



Global Donor Platform  
for Rural Development

**EIARD**

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## About

Authors: Steve Ashley, Rachel Percy and Josephine Tsui, theIDLgroup Ltd

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## Disclaimer

This paper does not necessarily reflect the position of the Platform, EIARD, or their member organisations.

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## Maximising the Contribution of Agricultural Research to Rural Development

### Executive Summary

This paper describes the extent to which agricultural research contributes effectively to, and is harmonised with the broader agriculture and rural development agenda.

Current approaches to rural development and agricultural research are characterised. Both illustrate concerns with aid effectiveness, the wider development context, and note the profusion of new emphases and new institutional arrangements at global, regional, sub-regional and national levels.

But the current paradigms are not delivering effectiveness to the levels required. Four key areas in which problems arise are identified, along with a number of contributing issues. These are:

#### 1. Research supply-side constraints

- Insufficiently appropriate research
- The impact of under-investment in agricultural research and extension
- Lack of responsiveness and accountability of National Agricultural Research Systems
- Differences in ethos within the agricultural research community
- The performance incentives in place for agricultural research
- The evolving relationship between Africa based CGIAR members, FARA and the SROs

#### 2. Research demand-side constraints

- Decision-makers' perceptions of the relevance of agricultural research
- Limited capacity and voice of farmers' organisations

#### 3. Knowledge transfer constraints

#### 4. The effectiveness of donor engagement, including EIARD and Platform

- Donor coordination and harmonisation
- Donor alignment with African restructuring of agricultural research and development
- Coordination between EIARD and Platform

If the systems for integrating agricultural research effectively into wider rural development frameworks and maximising the contribution of research to growth and poverty reduction are to be effective, they need four critical pieces of the rural development-research 'jigsaw' to work. These are:

- Effective functioning of the supply of research from NARS
- Effective contributions from the CG system to NARS
- Effective national processes for integration of research into development
- Effective donor partner support to these processes

The analysis presented in this paper shows us that there are weaknesses in each of these key areas:

#### 1. Supply of research from NARS

Despite many positive trends, NARS are still largely unable to provide research of the quality required.

#### 2. Contributions from CGIAR

The international research system is not providing what is needed for agriculture and rural development at present. The ongoing CG reform may address this, but as of today the system is not sufficiently effective

#### 3. Integration of research into development

National level coordination arrangements between agricultural research and agriculture and rural development are not working sufficiently well to ensure that agricultural research is effectively integrated within national planning frameworks.

#### 4. Donor Partner support

Donor alignment and harmonisation around strategic reform agendas and pathways to impact, while improving, is similarly not yet sufficiently effective.

The paper concludes by proposing ways in which these four core issues can be addressed so as to enhance the contribution of agricultural research to wider rural development agendas.

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## 1. Introduction

Population is set to grow by over a third – 2.3 billion people – between 2009 and 2050.<sup>1</sup> Feeding the world in 2050 will require food production to increase by 70% globally and as much as 100% in developing countries. A renewal of interest in both agriculture and agricultural research has been backed by significant funding from the international community, including the promise of \$20 billion from the G8 agriculture and food security, much of it for Africa.

This paper describes the extent to which agricultural research contributes effectively to, and is harmonised with, the broader agriculture and rural development agenda. The paper examines the current relationships between key institutions and processes in research for development and the broader rural development agenda. It identifies key barriers to effectiveness that need to be addressed and their root causes, if the potential impact of agricultural research to MDGs is to be maximised. It ends by providing ways forward for a more effective research/development integration.<sup>2</sup>

## 2. The Current Rural Development Paradigm

Since the 1990s the processes by which rural development is supported have evolved, driven by a growing concern about aid effectiveness in the face of poor agricultural performance. Interest in sector programmes grew, as the focus on large scale sustainable impact in the context of MDGs led to the introduction of PRSPs as national frameworks for poverty reduction, and recognition of the need for enhanced donor alignment and harmonisation. Further, the critical importance of policy, politics, institutional issues and governance more generally on development informed rural development planning.

The current paradigm for rural development has the following features:

- **Country-led.** National frameworks for agricultural or rural development within PRSPs – with a focus on policy, governance and coordination.
- **Multi-sectoral approach.** Recognising that policy and governance are critical, and that wider enablers such as roads, markets, financial services are needed for rural growth and equity – although tensions and coordination issues remain widespread.

