Roles & Responsibilities of Key Actors in the One CGIAR Collaborative Framework

The National Agricultural Research Systems (NARS)

The National Agricultural Research Systems (NARS) are the bedrock of coordination and monitoring of Agricultural Research for Development (AR4D). The systems comprising the NARIs, the Agriculture and associated line ministries, the universities, the NGOs, and private sector should play a critical role in the determination, implementation and uptake of One CGIAR supported initiatives.

The role of the NARS therefore includes:

1. Providing infrastructure including laboratories and land for research
2. Providing technical research staff to backstop the One CGIAR in conducting priority research.
3. Providing the foundational human resourcing skilling through higher education training.
4. Identification of both national priorities for research.
5. Identification of regional priorities for collaborative research.
6. Acting as a reliable source of data, information and knowledge products for tracking
national progress in AR4D.

7. Acting as the technical arm of the Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa (ASARECA).

8. Acting as the conveners of national strategic meetings to identify and set priorities for AR4D, including supporting the defining the roles and responsibilities.

9. Working closely with ASARECA in the coordination of annual national stakeholder planning and review meetings to develop national programmes for research, training, and dissemination.

10. Facilitating the establishment of national-level platforms for enhancing multi-stakeholder engagement to catalyze sharing of benefits and in-country spillover of technologies, innovations and management practices (TIMPs).

11. Engaging with ASARECA in efforts to enhance advocacy for relevant rationalization and harmonization of policies, procedures and regulations aimed at creating standards.

12. Coordinating in-country capacity strengthening along identified capacity gaps through training initiatives and sourcing of physical infrastructure.

13. Coordinating partnership brokerage with national partners to support priority initiatives.

14. Serving as a catalyst for out-scaling of TIMP and deploying knowledge products to partners.

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

ASARECA is a body of the NARS created in 1994 following the approval of the “Framework for Action for Agricultural Research. This was done out of the regional realization for the need for a platform to:

1. Promote efficiency through attainment of economies of scale and scope by pooling all the member countries together and sharing the available resources to tackle common and cross-border constraints;

2. Create common pools of knowledge for and from all the member countries, thereby avoiding duplication of effort and repetition of common or similar activities;

3. Facilitate regional agricultural technology, innovations, management practices, knowledge products and information spillovers amongst the member countries.

Based on the foregoing, ASARECA has established functional systems and platforms for facilitating sub-regional agricultural research for development, and for sharing of assorted knowledge and knowledge products amongst key AR4D partners. It has strategically repositioned itself to perform a higher level facilitative, supportive, coordination and advocacy role to enhance sustainable agricultural transformation, sustained economic growth and inclusive development in the Eastern and Central Africa region. It does this by
engaging at least two countries at a time.

ASARECA is therefore very well placed to facilitate spillovers of TIMPs generated through the One CGIAR as well as enhance collaboration of the NARS in line with the AU/NEPAD's CAADP Pillar IV, which focuses on revitalizing, expanding and reforming Africa's agricultural research, technology dissemination and adoption efforts.

As the regional Go to Service Provider of Choice for AR4D coordination, convening, partnership brokerage, process facilitation, and communicator of products and services, ASARECA’s role in the One CGIAR is anticipated to be:

1. **Convening** regional strategic meetings involving more than one country to identify and set regional priorities for AR4D, including supporting the setting of roles and responsibilities. ASARECA is mandated to convene regional players in AR4D, ranging from governments, private sector, development partners, farmer groups, civil society, advisory services, and academia, among others.

2. **Coordinating** annual regional stakeholder planning and review meetings to identify, prioritize, and develop regional programmes for research, training, and dissemination. These prioritizations should be based on identified gaps in more than one country, and thus engaging these countries in the tacking of these challenges.

3. **Facilitating** the establishment of platforms for multi-stakeholder engagement to catalyze the sharing of regional public goods, as well as enhance regional spillover of selected regional priority TIMPs, coordination of regional policy dialogues and engagements, and capacity strengthening interventions.

4. **Advocating** for rationalization and harmonization of policies, procedures and regulations aimed at creating common standards in the participating countries. This including representing these countries in the COMESA high-level policy dialogues and debates, representation at the other meetings organized by the Regional Economic Communities (RECs), as well as at the African Union Commission. This role is well played by the fact that ASARECA is the technical arm of COMESA in AR4D.

