

Policy Brief



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Capacity Building for Multi-stakeholder Actors in Agricultural Research for Development: Lessons and Recommendations



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Executive Summary

The PAEPARD recognizes the importance of building capacity for multi-stakeholder actors in ARD to enhance collaboration, demand articulation and enhanced resource mobilization to support inclusive partnerships with non-research stakeholders (farmers organizations, private sector/industry, Non-Government Organizations) leading those partnerships.

1. Capacity building as a process and not just a one-off: a common goal or shared objective is a prerequisite for functional partnerships. A shared mission can be achieved through capacity building, not just as a series of training events but rather a process of transformation of individuals, groups and organizations to achieve their desired intentions and objectives. The needs of individuals, groups and organizations in a partnership are not always well known and may evolve over time.

A process of learning through critical thinking and reflection, stimulated by questioning of the underlying values, beliefs and practices, is required to tease out this awareness and create a vision of desired change. Such learning is best achieved through an iterative process of convening events. Initially, these create the motivation to experiment with change, and provide the basic knowledge for getting started. Subsequent learning events provide opportunity for reflection on this experience, and lead to the next levels of action, in a series of “learning loops”. Thus, Partnership development takes time, and it is important to in build sufficient time-periods for inception activities.
2. A shared interest in the innovation at hand is key for MSPs: Working in partnerships to address challenges in ARD that impact on smallholder farmers requires resources (both human and financial) and institutions engaged in ARD MSP should address a challenge that is of significant regional and global relevance. It is important to demonstrate the benefit of a regional and not merely multi-country partnership over a national partnership approach.
3. End-user demand articulation for relevant research for development actions, collaboration and partnerships between practitioner organizations (Famer Organizations, Non-Government Organizations, and Industry) with formal research organizations (including Universities and Research Institutions) has been catalyzed by strengthened Institutional arrangements of the sub-regional farmer’s organization under the umbrella of the Pan Africa Farmers Organization (PAFO). The PAEPARD and other institutions/ programmes with similar mission have opportunity to work closely with an array of grassroots farmer’s organizations that constitute the membership of PAFO’s member institutions and empower them to effectively contribute to food and nutritional security. This arrangement forms a good foundation for establishing relevant partnerships for multi-stakeholder agricultural research for development.
4. There is increasing realization on the importance of inclusive partnerships with non-research stakeholders (FOs, private sector/industry, NGOs) leading such partnerships in ARD. Policymakers and donors recognize the fact that effective engagement of non-research actors in research projects and programmes accelerates adoption. To this end, many Research for Development Calls necessitate partnership arrangements which at a minimum must entail and demonstrate evidence of collaboration between research and non-research actors from design through to implementation of projects. Nonetheless, most Calls come with terms and conditions that do not favor non-research actors to effectively participate as partners but only as target beneficiaries.

1. Capacity Building Strategy for multi-stakeholder actors in Agricultural Research for Development

The Platform for African European Partnership on Agricultural Research for Development (PAEPARD) promotes a multi-stakeholder partnerships (MSP) approach, involving non-research stakeholders working closely with researchers to generate and apply knowledge to solve challenges faced by smallholder farmers. In 2011, through a comprehensive stakeholder consultation, a strategy to enhance the capacity of stakeholders in Africa and Europe to jointly implement ARD was developed.

The strategy has a dual approach to establishment and/ or facilitation of partnerships.

Fast track - is a Grafting approach for fast-tracking establishment of innovative partnerships. Focuses on existing groups and teams, which have already found enough reasons to work together and have been engaged in ARD work. These groups or teams need to be assisted to become sufficiently innovative both in membership and in the mode of operation

The “fast track” started with an open PAEPARD call for proposals around a theme of interest to a potential partnership, with successful

partnerships receiving support for a “partnership inception workshop”, and a subsequent “proposal development write-shop”. It was expected that successful partnerships would proceed to identify a potential source of finance to support implementation of activities. This was not the case in most cases until the establishment of the PAEPARD competitive research funds (CRF).

The “Slow track” was designed as a Seeding approach - long-term process that involved partnership construction with the provision of adequate space for the non-research actors to organise themselves around mutual interests and engage with the research actors to articulate their demand and address them through partnerships.

The “slow-track” procedure starts with a coalescing theme, identified through stakeholder consultations in Europe and Africa. Following the formation of the proposed consortium, the partners would attend “partnership inception workshops” and “proposal development write-shops” as in the fast track procedure.

