ASARECA COUNCIL OF PATRON MINISTERS SUMMIT

Theme: Repositioning ASARECA for Accelerated African Agricultural Transformation

May 2nd - 4th, 2019

Speke Resort and Conference Centre, Munyonyo, Kampala, Uganda
ASARECA COUNCIL OF PATRON MINISTERS SUMMIT

SUMMARY

Completing ASARECA’s governance reform process

The Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa (ASARECA) has developed a new Strategy and Results Framework (2019-28).

The new strategy requires ASARECA to reposition itself in terms of its implementation approach as well as its governance and management structures in order to appropriately respond to the demands of its clients.

Key reforms include; the composition of a new constitution, the development of a new board structure and the hiring of key theme leaders.

A series of activities to formalize these reforms will be undertaken from May 2nd-4th. The activities include:

- Review and approval of the ASARECA governance organs and instruments by the Business Committee of the ASARECA General Assembly.
- Meeting of the ASARECA council of patron ministers to approve the new constitution and inaugurate the new ASARECA Board.
- The induction of the new ASARECA Board of Directors.

Ministerial Panel on achieving agricultural resilience and sustainability in Africa

As part of these events and to showcase ASARECA’s role and capacity as a central institution for convening and coordinating regional agricultural research and policy discussions, a high level policy forum will be organized. The International for Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT), seven national research organizations in eastern and southern Africa, ASARECA and other international organizations with the support of ACIAR have collaborated in an 8-year research program1 that has focused on adaptive research and institutional innovations around conservation agriculture based sustainable intensification in smallholder farming systems.

The purpose of the Ministerial Panel will be to share the evidence from SIMLESA’s eight year research on the impact of Conservation Agriculture-based Sustainable Intensification (CASI) technologies and practices on the region’s key development priorities including food security and enhancing resilience to climate change. Based on the evidence, the panel will enable dialogue and commitments on the policy priorities, program design and investment choices needed to institutionalize CASI and take it to more farmers and cropping systems through the region.

The thrust of this panel will be to propose critical paradigm shifts in smallholder agronomy, agricultural value chains and rural institutions and how they can be achieved for climate smart agriculture in Africa.

A development partner panel discussion will also be held to explore the continued relevance of regionally coordinated research for development programs and impacts on Africa’s transformation agenda.

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1The program was the Sustainable intensification of Maize Legume Systems for Food Security in Eastern and Southern Africa (SIMLESA)
A Introduction

The Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa (ASARECA) is a non-profit Intergovernmental organization of the National Agricultural Research Systems (NARS) of twelve countries2 (Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Rwanda, Republic of Congo, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda). The core functions of the organization are to mobilize and coordinate human, physical, financial and institutional capital to implement research, extension, and training for agricultural transformation in the Eastern and Central Africa sub-region. Its mission is “to contribute to increased productivity, commercialization and competitiveness of the agricultural sector through strengthening, catalyzing and coordinating agricultural research for development in the ECA sub region”.

This note provides a synopsis of the ASARECA Council of Patron Ministers’ Summit which is being convened to inaugurate the new ASARECA governance organs and instruments and to receive the strategy for regional AR4D. As part of this high level meeting, ASARECA in collaboration with the International Centre for the Improvement of Maize and Wheat (CIMMYT) and the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) will showcase the long-term research results of eight years of work on the promise of conservation agriculture-based sustainable intensification for Africa. The main aim of this forum will be to share key policy, institutional, market and programming lessons from the SIMLESA body of work. The hope is to motivate policy action to support the growth and development of agricultural resilience and sustainability in the region and beyond.

B The ASARECA Governance Reform Process

In 2016 ASARECA commissioned an External Programme Management Review (EPMR) to assess the performance of its programmes as well as the effectiveness of its governance structures. The EPMR noted that ASARECA was now operating in a more competitive research for development landscape and required significant reforms at all levels to better position itself to deliver on its regional mandate. With regard to governance, the agreed principles for reform were defined to include strengthened ownership of ASARECA by member countries and regional economic communities (RECs) to increase the relevance and demand orientation of its work in the region; a governance structure that demonstrates international best practice; is more efficient and more cost-effective; allows for diversity in skills sets and representation; and enhances transparency, accountability while eliminating any perceived conflict of interest. A fiduciary review and action plan 2017-18 reinforced the need for overall reform. Furthermore, ASARECA has developed a new Strategy and Results Framework (2019-28) which effectively requires it to reposition itself in terms of its implementation approach as well as its governance and management structures in order to appropriately respond to the demands of its clients. The Table below highlights the progress and timelines of the governance reform process.