- **Enabling not delivering.** Focus on enabling rural development not delivering it, and supporting national governments to achieve their own objectives through pluralistic actors including private sector.
- **Enhanced growth focus.** Balancing growth and equity to address production needs and inclusion objectives together.
- **Donor alignment and harmonisation.** Increased donor effort on alignment with national frameworks, and harmonisation of efforts – as a result of Paris and Accra. Increased use of harmonised sector support mechanisms, General Budget Support and multi-donor approaches. However still patchy in places.
- **Enabling not delivering.** Focus on enabling rural development not delivering it, and supporting national governments to achieve their own objectives through pluralistic actors including private sector.
- **International focus.** Parallel efforts to address international level normative constraints to national development such as trade, climate change, and harmonisation with donor country foreign policy.
- **New supra-national initiatives.** The advent of a new generation of processes around which to organise rural development planning – such as CAADP which is African-owned and led, and at an international level the Common Framework for Action (CFA) and the proposed Global Partnership for Agriculture and Food Security (GPAFS).
- **New priorities.** Importance of food security after the global food crisis, climate change, alongside a greater focus on Social Protection.

## 3. The Origins of the Current Agricultural Research Paradigm

Over recent years there has been recognition that, despite much investment of bi- and multi-lateral donors into research over the years, many of the outputs of research have not impacted on poverty.<sup>3</sup> To this end there has been growing interest in supporting programmes to get research into use or to ensure that research is 'for' development, and the bringing of agricultural research within wider rural development frameworks.

This shift towards requiring research impact has challenged the status quo for research, and has stimulated major reform of the CGIAR system, which is presently underway. In Africa in particular the institutional frameworks for agricultural research have shifted immensely and new platforms, coordination bodies and processes have been established towards ensuring the relevance and impact of research on development and poverty reduction.

<sup>1</sup> FAO High-Level Expert Forum 2009, Global Agriculture towards 2050.

<sup>2</sup> The focus of the paper leans towards sub-Saharan Africa.

<sup>3</sup> For example see <http://www.researchintouse.com/index.php?section=2&subsection=1> and Scoones, I and Thompson, J (2009).

As noted by FARA “Africa has not been standing idly by letting the food crisis unfold. It has been engaged in difficult wide ranging institutional restructuring involving far sighted reforms”.<sup>4</sup>

Key characteristics of the current agricultural research paradigm are as follows:

- **Impact.** A focus on research being used, and generated differently, wrapped up in terms such as IAR4D, and using insights from innovation systems – but still widely hindered by lack of effective systems.
- **National frameworks.** A greater focus on ensuring that research is seen as a part of joined up poverty reduction efforts and not as an independent supply of research products.
- **Systems reform.** The shift to a NARS and innovation systems approach is changing the systems in which agricultural research is conducted, opening up opportunities for actors to compete for resources.
- **CG reform.** The CG system is currently under reform, seeking to cement its place and role within the changing architecture and maximise impact on development goals.
- **Broadening of research.** A move towards business unusual so that not only is technological research done differently, but also the research agenda is broadened to include policy and institutional issues related to enhanced impact.
- **African research reform.** A major shift in the institutional arrangements for research and accompanying capacity to deliver effectively in Africa is underway within the framework of CAADP’s pillar 4, overseen by FARA and based on four Sub-Regional Organisations (SROs): CORAF/WECARD, ASARECA, NASRO and CARDESA.
- **New global institutional arrangements.** A host of new global arrangements to enhance coordination, such as the Global Forum for Agricultural Research (GFAR), The European Forum for Agricultural Research for Development (EFARD) and EIARD.

## 4. Constraints to Impact of Agricultural Research on Development

Sections 2 and 3 above summarised the current paradigms for rural development and agricultural research respectively. The objective of this paper is to identify measures by which poverty impact can be enhanced through greater integration of these two closely related areas.

