

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 of CAADP-XP4 is to support agricultural research and innovation in Eastern and Central Africa (ECA) to contribute effectively to food and nutrition security, economic development and climate mitigation in Africa. This is being achieved by **improving the capacity, effectiveness and positioning of ASARECA**, as well as of National Agriculture Research Systems, and by promoting collaboration and knowledge sharing among the African 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.



Maintenance of soil and water conservation structures (bench terraces) in fragile and marginal lands in Ethiopia. Photo credit: ASARECA

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 critical and these should be insulated from the serious threats posed by climate change. Learning from existing programmes supports this goal.

CAADP-XP4 project (African Regional and Sub-Regional Organizations for Agricultural Research and Innovation Support Project) is addressing the above challenges by supporting a science-led and climate-relevant agricultural transformation in Africa. The project is supporting the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA), the West and Central Africa Council for Agricultural Research and Development (CORAF), the Association for strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa (ASARECA), the Centre for Coordination of Agricultural Research and Development for Southern Africa (CCARDESA) and the African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (AFAAS).

Like other ex-pillar 4 institutions, ASARECA faced significant challenges in delivery of its Agriculture Research for Development (AR4D) mandate within the Eastern and Central Africa (ECA) sub region. Some of these constraints included: 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 are well aligned with the four thematic thrusts of the ASARECA Strategy and Results Framework (2019-2028) and its Medium Term Operational Plan 1 (MTOP-1: 2019-2023): (i) Transformative capacity strengthening and integration; (ii) Agricultural transformation technologies and innovations; (iii) Enabling policy environment, functional markets and transformative institutions; and (iv) Knowledge and information management.

The theory of change to achieve the objectives

The theory of change (ToC) that guides the design of the change pathway resulting in the expected results of the ASARECA CAADP-XP4 programme, entails that: IF, the capacities of ASARECA are improved and strengthened to coordinate science led agriculture research, innovation and sustainable and climate relevant initiatives, THEN, the collaboration between ASARECA and other CAADP-XP4 organizations will be improved, and this will lead to improved mainstreaming of Science Technology and Innovation (STI) in the CAADP processes to: - advancing a common vision and agenda; - enhancing coherence of actions; and -strengthening of African voices from the Eastern and Central sub-region in continental and global platforms on research and innovation. IF, individual and collaborative capacities of ASARECA, are improved and strengthened, THEN, they will be better positioned to support countries in their planning and implementation of actions aimed at ensuring their agricultural transformation by: (i) prioritizing research and innovation; (ii) developing and using climate-relevant technologies and innovations; -(iii) advocating and mobilizing investments in agricultural research & innovation; and (iv) formulating and implementing policies. IF, the capacities of the country partner organizations are strengthened in planning and implementation of actions aimed at ensuring their agricultural transformation; THEN, ASARECA member countries will be better positioned to contribute to CAADP-Malabo and Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Targets (Wealth Creation, Food and Nutrition Security, Poverty Alleviation & Resilience]]. The logic in the change pathway is based on the following key assumptions: - (i) relevant continental, regional and national policies favourable to agricultural transformation and growth will prevail; - (ii) adequate and appropriate policies and plans for climate change adaptation and mitigation in the agricultural sector will be strengthened and developed; - (iii) political support for agriculture as a major driver of sustainable national economic development will be upheld; - (iv) ASARECA will continue to work together with other CAADP-XP4 organizations in coordinating and implementing programme activities, adopting practices that foster effective collaboration; and (v) ASARECA and its stakeholder partners will be motivated to co-create, share and exchange climate relevant knowledge and information.

