

For immediate release

Begins

NEWS RELEASE

## CABI and ASARECA sign MoU to Strengthen Agricultural Research for Development



image copyright-CABI

**13 August 2020** - The Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa (ASARECA) and CABI have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) that will enable both organisations to jointly work towards promoting their shared objectives and areas of strategic focus in Eastern and Central Africa. The signed MoU formalises and strengthens a long-standing partnership that has existed for over a decade, with each of the organisations individually or collectively contributing to numerous agricultural research for development initiatives in the region.

CABI and ASARECA collaborated under the [Good Seed Initiative Project](#) in 4 Eastern African countries that improved access to quality seed for indigenous vegetables. Spill over from this initiative [empowered over 20,000](#) seed and vegetable farmers who were linked to markets resulting in increased income and nutritional security in Arusha and Dodoma, Tanzania.

In 2014, ASARECA working with CABI and other partners successfully implemented an initiative that empowered farmers with actionable plant health knowledge on [Maize Lethal Necrosis Disease \(MLND\)](#). This enabled them to minimise its spread and reduce crop losses across 7 Eastern and Central African countries, resulting in increased productivity and efficiency of the maize value chain.



NEWS RELEASE

Between 2016 to date, both organisations have catalysed research and knowledge exchange programmes in over 10 National Agricultural Research Institutes (NARIs). The CABI led [Plantwise](#), [Action on Invasives](#) and [Pest Risk Information Service \(PRISE\)](#) being implemented in-country by NARIs continue to demonstrate how collaboration between key plant health system stakeholders can effectively establish prevention, early warning, extension and management systems for invasive and migratory pests such as the fall armyworm and tomato leaf miner.

Dr Morris Akiri, CABI Regional Director, said, “Out of the 14 member States in ASARECA sub-region, Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda are also CABI member countries in Africa. In addition, CABI also undertakes work in other ASARECA member countries such as Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of Congo and South Sudan. So, this partnership builds on and strengthens existing regional agricultural research for development and expands it by linking to CABI’s international network of partners and global agricultural and environmental expertise.”

Leveraging on this foundation, CABI and ASARECA recognise that present challenges for agricultural transformation in Africa require concerted, inclusive, climate-sensitive and gender-responsive efforts to harness opportunities for sustainable agricultural research and development on the continent. The two inter-governmental organisations undertake to draw directly upon their institutional mandates, competences, and areas of technical expertise to support effective implementation of strategies and medium-term operational plans.

Prof. Jean Jacques Mbonigaba Muhinda, Executive Director for ASARECA, said, “Our 2019-2028 Strategy and Results Framework outlines how agricultural transformation requires an integrated delivery approach across an ecosystem of partnerships. This MoU and its operationalisation add to ongoing efforts aimed at improving integration, coordination and investments by governments, private sector, implementing and development partners in agricultural research for development across the region.”

In the immediate future, both organisations will jointly assess the effects of COVID-19 and emerging food security issues with a purpose to leverage successes from past initiatives. Achievements of the African Indigenous Vegetables project may be repackaged and upscaled to support COVID-19 nutrition interventions that recommend healthier foods full of nutrients such as vitamins and minerals that strengthen the human immune system. Invasive species and the desert locust are also of great concern to ASARECA member countries, who can leverage CABI’s expertise in this area.

In the long term, the MoU will facilitate and support transformative and sustainable agricultural practices aimed at improving people’s livelihoods, knowledge sharing, improved access to agricultural information across the region for increased competitiveness, value-added production and trade while protecting the environment.

---

*Ends*



**N  
E  
W  
S  
  
R  
E  
L  
E  
A  
S  
E**

**Notes to editors**

**Media enquiries**

David Onyango, Corporate and Development Communication Specialist CABI,  
Email: [d.onyango@cabi.org](mailto:d.onyango@cabi.org)  
Tel : +254 725 525 540

Ben Moses Ilakut, Technical Communications Officer, ASARECA  
Email: [b.ilakut@asareca.org](mailto:b.ilakut@asareca.org)  
Tel: +256 772 798 632

**About CABI**

CABI is an international not-for-profit organisation that improves people's lives by providing information and applying scientific expertise to solve problems in agriculture and the environment.

Through knowledge sharing and science, CABI helps address issues of global concern such as improving global food security and safeguarding the environment. We do this by helping farmers grow more and lose less of what they produce, combating threats to agriculture and the environment from pests and diseases, protecting biodiversity from invasive species, and improving access to agricultural and environmental scientific knowledge. Our 50 member countries guide and influence our core areas of work, which include development and research projects, scientific publishing and microbial services.

We gratefully acknowledge the core financial support from our member countries and lead agencies including the United Kingdom (Department for International Development), China (Chinese Ministry of Agriculture), Australia (Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research), Canada (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada), Netherlands (Directorate-General for International Cooperation), and Switzerland (Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation). Other sources of funding include the fees paid by our member countries and profits from our publishing activities which enable CABI to support rural development and scientific research around the world.

**About ASARECA**

ASARECA is a not-profit inter-governmental organisation established in 1994 as an African-led Sub-Regional Research Organisation covering 14 Member States, namely: Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Rwanda, Republic of Congo, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda.

As a forum for promoting AR4D, ASARECA is strategically positioned to perform a higher level, coordination, convening, advocacy, partnership brokerage, process facilitation, and communication roles to deliver specific and targeted high priority inclusive and sustainable agricultural transformation and development outcomes and impact in the ECA sub region.



# NEWS RELEASE

ASARECA's Mission is to contribute to increased productivity, commercialization and competitiveness of the agricultural sector through strengthening, catalysing and coordinating AR4D in the sub-region, thereby seeking to enhance regional collective action in agricultural research for development, extension and agricultural training and education to promote economic growth, fight poverty, eradicate hunger and enhance sustainable use of resources in Eastern and Central Africa.

ASARECA aims to address various agricultural research for development (AR4D) challenges faced by its member countries in a regionally coordinated manner by working with critical partners, including national agricultural research organisations, farmer organisations, agribusinesses, agro-service providers, women and youth groups, the national, regional and international research institutions, extension and training organisations, public and private sector actors, NGOs, and Regional Economic Communities and development agencies.

ASARECA's work contributes to sub-regional AR4D through: (i) transformative capacity strengthening and integration through strengthening and integration of different types of AR4D capacities and competencies at systemic, organisational and individual levels; (ii) agricultural transformation technologies and innovations; (iii) enabling policy environment, functional markets and transformative institutions by supporting and advocating for creation of an enabling AR4D policy environment, establishment of functional and structured regional markets and strengthening of regional institutions; and (iv) knowledge and information management by improving management and access to reliable and up-to-date data, information and knowledge to inform agricultural transformation decision making processes and action in the ECA sub region.