This section identifies constraints within the current paradigm which reduce the effectiveness of agricultural research’s impact on poverty. These constraints are presented as four categories:

- **Research supply-side constraints**
- **Research demand-side constraints**
- **Knowledge transfer constraints**
- **The effectiveness of donor (including EIARD and Platform) engagement**

### 4.1 Supply-side constraints to effective agricultural research for development

Supply-side constraints include: weaknesses in the appropriateness of research conducted, the impact – felt particularly in NARIs – of years of under-investment, a lack of responsiveness of NARIs to development agendas, differences in ethos within the agricultural research community, the performance incentive systems in place within the agricultural research community, and the evolving relationship between Africa based CGIAR members and the SROs of NARS.

#### a) Insufficiently appropriate research

Despite the progression of the research paradigm through farming systems research, participatory research and multi-stakeholder innovation systems the original transfer of technology approach remains widespread, despite it being demonstrably less than effective.<sup>5</sup> Despite all the developments in concept, many specific exceptions, and a number of important processes aimed at addressing this problem, much farmer-focused research remains insufficiently demand-led in practice.<sup>6</sup>

Equally it is clear that for research to have an impact, there needs to be an enabling environment for uptake and impact, addressing issues such as access to information, finance, roads,

<sup>4</sup> FARA (2006) p.5

<sup>5</sup> IAASTD (2009); Hall and Nahdy (1999).

<sup>6</sup> CORAF/WECARD (2007); ASARECA (2006); FARA (nd).

<sup>7</sup> DFID (2004).

and input and output markets.<sup>7</sup> Social science was brought into agricultural research from the 1980s onwards, mainly to support the technology generation process. But research on the policy and institutional environment, and how to influence it remains widely inadequate.<sup>8</sup>

Public research organisations conduct 94% of agricultural R&D in developing countries, although this may be changing.<sup>9</sup> And yet they face serious institutional constraints that inhibit their effectiveness. According to the WDR 2008, major reform is required.<sup>10</sup>

#### Box 1: CAADP-related reforms in Africa

AU-NEPAD's CAADP has four pillars. Pillar 4 relates to agricultural technology and its uptake and the mandate for delivering it in Africa is given to FARA. FARA is a membership organisation with African SROs as its members, and SROs are themselves membership organisations comprised of the states within their sub-region.

Since 2006 FARA and two SROs (CORAF/WECARD and ASARECA) have made important strides with a process of integrated reform of the way research is done.

Reforms have centred around the introduction of an impact and client-oriented 'business unusual' through an IAR4D paradigm, in pursuit of the MDGs and to address the weaknesses of African agricultural research. Common to this process has been:

- Reform of technological research to be more demand-led and appropriate
- Enhancement of policy and institutional research
- Strengthening of capacity in the sub-regions
- Meeting demand for information

#### b) The impact of under-investment in agricultural research and extension

Structural adjustment in the 1980s led to under-investment in agricultural research at national levels which has only begun to increase in the current decade. Across SSA, NARIs are under-resourced, lack capacity and underperform.<sup>11</sup>

The statistics are difficult to compare and hide considerable variation. The share of aid investment in agricultural research has increased from 4% of total ODA in the 90s to 6% in the current decade. However global and national market failures continue to induce serious underinvestment in R&D and related extension systems, especially in Africa.<sup>12</sup>

The separation of research funding from implementation has introduced competition for funds and will increasingly reward better-performers. If governments want research to play a major role then investment in research capacity and resources will be required.

#### c) Lack of responsiveness and accountability of National Agricultural Research Systems

Many agricultural research organisations are today very similar to how they have been for many years, with a supply-driven orientation, an expectation of their role as being technology development prior to 'handing over' to dissemination channels, and with little strategic planning of their research and its potential impacts.<sup>13</sup>

In most countries, representatives from the NARS (usually the NARIs) are involved in national poverty reduction planning processes – attending workshops, working groups, and making contributions to PRSP and sector plans.<sup>14</sup> However their lack of a client- and service delivery-orientation, and also the timeframe and risky nature of research, frequently means that while they are bound by shared national level objectives, their delivery against those is weak.

Once more this is changing in Africa in particular, especially through the strategic planning processes and institutional reforms associated with CAADP pillar 4, as acted upon by ASARECA and CORAF/WECARD to date (see box 1). But below the SROs there remain a large number of unreconstructed NARIs within unharmonised NARS. It will take time, but also political commitment and resources for efforts to achieve change at this level.

