



Ministry of Agriculture
and Rural Development



ASARECA Contribution to Member States

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Since inception in 1994, ASARECA has worked with the National Agricultural Research Systems (NARS) of its 14 member countries: Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda.

Between 1994 and 2023, ASARECA has mobilised over US\$ 258 million to implement Agricultural Research for Development (AR4D) initiatives in member countries. Out of these, US\$ 138 million was received directly by the Secretariat, which disbursed US\$ 101 million (73.5%) to member countries retaining US\$ 37 million (26.5%) for operational costs. The rest of the money (US\$ 120 million) was disbursed directly to select countries by Development Partners under the East Africa Agricultural Productivity Programme (EAAP), an initiative that was closely coordinated by ASARECA.

The Central African Republic is a relatively new member of ASARECA having joined the Association in 2020. Since then, ASARECA is has been working with Institut Centrafricain de Recherche Agronomique (ICRA) and the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development to jointly address AR4D challenges. Between 2020 and 2023, ASARECA has invested US\$ 570,000 to catalyze agricultural transformation in Cameroon through key beneficiary initiatives highlighted below:

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Researchers from selected NARIs including ICRA appreciate technologies at Agricultural Engineering and Appropriate Technology Research Centre - Namalere in Uganda.

ASARECA work in the Central African Republic

Facilitating learning through benchmarking

ASARECA organized two benchmarking exercises for eight (8) ASARECA member countries including **Central African Republic**, one in October, 2021 hosted by the National Agricultural Research Organisation (NARO), Uganda; and the other in July, 2012 hosted by Tanzania Agricultural Research Institute (TARI). During the two exercises ASARECA facilitated a total of 88 researchers from the National Agricultural Research Institutes (NARIs), farmers and selected private sector actors (43 in 2021, and 45 in 2022) to enhance their capacities in implementing climate relevant AR4D initiatives. The beneficiary countries were: Cameroon, Burundi, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eritrea, Republic of Congo, South Sudan, and Sudan. They were supported to visit sister NARIs in Uganda and Tanzania to enhance their skills through peer-to-peer learning and mentorship.

The researchers interacted in key areas such as: (i) laboratory diagnostic tools; (ii) bio-policy and bio-safety; (iii) aflatoxin management; (iv) tissue culture, biotechnology and hydroponics; (v) bio-fortification of banana; (vi) livestock nutrition and embryo transfer; (vii) integrated pest management; (viii) marketing and private sector involvement; (ix) soil analysis; (x) crop production using CSA practices; (xi) strategies for livestock management to mitigate impacts of climate change; (xii) new approaches to farming; (xiii) application of commercialization concepts and marketing; (xiv) and choice of crop varieties for diversified agro-ecological zones.

ASARECA Climate Smart Agriculture Alliance (ACSAA)

ASARECA mobilised the National Agricultural Research Institutes (NARIs) of member countries to form a united front to mitigate

the effects of climate change. Through this initiative, which was adopted by the Directors General of all the 14 member countries including **Central African Republic**, the ASARECA Climate Smart Agriculture Alliance (ACSAA) was established in August 2021 with the overall objective of bringing together all climate relevant multi-stakeholder platforms, partnerships and networks within the region to scale up CSA. All researchers from the 14 member countries are members of this alliance which has already embarked on an ambitious collaborative effort to: (i) Define a framework for institutionalizing CSA among partner institutions; (ii) act as a clearing house for exchange of CSA TIMPs; (iii) facilitate exchange of knowledge among the partners; and (iv) provide a platform for CSA partners to engage with governments and global partners on climate relevant priorities. ASARECA secretariat has since organized five training and consultative workshops for the Alliance on application and uptake of CSA technologies and constituted them into a Community of Practice (CoP) for regular interaction.

Building a pool of experts on AIS

ASARECA in collaboration with FAO facilitated two Training of Trainers (ToT) workshops to support integration of the Tropical Agriculture Platform (TAP) Common Framework (CF) into ASARECA member NARIs including Central African Republic and farmer organisations. The selected cohort of trainers who have now been constituted into a database included Researchers, Directors of Research, Private sector actors, farmer organizations. At the end of the training held in March 2022 and July 2022, the ToTs became certified trainers on Integrating the TAP framework for Capacity Development in the Agricultural Innovation System. They have since implemented their Participant Action Plans (PAP) by training other trainers in the TAP AIS concept in their respective countries. Through this action, ASARECA and the NARIs have built a common pool of experts in the NARS who are now enhancing the utilisation of AIS tools and approaches among researchers, farmer organisations and other stakeholders.