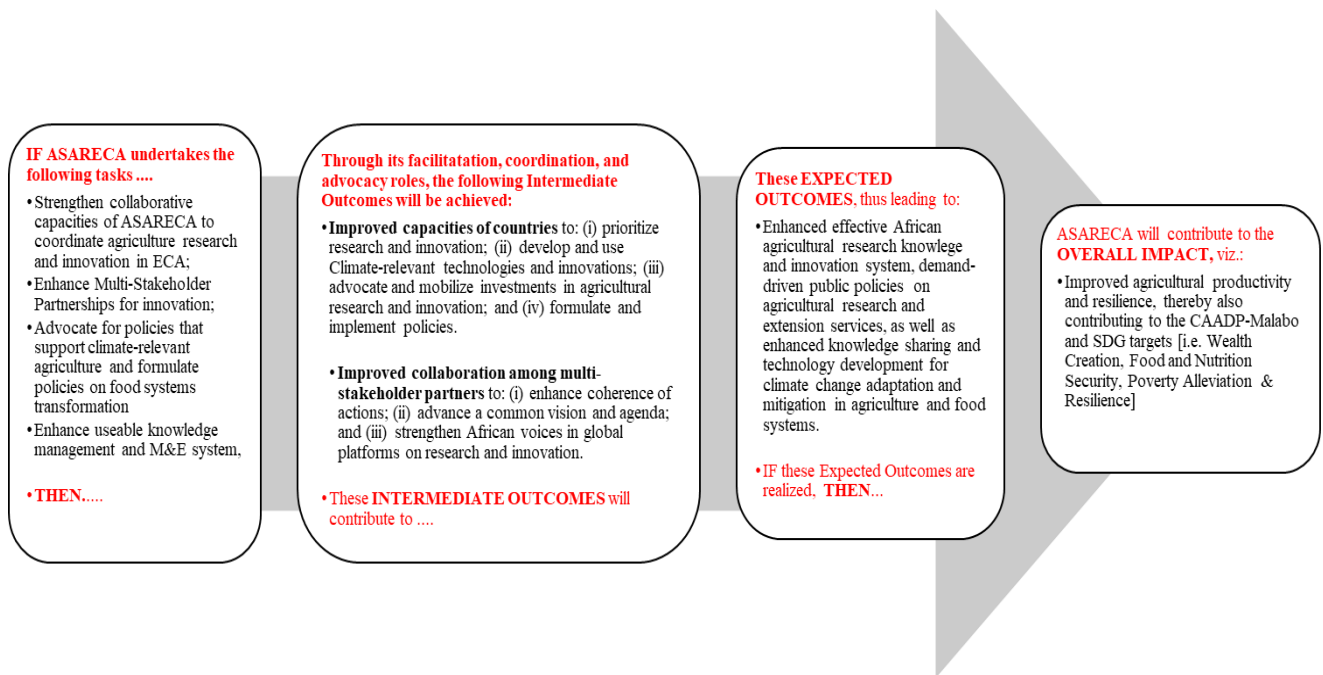


Figure: ASARECA-CAADP-XP4 Theory of change

Main activities

Under Output 1, on capacity strengthening the following activities were planned: (i) undertake capacity gap assessment, (ii) establish a staff development program, (iii) recruit and maintain staff, (iv) upgrade operational systems, especially Financial, Knowledge Management (KM), Procurement and Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) systems, (v) develop an implementation framework, (vi) develop and activate instruments of engagement with authorizing institutions Regional Economic Communities (RECs), (vii) undertake high level policy dialogue and (viii) develop an accountability framework.

Under Output 2, on enhancing multi-stakeholder partnerships for climate relevant research and innovation, the following activities were planned: (i) map out exiting climate relevant initiatives at national, regional and continental levels, (ii) convene periodic meetings for inclusive existing Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) platforms, (iii) strengthen existing climate-relevant Thematic Working Groups and national multi-stakeholder innovation platforms, linking them with regional, continental & external global platforms, (iv) provide market space for researchers, extension services and private sector to interact- Dialogues on commercialization of CSA technologies, (v) train country stakeholders on resource mobilization and management in conjunction with international experts, (vi) broker partnerships on climate-relevant satellite data/ information provision from the European partners, (vii) develop ASARECA programme process manual, (viii) develop joint response mechanisms to emerging technical and innovation issues, (ix) establish, operationalize linkages and broker international cooperation, (x) establish portals for funding opportunities and coordinate/facilitate the process of responding to the calls with AR4D actors, (xi) commission regional case studies on effective partnerships for innovation, (xii) develop and implement action plan based on the findings of the case studies to inform the operations of the multi-stakeholder partnerships, and (xiii) create viable solutions for multi stakeholders at multiple levels (local, regional and global).

Under Output 3, on enabling policy environment, market access and trade, the following activities were planned: (i) assess capacity gaps and develop capacity development plans related to policy analysis and policy formulation at national and regional levels, (ii) conduct training and organize

technical assistance in policy analysis, formulation, advocacy and resource mobilization, (iii) develop and promote guidelines for inclusion of relevant climate STI indicators in National Agriculture Investment Plans (NAIPs), for use by regional and continental institutions, (iv) sensitize stakeholders about the relevance of foresight, (v) organize technical assistance to enable regional and national organizations to participate in foresight initiatives and apply results from past /ongoing foresight initiatives, (vi) gather feedback on the use of foresight tools and use it to inform improvements in application of foresight, (vii) convene policy dialogues at regional and continental levels (including for National Agriculture Extension Services (AES)) on CSA, climate relevant issues and interregional trade and market access, (viii) provide technical support for strategic communication, (ix) provide technical support for policy formulation at national, sub-regional and continental levels, (x) provide technical support to national and regional organizations on strengthening quality control of agricultural inputs and products, to increase cross-border trade, (xi) conduct regional reviews of trade in agricultural inputs and commodities to improve implementation of existing policies in support of cross-border trade, and (xii) conduct evidence-supported advocacy to improve the implementation of existing policies to support cross border trade in agricultural inputs and commodities e.g. regional seed harmonization policies.