#### d) Differences in ethos within the agricultural research community

There has been a major tension between good science and applied agricultural research, in NARIs and also within the CG system. While this issue is currently under revision through the CAADP-oriented reforms in SSA and the CG system's own reform process,<sup>15</sup> the new system of effective NARS nested within wider development planning forums has yet to fully materialise. See boxes 2 and 3 for examples.

<sup>8</sup> FARA (nd).

<sup>9</sup> Brown et al (2009).

<sup>10</sup> World Bank (2008) p.176.

<sup>11</sup> See ASARECA (2006).

<sup>12</sup> World Bank (2008) p159; FARA (2006c); Beintema and Stads (2004); Brown et al (2009).

<sup>13</sup> Scoones, I. and Thompson, J, (eds) (2009) & interviews with key informants.

<sup>14</sup> FARA (2006c).

<sup>15</sup> For example the CGIAR's Science Council will become the independent Science and Partnership Council in the current CGIAR reform process.

**Box 2:**

The institutional learning and change (ILAC) initiative within the CGIAR system was designed to help in the transition from centre-of-excellence participation in innovation systems. Tension arose between the learning and change objectives of ILAC and the evaluation and impact assessment procedures promoted by the CGIAR Science Council. While traditional scientific impact assessment methods may be suited to assessing technical, scientific experiments, when one moves into the more 'messy' world of multi-stakeholder value chain platforms, then a different approach is needed.

**Box 3:**

FARA has responsibility for the running of the SSA Challenge Programme. The programme is built around the AR4D paradigm within a broad innovation systems context, but tensions between FARA and the CGIAR grew about the approach in which the programme should be monitored, with the Science Council calling for scientific proof of concept whereas the programme was more one of partnerships and learning through change.

**e) The performance incentives in place for agricultural research**

The embedded view that CGIAR centres are responsible for basic and strategic research and the NARS responsible for more applied adaptive research, remains strong. This is reinforced by promotion systems for scientists that are tied to their ability to publish scientific articles in international journals. Until this changes it serves as an institutionalised disincentive for those who seek to respond to value chain needs, as doing this means working with a wide range of stakeholders following processes not all of which are scientific. Thus "major shifts in the way professional incentive structures, organisation hierarchies and reward systems operate within the agricultural science community" are still required.<sup>16</sup> Watts and Horton (2009) also note that:

**"To be relevant and effective today, CGIAR programmes must have a more responsive mode of operation in which partnership and client orientation are core principles. To achieve this, major institutional changes will be needed. Although the institutional arrangements of the CGIAR have evolved over time, much remains to be done to complete the transition from a 'centre-of-excellence' model to one of effective participation in innovation systems".**

Associated with this are attitudinal issues in which a reluctance is seen among some researchers to work with and learn from farmers, as is called for in participatory research. For some, this challenges their professionalism and status, as well as being inconsistent with their training, experience, and reward systems. Similar issues arise as researchers are pushed to contribute within the wider innovation system. Where research remains in the linear technology generation and transfer model it becomes difficult to establish the on-going dialogue and relationships called for in IAR4D innovation systems approaches.

Several initiatives currently address this problem explicitly, for example the change management programmes in CORAF/WECARD and ASARECA (box 1) and the CG reform (box 4). However there is a long way to go before this can be considered to have been overcome.

**f) The evolving relationship between Africa based CGIAR members, FARA and the SROs**

The formation of CAADP and its agricultural research pillar, the resourcing and mobilisation of SROs in east, west and central Africa [ASARECA and CORAF/WECARD] and the launching of those in the north and south [NASRO and CARDESA] requires a repositioning of the CGIAR and its members in Africa. The earlier linear relationship between the CG members and the NARIs is now challenged with the CG system looking for a clear role within the new architecture of NARS, and within harmonised national frameworks for achievement of MDGs in particular (see box 4).

As phrased by the CGIAR:

**'.. the space that international research centers occupy has altered. Some national institutions challenge the ability of the CGIAR to partner equitably or meet their needs .. The CGIAR may no longer be perceived as the critical provider of solutions for agricultural productivity, natural resource management or policy advice. .. If these trends continue, and the CGIAR does not adapt, the CGIAR will rapidly become irrelevant'.<sup>17</sup>**

**Box 4: CGIAR reform**

In December 2008, the CGIAR decided to change its governance structure and way of doing business to respond more effectively to the needs of its beneficiaries and to enhance its position as a key global provider of agricultural research for development.

