to identify stakeholder partners that need capacity strengthening;
- ✓ conduct training for country partners on M&E, KM, internal audits and use of specific tools, approaches and access how to KM Hub;
- ✓ convene partners to develop joint proposals;
- ✓ develop resource mobilization strategy;
- ✓ develop training modules;
- ✓ develop a portal for resource mobilization and link the portal to existing global portals and networks for resource mobilization;
- ✓ organize a round-table discussion with researchers, private sector, and other actors on R&D priority setting for CSA in ECA;
- ✓ establish a virtual platform and convene face-to-face meetings with research scientists for dialogue and information sharing;
- ✓ review the existing KM strategies and guidelines;
- ✓ convene stakeholders workshop of 20 participants to develop the sub-Regional KM Strategy;
- ✓ monitor implementation of the strategy;
- ✓ develop and disseminate assorted/relevant KM products, tools/instruments; and
- ✓ procure cloud hosting services for the Knowledge and Information Management (KIM) platform tools and Apps.

Organization

The project is organized around 5 components: (i) capacity strengthening; (ii) multi-stakeholder partnerships' development; (iii) policy, cross country market access and improved Investment; (iv) Knowledge Management; and (v) effective planning, coordination, partnership, monitoring, evaluation and reporting.

The project will be implemented by a consortium of five partner organizations (FARA, CORAF, ASARECA, CCARDESA, AFAAS). The governance structure comprises (i) an advisory committee (AC); (ii) a technical committee (TC); (iii) a program management committee (within each organization); and (iv) a communication, branding and visibility committee comprising of stakeholders at country level and respective EU delegations. The TC will be responsible for reviewing progress in project implementation. The program management and coordination team at ASARECA will work closely with the country teams comprising of research scientists and monitoring and evaluation specialists to ensure smooth implementation of the project activities.

Key regional activities undertaken so far: ASARECA participated in the CAADP-DeSIRA project inception meeting in Johannesburg, South Africa in October 20-25, 2019. The purpose of the meeting was to formally launch the project implementation, brief all stakeholders about the project and explore modalities through which the partner organizations would work together. During the meeting, participants: Discussed and finalised

the Programme governance arrangements; reviewed year 1 AWPB (Annual Work Programme & Budget) for each partner organization; reviewed the project implementation arrangements; agreed an action plan for the implementation of the MEL; benefitted from training of technical, finance and administrative staff of the partner organizations on EC/IFAD-funded grant requirements. ASARECA also participated in the consultative meetings for the CAADP XP4 Communications and M&E Specialists at FARA Secretariat, Accra, Ghana from February 13th to 21st, 2020. The objective of the meeting was to set firm ground for establishing a functional M&E system, a joint communications and visibility strategy, and a vibrant group of M&E and communications specialists that will work hand-in-hand with the same understanding to guide successful implementation of the project. Several other regional activities that were planned in quarters 1 & 2 of this year will certainly be delayed due to COVID-19 pandemic disruptions.



Implementing organizations

Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa (ASARECA)



Administered by IFAD

Project Partners

Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA); African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (AFAAS); Centre for Coordination of Agricultural Research and Development for Southern Africa (CCARDESA); and West and Central Africa Council for Agricultural Research and Development (CORAF/WECARD).

Other stakeholders

African Union (AU), Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), East African Community (EAC), Inter-governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), Regional and National Level Partners; Eastern African Farmers Federation (EAFF); European Partners-AGRINATURA- European Alliance on Agricultural Knowledge for Development; International Soil Reference and International Centre (ISRIC), Agricultural Research Centre for International Development (CIRAD).

Region

ECA Sub region, with a focus on ASARECA 12 member countries

Funding and co-funding

UE	€ 4,370,000
Total budget	€ 4,370,000

Duration

54 Months (2019-2024)





Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry,
Cooperatives and Rural Development