Under Output 4 on Knowledge Management for advocacy and decision support and Communication, the following activities were planned: (i) develop and operationalise KM strategies including guidelines for data capture at national, regional and continental level, (ii) convene CSA alliance Forum at regional and continental levels in partnership with other partners, (iii) develop, operationalize and maintain an interoperable KM platform, (iv) develop knowledge products with various stakeholders for dissemination via the knowledge platforms, (v) develop and disseminate relevant knowledge products at all levels including up to the last mile, (vi) produce flagship publications on: Africa status report on research and innovation, and (vi) produce best practice guidance notes based on experiences of the Sub Regional Organisations and Agricultural Extension and Advisory Services (AEAS).

Under Output 5 on planning, coordination, monitoring, evaluation, learning and reporting, the following activities were planned: (i) organize joint programme review and planning meetings at different levels (national, sub-regional and continental), (ii) convene portfolio review meetings, (iii) joint development of data collection tools, (iv) conduct baseline studies, (v) undertake continuous data collection, (vi) undertake a Mid Term Review to assess progress in implementation of the ASARECA CAADP-XP4 project, (vii) undertake internal and external audits for the CAADP-XP4 project, (viii) undertake trainings on MEL, (ix) document and share lessons among programme stakeholders/partners, (x) prepare internal project completion and review report, (xi) prepare external Project Completion Report (PCR), (xii) design and implement a joint programme communication and visibility strategy, (xiii) prepare and disseminate communication and visibility materials, and (xiv) participation in other similar strategic events/fora.

Results achieved to date (December 2022)

The project has strengthened the capacity of ASARECA to deliver on its AR4D mandate and to support its member countries in implementing relevant programmes of CAADP.

- ✓ Conducted capacity gap assessments that identified R&D gaps which were addressed;
- ✓ Strengthened ASARECA's research capacity through training and establishment of institutional support systems such as financial management, M&E and KM;
- ✓ Enhanced the skills of the scientists in ASARECA member countries through promoting knowledge sharing and exchange of technologies;
- ✓ Contributed to increased farm productivity through strengthening capacities of farmer groups to implement Good Agronomic Practices (GAP) and application of CSA technologies and practices;
- ✓ Established and strengthened the ASARECA regional CSA Alliances to promote and increase adoption of climate smart Technology, Innovation and Management Practices (TIMPs);

- ✓ Increased knowledge and skills in CSA practices among stakeholders, acquired through assorted trainings in application of CSA technologies;
- ✓ Facilitated transfer/scaling of TIMPs across national borders through the ASARECA CSA Alliance;
- ✓ Strengthened capacities of smallholder farmers along selected value chains to adopt and disseminate technologies;
- ✓ Implemented joint resource mobilization strategies that led to new bilateral projects;
- ✓ Built strategic partnerships with regional, continental and global partners which are now being used for resource mobilization;
- ✓ Advocated for necessary agricultural and trade policy reforms such as inclusion of climate indicators in the NAIPs;
- ✓ Enhanced capacity of policy makers in climate relevant agricultural policy formulation and analysis;
- ✓ Enhanced capacities of stakeholders in carrying out negotiations during the Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP) meetings;
- ✓ Developed action plans and strategies for gender integration in CSA activities and policies;
- ✓ Enhanced capacity of several stakeholders in application of climate foresight data in agricultural policy implementation and planning;
- ✓ Conducted analysis of barriers impeding cross border trade in some ECA countries;
- ✓ Developed a Gender Equity Plan and Refreshed ASARECA gender policy;
- ✓ Developed an action plan for integration of gender in CSA activities and policies;
- ✓ Facilitated the development of communication and KM strategies in countries to aid dissemination of knowledge products and research outputs;
- ✓ Increased visibility of ASARECA and its partners through events and media platforms;
- ✓ Strengthened the capacities of KM Leads from National Agricultural Research Institutes aimed at mainstreaming KM in the delivery of research outputs;

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 is being 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) Technical Working Groups (TWGs); and (iv) a programme management committee (within each organization). Communication, branding and visibility of the CAADP-XP4 programme at country level and respective EU delegations is being guided by the communication and visibility strategies of the respective organizations as well as the branding and visibility guidelines of the EU. The TC is responsible for technical guidance and review of the progress in project implementation. The programme management and coordination team at ASARECA is working closely with the country teams comprising of research scientists and monitoring and evaluation specialists to ensure smooth implementation of the project activities.

Implementing organization

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



Administered by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)



Investing in rural people

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);
- ✓ West and Central Africa Council for Agricultural Research and Development (CORAF/WECARD).

Other stakeholders

African partners including:

- ✓ 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),
- ✓ Eastern African Farmers Federation (EAFF);
- ✓ Regional and National Level Partners;

European Partners including:

- ✓ AGRINATURA, the European Alliance on Agricultural Knowledge for Development;
- ✓ International Soil Reference and International Centre (ISRIC),
- ✓ Agricultural Research Centre for International Development (CIRAD)
- ✓ Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR/One CGIAR).

Location

ECA Sub region, with a focus on ASARECA 15 member countries including: Burundi, Cameroon, Central Africa Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Kenya, Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda.

Funding and co-funding

EU	€ 5,370,000
Total budget	€ 5,370,000

Duration

54 Months (01 March 2019 - 31 December 2024)

Website

<https://www.asareca.org/>

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