Source: [www.cgiar.org/changemanagement](http://www.cgiar.org/changemanagement)

<sup>16</sup> Scoones, I. and Thompson, J, [2009:303].

<sup>17</sup> [http://www.cgiar.org/changemanagement/cm\\_whychange.html](http://www.cgiar.org/changemanagement/cm_whychange.html)

## 4.2 Demand-side constraints to effective agricultural research for development

Demand-side constraints to effective agricultural research for development are two-fold: constraints related to the perceptions decision-makers have of research; and limited capacity and voice of farmer organisations.

### a) Decision-makers' perceptions of the relevance of agricultural research

Years of failing to respond to development needs have led to a situation where those engaged in planning agricultural and rural development often perceive research programmes of the NARIs, through to the CGIAR centres, to have limited relevance to the development agenda.<sup>18</sup> This is often associated with a lack of clear vision for how agricultural research can best be harnessed within development processes. And it is aggravated by the lack of synergy between the shorter term political timeframes of Governments and the longer timeframes against which research can deliver.<sup>19</sup>

Another factor is the view that sufficient research remains unused 'on the shelf', and that what is needed is not further investment in research per se, but, rather, an innovation systems approach aimed at uptake and application of research with a focus on impact in practice.

This perception that research outputs are there ready to be used has been furthered by the research fraternity itself – for example DFID's ten year investment in research<sup>20</sup> was assessed as not making a significant impact on poverty<sup>21</sup>. Consequently the 'Research into Use' project was initiated to make better use of completed research outputs.

### b) Limited capacity and voice of farmers' organisations

Despite decades of donor support to, and scientist engagement in, farmer participatory research, the extent to which research is demand-led remains limited. Ashby<sup>22</sup> asserts that 'FPR in agricultural research institutes has been moulded in to a style of technology transfer that uses participatory learning and many of the PRA tools to reassert the top-down, pipeline model of inno-

vation.' As the supply side of research has struggled to deliver, attention on the demand side of rural innovation has increased. FARA's Framework for African Agricultural Productivity also notes that farmers' needs do not drive the orientation of agricultural research, and argues that farmer empowerment will play a key role in improving agricultural productivity.<sup>23</sup>

National farmers' organisations have grown up over the last twenty years in SSA, often organised around particular commodities or sectors. Furthermore in the current decade four active sub-regional farmers' organisations have emerged<sup>24</sup> and in 2007 the Africa Alliance of sub-regional Farmer Organisations was launched. This body can now link the four sub-regional farmer organisations with the International Federation of Agricultural Producers. However much remains to be done to build the strength and voice of these organisations, increase their representation in steering committees of agricultural research systems including the GGIAR system, and institution-alise systems of research accountability to the end-users.

## 4.3 Knowledge transfer constraints

The transfer of technology model requires an effective dissemination mechanism. Since the failure of the massive investments in T&V extension<sup>25</sup> this requirement has generally failed to hold. Dissemination and subsequent uptake of research output has been a major weakness.

Agricultural extension services are however now back on the development agenda, stimulated by new institutional innovations related to innovation systems, private sector roles, and the potential of technology.<sup>26</sup>

Much remains to be done however. In most cases the knowledge transfer process is weak and under-scaled, introducing a critical disconnect between research products and end-users. And more attention needs to be paid to the inclusiveness of new ideas for poorer farmers.

<sup>18</sup> Key informants for this paper.

<sup>19</sup> World Bank (2008) p166.

<sup>20</sup> DFID's Renewable Natural Resource Research Strategy which ran from 1995-2006.

<sup>21</sup> <http://www.researchintouse.com/index.php?section=2&subsection=2>.

<sup>22</sup> Ashby, J, (2009:42).

<sup>23</sup> Framework for African Agricultural Productivity (2006) FARA.

<sup>24</sup> These are Réseau des organisations des paysannes & de producteurs de l'Afrique de l'Quest (ROPPA); the Eastern Africa Farmers' Federation (EAFF), the sub-regional platform of peasant organisations of Central Africa (PROPAC) and the Southern Africa Confederation of Agricultural Unions (SACAU) (Jones, M P and Snyang, S (2009) "The politics of inclusion in African agricultural research and development" in " in Scoones, I. and Thompson, J, (2009:303) Farmer First Revisited: Innovation for Agricultural Research and Development.