5. **Coordinating** capacity strengthening along the regionally identified capacity gaps through training initiatives and sourcing of physical infrastructure. These trainings are based on the clustering of capacity gaps from all the countries based on the capacity gaps assessments conducted at least every 3 years.

6. Enhanced **partnership brokerage** with the national, sub-regional, continental, and global agencies and organizations to support the joint initiatives. Top on the list include multi-stakeholder partnerships with the North and the South. This role is better played by ASARECA by the virtue of the fact that it is set up as an inter-governmental agency in the region.

7. Enhancing the role as **communicator and catalyst**, by mainly serving as a catalyst for out scaling of TIMPs as well as by deploying resources to standardize knowledge management, including generation, storage, processing and dissemination.
8. Making good use of its regional Knowledge and Information hub (KI-Hub) to connect all the member countries and to furnish them with relevant data and information to enhance national and regional decision-making processes.

**Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA)**

Based on the Principles of Subsidiary as enshrined in the Framework for Africa’s Agricultural Productivity (FAAP), and endorsed by the African Heads of States (African Union Summit, Banjul, Gambia, June 2006), FARA is primarily supposed to work with the African Union and NEPAD to articulate the African vision of agriculture. Similarly, FARA is supposed to work with the African governments and regional economic bodies by depending on the sub-regional research organizations (SRO—ASARECA, CORAF and CCARDESSA) and the NARS to ensure that the principles of FAAP are aligned to the existing and future programmes on agricultural productivity.

**The role of FARA in the One CGIAR should aligns to the above and should be limited to:**

1. **Coordinating** the SROs to ensure implementation of the AU/NEPAD agenda and global goals. This includes convening the SROs and other sub-regional organs to deal with continental issues that go beyond the borders of the sub-regional institutions.

2. **Translating** the AU Agenda into sub-regional and ultimately national agenda by working with the SROs to breakdown continental and global goals into national goals, and building the capacity of SROs to support national level partners. For example, the Biennial Review should be coordinated by individual member states. ASARECA then comes in to look at the regional perspective, and FARA consolidating the sub-regional information into the continental status. The same scenario should guide activities such as preparations and participation in the CoP meetings and UNFCCC-related activities.

3. **Supporting** the SROs to synthesize the outcomes of implementation of sub-regional and national initiatives for reporting at the AU level. This includes mobilizing resources and sharing with the SROs to undertake specific regional tasks, that are consolidated at the continental levels.

**The One CGIAR**

The CGIAR system has carried out state-of-the-art research, which has generated technologies, tools, methodologies and practices that have contributed immensely to agricultural transformation in many countries. The One CGIAR therefore should focus on the following important functions in an alliance with NARS, SROs and continental bodies:
1. **Pooling capacities**: Bringing together the existing Centers under a unified governance and operational umbrella to scale out research and innovation for positive impact.

2. **Monitoring subsidiarity**: Ensure subsidiarity among actors by giving responsibility and control over resources at the lowest appropriate level of aggregation, and promoting collaboration by establishing clear roles.

3. **Co-designing**: Lead the joint re-alignment of the research agenda by linking up with the SROs and the NARS to develop an integrated R&D agenda, including a cross national collaborative operating model with SROs.

4. **Joint planning, monitoring and evaluation**: Work with SROs and NARS to establish a platform for joint planning, review, knowledge sharing and identifying priorities for research in-country.

5. **Resource mobilization**: Lead joint resource mobilisation efforts and ensure transparency with national and regional partners, especially in co-identification of funding mechanisms (development of concept notes and proposals), appropriation, equitable distribution and accountability of resources.

6. **Backstopping research**: Supporting SROs to provide technical backstopping to research in the NARs.

**Date Published**: Thursday, 04 August 2022

**News File**: [ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN ONE CGIAR COLLABORATION.pdf](https://www.asareca.org/sites/default/files/https%3A//www.asareca.org/sites/default/files/ROLES%20AND%20RESPONSIBILITIES%20IN%20ONE%20CGIAR%20COLLABORATION.pdf) [1]