Commercialization of CSA Technologies

ASARECA convened researchers from its 14-member NARIs; other actors from the National Agricultural Research Systems (NARS) including **Central African Republic**; and the private sector for a dialogue to chat out sustainable pathways for commercialization and scaling up of gender responsive and climate smart agricultural technologies. During the Dialogue held in Nairobi, Kenya, in March 2022, the participants showcased the best bet climate-smart TIMPs of regional importance for commercialization and scaling. They: (i)

identified over 100 technologies and innovations that are ready for commercialization; (ii) established a platform comprising private sector actors, researchers, and civil society organizations to advance the initiative; (iii) identified barriers and pathways for commercializing and scaling identified TIMPs; (iv) and identified and documented digital climate advisory capacity gaps in ECA.

Agricultural Trade Policy Reforms

ASARECA convened the Regional Policy Dialogue on Agricultural and Trade Policy Reforms in Eastern and Central Africa for all the 14 member countries, including Central African Republic to enhance the capacity of member states to comply with quality standards for cross border trade in agricultural inputs and commodities. The Dialogue was attended by 50 participants drawn from NARIs; Ministries of Agriculture; Ministries of Trade; National Revenue Authorities; National Bureaus of Standards; farmers' organizations; youth groups; the private sector; the African Union Commission; and the Regional Economic Communities.

The participants discussed recent agriculture related policy and trade policy reforms in ECA; and mechanisms to address barriers to cross border trade. Overall, it was noted that challenges such as political instability; overlapping membership to Regional Economic blocs; uncoordinated macro-economic policies; and poor compliance to international standards cut across member states. The meeting agreed to resolve these through review and harmonization of regional trade policies and standards;

adoption of harmonized certification and regulations for seed by all member states; strengthening customs administration procedures; and establishing measures to eliminate trade barriers.

Capacity for climate foresight

ASARECA organized a training course on application of climate foresight data to enhance agricultural policy implementation and decision making in Member States, including **Central African Republic**. This training brought together 39 representatives of the farmers; policy makers from Ministries of Agriculture and NARIs; climate scientists from National Meteorological Institutes and IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre (ICPAC) from Kenya, Ethiopia, and Uganda. The training enhanced the capacity of key stakeholders in implementation of climate foresight data in agricultural decision-making and policy implementation; interpretation and analysis of climate foresight data; provided a platform for farmers to link up with sources of climate foresight data such as ICPAC and the National Meteorology Institutes.

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All researchers from the 14 ASARECA member countries are members of the ASARECA Climate Smart Agriculture Alliance (ACSAA)

The training also provided an opportunity for sharing lessons, experiences and challenges on access to and use of climate foresight data in agricultural policy implementation and decision making.

Mainstreaming Knowledge Management to AR4D delivery

In order to mainstream Communication and Knowledge Management (CKM) and Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) as key enablers of advocacy and decision support in Agricultural Research for Development (AR4D) at the national level, ASARECA embarked on an initiative to strengthen relevant national CKM systems in Member States. Since 2020, ASARECA has held a series of capacity building workshops with key CKM officers from the NARIs to position CKM and M&E as key drivers to AR4D.

During the series of joint CKM consultative, training workshops held in Entebbe, Uganda, focus has been on: Explaining the role of CKM and M&E in Agricultural Transformation; identification of priorities for M&E and CKM as enablers of AR4D; (iii) sharing knowledge resources available at the NARIs and (iii) training of stakeholders in best KM practices. Through the workshops, practitioners from all Member States have identified a range of CKMs and M&E best practices, leading and developed a “Joint Call to Action for NARIs & ASARECA”, which was endorsed by the Committee of Directors General for adoption and implementation.

ASARECA has also committed to support Burundi, South Sudan, Cameroon, Central Africa Republic, Eritrea, Madagascar, and Republic of the Congo, which were identified with critical KM needs to develop CKM strategies. The workshop to support Burundi to develop its CKM strategy was held in Bujumbura in December 2022. Other countries will be reached in 2023.

Financial Commitments by Member States

To facilitate operations at the Secretariat, fund jointly conceived priority Research for Development Projects, and indeed as a badge of ownership, the Member States earlier committed to make a one-off capitalisation payment of US\$ 100,000 and an annual membership fee of US\$ 50,000. The Business Committee of the General Assembly on February 7, 2023 approved the revision of annual fees to 100,000 to match-up the demand for the Secretariat to catalyse the creation of impact in Member States. The Business Committee also made a passionate appeal to the Member States to clear outstanding arrears currently standing at US\$ 1,819,206 as of December 2022. The Secretariat anticipates that fulfilment of these obligations is the beginning of a journey towards self-sustenance in the financing of ASARECA.

Council of Patron Ministers

The ASARECA Constitution has placed the ASARECA Council of Patron Ministers for Agriculture at the helm of the Governance of the Association to ensure close oversight, guidance and value for money for the Member States. Similarly, ASARECA is currently affiliated to COMESA, IGAD, and the EAC, through mutually agreed arrangements to serve as their technical arm. The main purpose of such an affiliation is to reinforce full ownership from Member States and mainstream their issues and priorities through the joint Meeting of Council of Ministers of Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resources at the COMESA level.



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