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<tr>
<th>Timelines</th>
<th>Milestones in the ASARECA Governance Reform Agenda</th>
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<tr>
<td>October 2016</td>
<td>Internally commissioned external review of ASARECA governance and operations</td>
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<td>June – Dec 2018</td>
<td>Meetings of the High Level Advisory Panel on ASARECA governance reforms with Patron Ministers and the Regional Economic Communities</td>
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<td>Nov – Dec 2018</td>
<td>White paper to guide reforms in relation to governance prepared</td>
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<td>Dec 2018</td>
<td>Approval of the recommendations of the White Paper by the current Board of Directors</td>
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<td>Dec - Jan 2019</td>
<td>Review of the Constitution and governance manual in line with approved reforms</td>
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<td>Jan 2019</td>
<td>Country level Business Committee meetings held to appraise stakeholders of proposed reforms and elect members to the select regional committee on ASARECA governance reforms</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb 2019</td>
<td>Meeting of the select regional committee on ASARECA governance reforms held to elect nominees to the new Board of Directors of ASARECA</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 2019</td>
<td>Meeting of ASARECA’s Business Committee which is the electoral college of its General Assembly to approve the new constitution and governance manual and the nominees to the new ASARECA Board of Directors</td>
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<td>May 2019</td>
<td>Meeting of ASARECA Patron Ministers to receive and sign the new constitution of ASARECA, inaugurate the new Board of ASARECA and launch the region’s ten–year strategy for AR4D 2019 – 2028</td>
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<td>May 2019</td>
<td>Submit the new signed ASARECA constitution and governance manual to the African Union, member country governments and the host country</td>
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2During the 27th Ordinary Board of Directors (12-14 December 2018), the Republic of Congo was approved to join ASARECA as its 12th Member State.
C  **ASARECA’s new strategy for regional AR4D**

ASARECA’s new strategy repositions and reaffirms its role as a convener, partnership broker, catalyst, process facilitator, communicator and coordinator of regional AR4D initiatives aimed at delivering specific and targeted high priority inclusive and sustainable development outcomes and impacts for the transformation of the agricultural sector in the ECA sub region. The mandate of ASARECA is therefore to:

a. Identify regional research priorities and opportunities through credible, authentic and participatory on-going strategic visioning processes.

b. Commission, broker and manage strategic research partnerships to address identified regional priorities in the most effective, efficient and synergetic ways.

c. Nurture pathways for on-time delivery, spill over and scaling up of regional agricultural research results to deliver agricultural outcomes and impact.

d. Mobilize, allocate and manage regional AR4D investments to support generation of regional agricultural research public goods and services.

e. Monitor and evaluate returns on AR4D investment and repackage lessons and best practices to inform decision making processes and action.

In practice this mandate will be delivered through four thematic research areas which include strengthening and integrating capacities; supporting and coordinating the development and scaling up of technologies, innovations and management practices; advocating for an enabling environment, functional markets and institutions in the sector; and managing and communicating knowledge and information on AR4D.

Over the years 2008 – 2014, ASARECA partnered with over 290 institutions in the region to deliver a range of regional public goods and services with significant positive spill-over effect especially among farmers. An evaluation of the impact of ASARECA R4D work showed significant contributions in the areas of food security and nutrition, incomes, productivity, ecosystem services and resilience, the enabling environment for sector actors, knowledge management and networking of the region’s scientists to foster innovation, and institutional development. One of ASARECA’s various long-term partnerships has been with CIMMYT on implementation of the Sustainable Intensification of Maize Legume Cropping Systems for Food Security in Eastern and Southern Africa (SIMLESA) project which is funded by ACIAR.

SIMLESA has generated, tested and validated optimal packages for varying agro-ecological and resource contexts including technologies, agronomic practices and institutional innovations that enhance the productivity of smallholder farming while simultaneously enhancing the resilience of the ecosystem.