<sup>25</sup> IAASTD (2008).

<sup>26</sup> World Bank (2008) p.175.

## 4.4 Effectiveness of donor engagement

While the above issues relate to supply and demand side, and delivery, constraints to greater integration of agricultural research into agriculture and rural development, there remains another key set of issues which concern the ways in which donor partners, including EIARD and the Platform, engage. These include donor coordination and harmonisation, donor alignment with African restructuring of agricultural research and development, and specifically, coordination between EIARD and the Platform.

### a) Donor coordination and harmonisation

This point concerns the need for greater coordination between and within donor support for agricultural research for development, and that for agriculture and rural development. Typically these can be disconnected both horizontally within countries and the EU region, and vertically, between recipient nations, donor partners and global coordination bodies.<sup>27</sup>

There are four areas of concern:

- **Donor internal harmonisation.** To what extent are donor partners' own support to research and development harmonised internally? Are development and research efforts harmonised and aligned with an overarching strategy when applied to country level in practice?
- **Harmonisation between donors supporting agricultural research.** The majority of donor support for agricultural research for development, whether bilateral or through the EC, is still channelled to the CGIAR system. There are exceptions – for example the UK committed in this year's White Paper to also channel funds to AGRA, and there is some EU level and bilateral level support to the SROs in Africa. And across the membership of the EIARD, to what extent in practice are member donor states coordinating their support to agricultural research for development? And indeed, is this even the role of EIARD or is this the role of EFARD?
- **Harmonisation between donors supporting rural development.** Donor support for agriculture and rural development at national level is increasingly aligned behind government sectoral and national frameworks with harmonised support through multi-donor trust funds at sector or national level. Is this level of alignment and harmonisation adequate, and sufficient to deliver strongly against the MDGs?
- **Harmonisation between donors of research and rural development investments.** How strong are the communication channels between the donor lines of support for agricultural research for development and those for the broader agriculture and rural development agenda? And how well do these donors ensure that their own support results in a 'coordinated agenda'.

If there are still two 'camps' – a research one (perhaps aligned to the CGIAR) and an agriculture and rural development one (more aligned to recipient country national decision making processes) – how can this be addressed?

This tension is exemplified by the TORs for the workshop this paper is being prepared for. The workshop seeks to enhance dialogue and coordinate agendas between agricultural research for development and the broader agriculture and rural development agenda. The workshop brings together European donor partners supporting agricultural research, and those supporting agriculture and rural development. Will the workshop provide the first occasion for delegates from particular countries to meet their counterparts from the same countries? And when it comes to European coordination of agricultural research for development, how are the roles of the donor group EIARD and that of the European Forum for Agricultural Research for Development, with its direct links with the GFAR globally and FARA in Africa (for example), distinguished?

### b) Donor alignment with African restructuring of agricultural research and development

To what extent are donor partners consistently and effectively supporting national-, sub-regional and region-led processes?

Perhaps as outcomes of a) above there is a significant difference in level of engagement between Platform and EIARD with the AU-NEPAD and its CAADP process including the Agricultural Research Pillar 4 of CAADP being led by FARA. While the Platform has strong relations with CAADP is there an adequate degree of engagement by EIARD with CAADP and FARA?

FARA through the CAADP policy framework is ensuring that its member SROs and NARS take a broader, innovation systems approach in agricultural research which is entirely compatible with the broader agriculture and rural development agenda. Should donors be backing these processes more strongly? FARA<sup>28</sup> argues that

“The changes, of which CAADP is a part, are a product of arguably the greatest African-led reform since liberalisation from colonialism committing countries to evidenced-based planning for comprehensive reforms of the agricultural springboards of their economies”

Secondly, donor support being placed outside national systems may undermine these African-led processes unless specific effort is made to bring them together within a single framework. Donors are sometimes confronted with a choice between process and product. Funding a national process may take a long time before it translates to research product. Alternative funding to a

<sup>27</sup> Note that this is not necessarily the case for the UN, for example IFAD works to draw on and link to research related to the projects and programmes it funds.

<sup>28</sup> FARA (2006b).

CG system or independent organisation such as AGRA may deliver quicker and perhaps better research, but through parallel processes. Which path would EIARD and the Platform recommend?

