

Aide Memoire

A high-level meeting between leaders from NARES in Sub-Saharan Africa, SROs (ASARECA, CARDESA, CORAF), development partners and CGIAR Genetic Innovation took place on 27-28 June 2022 at the Trademark Hotel in Nairobi, Kenya.

During the meeting, participants as listed in Annex A agreed that / emphasized:

1. **Taking stock:** Substantial benefits have arisen from past collaborations between NARES, SROs and CGIAR centers in the area of Genetic Innovation, through research, capacity development and innovation; the sharing of information, germplasm and technologies; the better management and use of data; the wide availability of genetic resources, and joint fund raising. This has resulted in (i) the faster development and deployment of new crop varieties, (ii) the conservation of genetic resources, (iii) new skills and institutional capacities being developed (iv) economies of scale being created, and (v) larger scale impact. There is a need to strengthen this through stronger collaboration.
2. **Non-exclusivity:** This meeting included limited numbers of NARES and SRO partners in Sub-Saharan Africa. Other NARES and SROs in Sub-Saharan Africa are invited to join in the spirit and intent of this aide memoire, to attend future meetings to the extent that genetic innovations feature strongly in their national research and development strategies and priorities.
3. **View of the One CGIAR Transformation:** NARES and SROs in attendance at the meeting are supportive of the One CGIAR Transformation towards greater impacts being generated. It is in the right direction. Similar changes have happened in national organizations in Sub-Saharan Africa where institutions have come together to form one NARES organization in their country. The modality of collaboration, (i) between NARES, SROs and CGIAR and (ii) to ensure all centers pursue a joint agenda, needs further work to achieve a more effective overall system while building on the strengths of the past.
4. **Role of this meeting:** The OneCGIAR re-design of the portfolio enables to comprehensively and jointly take stock of the agenda and the modality of collaboration, and plan the way forward across crops, institutions, and for a major science area, Genetic Innovation.
5. **Our common challenge:** By (i) aligning NARES, SRO and CGIAR plans and activities better, including by doing so at a programmatic instead of individual project or crop level, and (ii) drawing on the complementary strengths of partners, greater benefits can be created for the achievement of national action plans, CGIAR results targets and the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
6. **Overarching values:** We want to pursue this endeavor as equal partners, with all partners contributing to greater alignment, the effective use of complementary skills, and egalitarian approaches to how we work together. We need each other to pursue the design, co-development, deployment and tracking of new products, to create benefits in research and innovation, and to achieve large-scale benefit for the people we serve.
7. **Reviewing priorities and targets in the Genetic Innovation area:**

- 7.1. **Establishing national priorities:** As a result of this meeting, the NARES, CGIAR, SROs will jointly take stock of (i) top priority crops, (ii) national research and development strategies and priorities as they apply to the Genetic Innovation area, (iii) partners' strengths and (iv) technical and infrastructural capacity development priorities, to the extent such information is not sufficiently available. These should be aligned with regional and continental priorities.
 - 7.2. **Establishing national breeding targets:** During the coming year and through existing breeding networks, CGIAR will work with NARES to describe national breeding targets (market segments, targeted product profiles, target environments) using standardized formats.
 - 7.3. **Platforms capturing evolving farmer, market and consumer demands:** Several national research and development strategies seek closer linkages with the private sector involved in the scaling and use of the new crop varieties. The insight of (existing and new) platforms that capture and consolidate national stakeholder views of demands for new crop varieties by farmers, consumers, seed companies and processors will be highly useful as NARES, SRO and CGIAR revise common breeding targets and relative priorities.
8. **Joint priority-setting:** Information developed as part of Point 7, will form the basis for:
 - 8.1. NARES, SRO and CGIAR jointly reviewing priorities among and within crops, market segments and product profiles, in view of creating together more substantive benefits to countries.
 - 8.2. Awareness-raising and fund-raising for top priorities of the common agenda.
9. **Defining individual partners' engagement:** Information developed as part of Point 7 will also form the basis for:
 - 9.1. Jointly examining the existing activities and find the best entry points for the collaboration in each Initiative.
 - 9.2. Agreeing on the technical focus of NARES, CGIAR, SROs and other partners (e.g. private sector, community organizations) within and across countries to capitalize on the complementarity and comparative advantage of each partner, avoid duplication, and better use of scarce resources to achieve greater and faster progress.
 - 9.3. Ensuring that collaborative efforts with individual NARES (i) are aligned with the priorities set in their respective national action plans, (ii) support needs for the impact and sustainability of the local programs, and (iii) develop capabilities that can be maintained with national resources.
 - 9.4. Identifying priorities for technical and infrastructural capacity development.
 - 9.5. Working with centers of excellence or model research programs in some NARES and sharing the learning experiences with other member countries.
10. **Improved coordination:** The need for improved coordination is recognized at all levels:
 - 10.1. At the higher level, sub-regional organization should provide leadership on regional development priorities, their application to the agricultural research agenda, existing NARES-to-NARES collaborations, the assignment of centers of excellence to distinct NARES (more of them are needed), policy linkages, and the development of more sustainable funding from national governments.
 - 10.2. CGIAR can contribute (i) to the better coordination of the technical / science agenda, (ii) also by standardizing approaches and with that transparency, (iii) support the

development of skills of NARES professionals and teams, and (iv) ensure continuous improvement in all technical aspects.