D  **The promise of Conservation Agriculture-based Sustainable Intensification (CASI)**

SIMLESA’s long-term research was based on the principles of conservation agriculture-based sustainable intensification (CASI). While the high input mono-cropping systems formed the basis for the Asian Green Revolution, CASI is an alternative production system that delivers both increased productivity and ecosystem health while increasing the resilience of African farms and livelihoods to climate change.

E  **The Summit**

ASARECA is therefore planning to host a high level summit on the 3rd May in Kampala, Uganda to inaugurate the new governance system for regional AR4D and showcase the results of SIMLESA to demonstrate the value proposition for regional AR4D but also to raise awareness on the impacts of CASI and support for its mainstreaming in the African agricultural policy agenda at the highest level in the sector.

The high level summit will be preceded by a meeting of ASARECA’s Business Committee on 2nd May 2019 to approve the new constitution and governance manual and the nominees to ASARECA’s new Board of Directors.

The induction of the new Board will then be undertaken on 4th May in addition to a parallel session on developing the new phase of SIMLESA.
**Summit Objectives**

1. Institute ASARECA’s new governance organs and instruments
2. Share ASARECA’s AR4D strategy with stakeholders and strengthen commitments to regionally coordinated research
3. Share the long term research results of the SIMLESA project and the opportunities for policy action
4. Seek Ministerial level commitment to CASI
5. Prepare the strategy for up-scaling CASI through the national agricultural investment plans
6. Formalise in a communiqué the key regional commitments to institute paradigm shifts in smallholder agronomy, agricultural value chains and rural institutions for climate smart agriculture in the region.

**Expected Outputs**

1. The new ASARECA Board of Directors inaugurated by ASARECA’s Patron Ministers and inducted
2. Decisions and policy actions for institutionalisation of conservation agriculture based sustainable intensification endorsed by the Ministers responsible for agriculture in the region.
3. Agreement on the key principles of the strategy for up-scaling of CASI in the region developed
4. Proceedings of the summit
5. Strengthened commitment to regionally coordinated research

**Meeting Venue and Participants**

The 3-day Summit will be held in Kampala at Speke Hotel and Resort, Munyonyo, Uganda. Participants will include: the Ministers responsible for agriculture from ASARECA member countries and the two additional SIMLESA countries; Malawi and Mozambique, the Heads of RECs, the current Board of ASARECA, the new Board of ASARECA which is to be nominated, members of ASARECA’s high level advisory panel on governance reforms, development partners, the national CAADP focal points, Heads of SROs and of EAFF, ESAFF, EAGC, Deans of Agriculture, Heads of Local government in SIMLESA sites, Directors of extension, CEOs of select private seed companies, Heads of partner NGOs, Heads of National Thinks Tanks, SIMLESA country coordinators, SIMLESA project value chain financiers, the ACIAR team, CIMMYT team, Partner IARCS including ICRISAT, CIAT, ILRI, QAAFI, Queensland University, Media and ASARECA Secretariat staff.

**Meeting program**

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<tr>
<th>DAY 1</th>
<th>DAY 2</th>
<th>DAY 3</th>
<th>DAY 4</th>
<th>DAY 5</th>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday, 1st May 2019</td>
<td>Thursday, 2nd May 2019</td>
<td>Friday, 3rd May 2019</td>
<td>Saturday, 4th May 2019</td>
<td>Sunday, 5th May 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arrival of the incoming and outgoing ASARECA Board of Directors</td>
<td>Arrival of the Ministers responsible for agriculture and the SIMLESA team</td>
<td>Inauguration of the new ASARECA Board</td>
<td>Departure of the Ministers responsible for agriculture and other select delegates</td>
<td>Departure of all other participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review and approval of the ASARECA governance organs and instruments</td>
<td>Launch of ASARECA’s regional strategy for AR4D</td>
<td>High Level Forum on Enhancing Agricultural Resilience and Sustainability in ECSA</td>
<td>Parallel meeting sessions</td>
<td>Induction of the new ASARECA Board</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Development of the up-scaling strategies for Enhancing Agricultural Resilience and Sustainability in ECSA</td>
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A draft detailed program for both the High level ministerial meeting and the high level forum is here attached.
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