### c) Coordination between EIARD and Platform

Looking more specifically at EIARD and the Platform, though these have similar goals, there is room for greater coordination between the two bodies to enhance the integration of agricultural research for development within agriculture and rural development. In addition, there are deeper questions about the roles and positioning of these bodies in the wider institutional context.

Both bodies are networks of donor partners – one being European donor partners for agricultural research for development and the other being global donor partners for agriculture and rural development. Their goals overlap in that both seek to reduce poverty and to promote economic growth. However the activities of each network differ. EIARD's role concerns coordination of European policies and investments in agricultural research for development. Meanwhile the Platform's role is advocacy in support of increased and more effective agriculture and rural development, and fostering knowledge to enhance capacity of member agencies to deliver more effective support for agriculture and rural development.

Of EIARD's four logframe outputs, whilst the first three deal with coordination of policies and investments for agricultural research for development, the fourth (new) output is "effective coordination between European investments in agricultural research for development and investments in rural development in the pursuit of the MDGs". For its part, the Platform is seeking to enhance the effectiveness of aid to agriculture and rural development, and bringing research within that framework is a key objective.

The sections above indicate the extent to which coordination of donor support for agricultural research for development and agriculture and rural development is needed. Meanwhile the annexed diagram indicates the key players in both spheres and how they relate to each other. The authors are aware that there are likely to be both inaccuracies and omissions in the diagram; its inclusion in the paper is intended to stimulate thought and discussion.

The diagram indicates:

- The multiplicity of (broadly supply-side) initiatives at global and Africa level
- The strategic position of sub-regional SROs and RECs in linking national programs with African/global initiatives (and hence the case for further investment in those activities, within the context of CAADP)
- The central role of CAADP led processes in integrating rural development and research and
- The relatively weak horizontal linkages at all levels between research and rural development institutions

Turning to EIARD and the Platform specifically, the diagram shows:

Close connections between:

- EIARD and the GGIAR
- EIARD, PAEPARD, FARA and EFARD
- Platform with CAADP
- Platform with the regional economic commissions
- Platform with national ministries

And less strong connections between:

- Platform and the CGIAR and its members
- EIARD and the African SROs
- EIARD and CAADP
- EIARD and Platform. Though this workshop may be the beginning of links between the two bodies, there is as yet no strong link

However, some deeper questions arise that the workshop may like to consider:

- To what extent is EIARD duplicating the activities of EFARD and of PAEPARD?
- Is EIARD support to EFARD (under Output 1) and PAEPARD (under Output 3) intended to strengthen each of these organisations to in the end take over the coordination functions of EIARD?
- EIARD seeks linkages with the Platform to harmonise European investments in agricultural research for development with those in agriculture and rural development. Would it be more appropriate for EIARD to link with a European body responsible for coordination of investments in agriculture and rural development (perhaps HARDs?).
- There is a difference in scale with EIARD representing Europe while the Platform is global. Would it be more appropriate for Platform to build relations with GFAR and its regional membership from around the world?
- The Platform does not as an output seek to coordinate global policies and investments regarding agriculture and rural development – is such a body needed and is it appropriate for EIARD to try to work on this with the Platform when the latter does not have the same mandate?

## 5. The Way Forward

Agriculture is back on the agenda for donors and national governments; with momentum behind Paris and Accra, now is a good time to address critical issues related to development effectiveness.

If the systems for integrating agricultural research effectively into wider rural development frameworks, and maximising the contribution of research to growth and poverty reduction, are to be effective they need four critical pieces of the rural development-research 'jigsaw' to work. These are:

- Effective functioning of the supply of research from NARS
- Effective contributions from the CG system to NARS
- Effective national processes for integration of research into development; and
- Effective donor partner support to these processes

However the analysis presented in this paper shows us that there are weaknesses in each of these key areas:

1. **Supply of research from NARS.** Despite many positive trends, NARS are still largely unable to provide research of the quality required.
2. **Contributions from CGIAR.** The international research system is not providing what is needed for agriculture and rural development at present. The ongoing CG reform may address this, but as of today the system is not sufficiently effective.
3. **Integration of research into development.** National level coordination arrangements between agricultural research and agriculture and rural development are not working sufficiently well to ensure that agricultural research is effectively integrated within national planning frameworks.
4. **Donor Partner support.** Donor alignment and harmonisation around strategic reform agendas and pathways to impact, while improving, is similarly not yet sufficiently effective.