10.3. NARES can contribute to improved coordination by incentivizing best practice use across commodities and institutes in their country.

10.4. Given the many stakeholders working with the NARES, it is critical to incrementally involve other partners to avoid duplication, misalignment of resources and leveraging of partners competencies. Funders have an important role in enabling such alignment.

11. The Common Technical Agenda

11.1. Will include: joint priority setting, market and gender studies; product design; accelerated germplasm development and deployment; new tools, technologies and approaches; access to genetic resources; capacity and infrastructure development; the development and sustainable use of shared services; tracking and impact assessment; policy recommendations.

11.2. To create benefits for: nutrition, health and food security; poverty reduction, economic development, livelihoods and jobs; gender equality, youth and inclusion; climate adaptation and mitigation; and environmental health and sustainability.

12. Execution of the Common Technical Agenda: With the revision of priorities and partners' engagement in the common agenda, partners are committed to (i) openness and transparency, (ii) joint planning, review, progress and performance assessment, (iii) the sharing of results and , (iv) effective communication and reporting, (v) resource allocation that is transparent and consistent and complements national investments, (vi) joint attribution of science and innovations (vii) implementing high standards for efficiency and accountability.

13. Recognition: NARES, SRO and CGIAR systematically recognize and acknowledge each other's contributions to joint activities and products through communications and publications.

14. Sustainability: NARES, SRO and CGIAR emphasize to pursue this collaboration with a commitment to

14.1. A longer-term collaborative program on Genetic Innovation that goes across crops, Initiatives and projects.

14.2. The development (through training, skills development, attachments, graduate research opportunities, and involvement in the collaborative agenda) of a new generation of research scientists, and

14.3. The sustainable growth of the national programs, including through joint resource, infrastructure and equipment-mobilization and by strengthening income generation (e.g. through licensing of varieties for commercially attractive crops).

14.4. Retaining high caliber NARES researchers, which is a big challenge for national research systems and long-term partnerships with CGIAR centers.

15. Country Endorsement: CGIAR and NARES partners will seek to document these principles of collaboration for the Genetic Innovation area in consistent umbrella agreements so to pursue country endorsements at highest levels.

16. Communication at all levels: Participants will represent the spirit and action points arising from this meeting (i) within their organizations, (ii) with national, regional and international policy makers and (iii) as part of other NARES – SRO - CGIAR interactions, recognizing that

transformation towards stronger and more effective partnerships needs the combined efforts and contributions at all levels.

17. Working towards high level CGIAR-NARES-SRO meeting 2023:

- 17.1. Participants present conclusions from this meeting and seek alignment with national and regional decision makers and will meet in approximately 12 months to take stock of progress made.
- 17.2. A CGIAR-NARES implementation team will take the technical agenda forward, with clear Terms of Reference. Participants choose the following representatives as an inception team. Teams may co-opt additional/alternative members:
- NARES: 4 reps, to rotate annually: (Godfrey Asea: East Africa, Busiso Mavangeni: Southern Africa, Mohammed F. Ishiyaku: West Africa, Frances Ajebesone: Central Africa)
 - CGIAR: 4 reps (Bish Das, Michael Quinn, Clare Mukankusi, John Derera)
 - SRO: 3 reps (Ousmane Ndoye: CORAF, Ben Ilakut: ASARECA, Lefulesele Nteletsana Lebesa: CARDESA)

18. Wider partnerships in Genetic Innovations: An equally systematic engagement needs to be developed with the private sector and other stakeholders (universities, ARIs, NGOs community-based organizations, farmer-based organizations) that are involved in the development and scaling of new technologies, including varieties.

20 Need for country and regional coordination for all CGIAR Action Areas: NARES and SRO participants appreciated this open level of interaction for the Genetic Innovation Action Area. There is similar need for country- and regional- coordination for the other Action Areas. The discussion of plans, joint identification of issues, challenges and solutions, and continued communication of insights will help in driving the change agenda forward.

This Aide Memoire is an accurate record of the conclusions of this meeting.