The remainder of this section looks at ways in which these four core issues can be addressed so as to enhance the contribution of agricultural research to wider rural development agendas.

### 5.1 Ability of NARS to provide research of the quality required

- Many NARIs will need to go through an extensive process of reorientation, along the lines being pursued through CORAF/WECARD and ASARECA.
- This will enhance the appropriateness of research through demand-led approaches, address the need for policy and institutional research, build capacity and support institutional transformations for effective NARS working with an innovation systems approach, all in the context of enabling adoption and meeting the needs of end users.
- Greater engagement of re-oriented and result-oriented NARS in national planning processes will help NARS support innovation systems to deliver results able to address rural development and poverty reduction.
- Neither NARS, nor SROs, will be able to transform themselves to 'business unusual' and provide good quality research without adequate resources. National governments need to recognise the role of science and innovation in the development agenda and invest accordingly .

### 5.2 National-level coordination arrangements

- Agricultural research must take its responsibility to support development more seriously and re-orient itself to become an effective contributor to shared national development frameworks
- For research to contribute effectively will require vision on how science and innovation may better become a real driver for poverty reduction
- Solutions need to be found for translating research into widespread and sustainable impact on poverty. An innovation systems approach in which all actors – NARIs, farmer organisations, CG, private sector work together in wider development processes to deliver results in practice - may be part of the solution, but achieving scale and quality is a major challenge
- The CAADP process in Africa is a potentially important example of what such integrated processes may look like. More work is required to consider whether this is indeed the case and if so what may be done to support it

### 5.3 How the international research system can better provide what is needed for agriculture and rural development

- The ongoing CGIAR reform needs to ensure it is driven by maximising the contribution of the CG system to achieving the MDGs
- This will require it to be situated within and driven by development processes – global, regional, sub-regional, national – and focused on meeting the needs expressed by these systems rather than focused on research or the CGIAR itself
- The reform needs to be aggressively implemented resulting swiftly in a responsive CG system which engages effectively with development processes in practice, and delivers against development challenges.

### 5.4 Donor alignment and harmonisation around strategic reform agendas

- Individual donor partners need to improve on their own internal coordination so that support to agricultural research and support to governments for agriculture and rural development is synchronised and complementary, and shares the same strategic framework
- Together, donor partners need to harmonise their support to rural development and agricultural research at all levels and ensure that they are being effective partners for development
- Donor partners can neither change rural development nor agricultural research systems on their own – nor should they try. Such changes are made through country-level commitment and action. The role of donor partners is to collectively enable (through support, mentoring and facilitation) and advocate for such commitment, and they need to collectively identify and support processes through which to engage
- Harmonised advocacy and enabling support to enhance the impact of agricultural research on development outcomes requires strategic (shared) analysis and agreement on the key processes and 'best bets' for widespread and sustainable rural development and agricultural research in the future, and alignment of collective support around these processes - whether at global, regional, sub-regional or national levels.

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## Acronyms

AGRA	Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa
ASARECA	Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa
AWARD	African Women in Agricultural R & D
CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme
CARDESA	Centre for Agricultural Research and Development for Southern Africa
GGIAR	Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
CIP	International Potato Centre
CORAF/WECARD	West and Central African Council for Agricultural Research and Development
DAC/OECD	Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
EFARD	European Forum for Agricultural Research for Development
EIARD	European Initiative for Agricultural Research for Development
FAAP	Framework for African Agricultural Productivity
FARA	Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa
GCARD	Global Conference on Agricultural Research for Development
GFAR	Global Forum for Agricultural Research
IAR4D	Integrated Agricultural Research for Development
IITA	International Institute of Tropical Agriculture
ILAC	Institutional Learning and Change
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
NARI	National Agricultural Research Institute
NARS	National Agricultural Research Systems
NASRO	North African Sub-Regional Organisation
NEPAD	New Economic Partnership for Development
ODA	Overseas Development Assistance
Platform	Global Donor Platform for Rural Development
PPP	Public Private Partnership
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
SADC/FANR	Southern African Development Community – Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Directorate
SRO	Sub-Regional Organisation
SSA	Sub Saharan Africa

Annex: Key organisations and processes in rural development, and agricultural research for development