Witnessed by/Signed by: Name and Affiliation

1. Witness by CGIAR Representative Dr. Sonja Vermeulen



2. Witnessed by NARES Representative Dr. Mweshi Mukanga, ZARI



3. Witnessed by SRO Representative Mr. Ben Ilakut: ASARECA



Nairobi, 28 June 2022

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Annex A. List of meeting attendees (in-person and online)

	Name	Role	Organization	Institution type
1.	Dr. Ousmane Ndoye	Project Coordinator	CORAF	Regional Body
2.	Dr. Lefulesele Lebesa	Director, Department of Agricultural Research, Ministry of Agriculture Lesotho	CCARDESA	Regional Body
3.	Mr. Ben Ilakut	Knowledge Manager	ASARECA	Regional Body
4.	Dr. George Bigirwa	Deputy Vice President Program Innovations and delivery -AGRA	AGRA	Regional Body
5.	Dr. Ndjido Kane	Director	CERAAS - Senegal	NARES
6.	Dr Mweshi Mukanga	Deputy Director Technical Services	ZARI - Zambia	NARES
7.	Dr. Joel L. Meliyo	Director of Research	TARI - Tanzania	NARES
8.	Dr. Cyprian Ebong	Head Resource Mobilization	NARO - Uganda	NARES
9.	Dr. Godfrey Asea	NaCCRI Director	NARO - Uganda	NARES
10.	Dr. Joyce Malinga	Director of Planning, Performance Management and Quality Control	KALRO - Kenya	NARES
11.	Dr. James Karanja	Senior Researcher, Maize Breeder	KALRO - Kenya	NARES
12.	Dr. Francis Ajebesone Ngome	Deputy Director General	IRAD - Cameroon	NARES
13.	Professor Achille Assogbadjo	Professor	INRAB - Benin	NARES
14.	Dr. Constantino Senete	Research Director	IIAM - Mozambique	NARES
15.	Professor Mohammed F. Ishiyaku	Executive Director	IAR - Nigeria	NARES
16.	Dr. Taye Tadesse	Director, Crop Research	EIAR - Ethiopia	NARES
17.	Dr. Busiso Olga Mavankeni	Deputy Director, Crop Breeding, Department of Research & Specialist Services Zimbabwe	DR&SS - Zimbabwe	NARES
18.	Dr. Maxwell Asante	Deputy Director	CRI/CSIR - Ghana	NARES
19.	Professor Garba Sharubutu	Executive Secretary	ARCN - Nigeria	NARES
20.	Dr. Jeffrey Ehlers	Senior Program Officer	BMGF	Donors
21.	Dr. Honor Renee Lafitte	Deputy Director, Crops Research and Development	BMGF	Donors
22.	Dr. Leah Ndungu	Regional Representative	ACIAR	Donors
23.	Dr. Sarah Schmidt	Advisor	GIZ	Donors
24.	Dr. Gary Atlin	Senior Program Officer	BMGF	Donors

*High Level Sub-Saharan Africa NARES – CGIAR meeting on Genetic Innovation, Nairobi 27-28 June 2022
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25.	Dr. Sharifa Syed Alwee	Breeding Resources Co-Lead	IRRI	CGIAR-GI
26.	Dr. Vishnuvardhan Reddy Banda	Product Manager for Crop Variety Development	IITA	CGIAR-GI
27.	Dr. Marianne Bänziger	Consultant	Independent	CGIAR-GI
28.	Dr. Vivian Polar	Market Intelligence Co-Lead	CIP	CGIAR-GI
29.	Dr. Ian Barker	Seed Equal Lead	CIP	CGIAR-GI
30.	Dr. Michael Quinn	Accelerated Breeding Lead	CIMMYT	CGIAR-GI
31.	Dr. Biswanath Das	Accelerated Breeding Transform WP3 Lead	CIMMYT	CGIAR-GI
32.	Dr. Eng Hwa Ng	Breeding Resources WP2 Lead	CIMMYT	CGIAR-GI
33.	Dr. Chris Ojiewo	Partnerships & Seed System Lead - AVISA - GRP	CIMMYT	CGIAR-GI
34.	Dr. Yoseph Beyene	Regional Maize Breeding Coordinator for Africa	CIMMYT	CGIAR-GI
35.	Dr. Clare Mukankusi	Accelerated Breeding Co-Lead	CIAT	CGIAR-GI
36.	Dr. Thiago Mendes	Potato Breeding Lead	CIP	CGIAR-GI
37.	Dr. Sonja Vermeulen	Genetic Innovation Director	CGIAR	CGIAR-GI
38.	Dr. Ajay Panchbhai	Regional Breeding Lead	IRRI	CGIAR-Breeding
39.	Dr. John Derera	Head of Breeding	IITA	CGIAR-Breeding
40.	Dr. Filippo Bassi	Senior Scientist	ICARDA	CGIAR-Breeding
41.	Dr. Jean Claude Rubyogo	PABRA Director	CIAT	CGIAR-Breeding
42.	Dr. Marie-Noelle Ndjondjop	Head of the Biotechnology Unit	AfricaRice	CGIAR-Breeding
43.	Dr. Hugo Campos	Director of Research	CIP	CGIAR
44.	Dr. Shoba Venkatanagappa	Seed Equal Co-Lead	CGIAR	CGIAR
45.	Dr. Agyemang Danquah	Lecturer – University of Ghana	WACCI - Ghana	ARI
46.	Dr. Bernard Bashaasha	Board Member	MaRCCI - Uganda	ARI