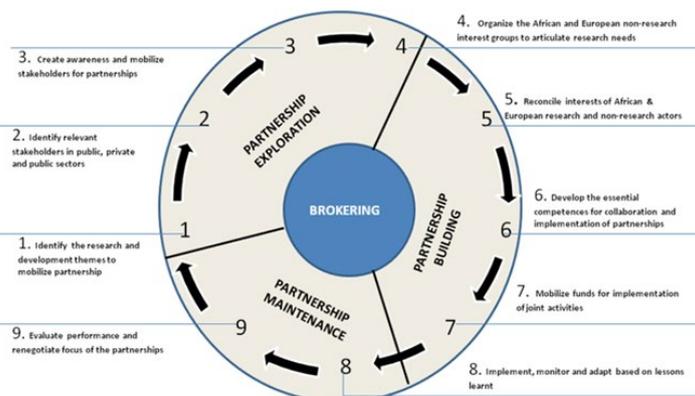
For both the slow and fast track procedures the role of an Agricultural Innovations Facilitator was envisioned. The AIF was to serve as a

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broker in the formation of partnerships around a given coalescing theme and/or facilitate different stakeholders to effectively work together as an effective partnership.



Short-term and fast-track partnership development process

The PAEPARD Capacity Building Strategy was anchored on previous experiences including among others the following projects and frameworks:

- Strengthening Capacity for Agricultural Research and Development in Africa (SCARDA)
- Innovative Partnerships for Sustainable Development (DURAS)
- Implementation and Coordination of Agricultural Research and Training in the Southern Africa Development Community (ICART)
- Dissemination of New Agricultural Technologies in Africa (DONATA)
- Sub-Saharan Africa Challenge Programme (SSA-CP)
- Research in Use (RiU)



PAEPARD Partners brainstorming at one of the sessions of the several capacity building events

Table 1 highlights key areas of emphasis for PAEPARD capacity building strategy which were crafted to focus on the following:

- The individual level, where capacity strengthening entailed motivating and providing incentives, fostering leadership, improving relevant skill levels, and enhancing the ability of partners to maintain relationships, collaborate and learn from each other;
- The relational level, where the linkages, partnerships and networks that enable innovating agents to operate efficiently and effectively can be enhanced through capacity building focusing on communication, negotiation, conflict resolution, and the development of social capital and trust; and,
- The System/enabling environment level, which entailed the enhancing the capacity of decision- and policymakers as a foundation for improving the macro institutions, structures, policies and rules that support the actions and interactions of innovating agents.

Table 1: Key points of emphasis in the PAEPARD Capacity Building Strategy at the individual, organizational and systems level

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared passions • Agreed roles • Sharing of information • Effective communication • Commitment and focus • Mutual respect • Flexibility to adapt • Trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared vision, interdependence and complementarity • Strong endorsement and consistent support from senior leadership • Appropriate institutional and individual benefits • Investment in human and social capital • Resource sharing and joint resource mobilization • Good practices for scaling up and institutionalization • Dynamic strategy formulation • A learning culture • Distribution of power 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A system to broker/facilitate the interaction between individuals and organizations • A large degree of freedom in the decision-making processes • Delegation as well as demanding of responsibility • Support for the development of leadership and commitment • Flexibility for adjusting organizational structures • Allocation of tasks and roles of organizations according to process rather than a hierarchical administrative structure
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2. Capacity Development needs and priorities of multi-stakeholder actors in ARD

Consultation with African stakeholders in implementation of PAEPARD were conducted, the capacity needs, and priorities identified are indicated in Table 2. A series of convening events and 'learning-loops' were conducted with emphasis on equipping partners with skills to identify and respond to Calls for proposals and mobilize resources (Project/Proposal Development Write-shops) to implement their innovative ideas linked to the research priorities identified.



Capacity building in project proposal development was a key priority area and the implementation process was appreciated by partners

The other training/capacity building events focused on systematic interventions. Systematic interventions were preferred since they consider capacity building not just as a conventional training of individuals but deepened engagement of people in learning

processes that enable them to work in teams to perform their best within their respective partnership/organizational environment.

3. Lessons learned

- Through the “first” and “slow” track, the PAEPARD established 19 consortia and also focusing on the user-led process (ULP) reinvigorated activities of the Pan African Farmer Organizations (PAFO), that is the sub-regional farmers organizations (EAFF, SACAU, ROPAC, PROPAC, and UMAGRI)¹. The PAEPARD capacity building process has strengthened and made the FOs and NGOs more attractive for investment. They have won grants and are successfully implementing a portfolio of projects. For example, the sub-regional FOs are through PAFO implementing the “Support to Farmers’ Organizations in Africa Programme (SFOAP). The SFOAP implementation entails engagement of subsidiaries of sub-regional farmer organisations (Table 3). Consortia in Eastern, Central, West and Southern Africa are implementing projects supported either through PAEPARD Competitive Research Fund or bilateral donor funding. Nonetheless, several of the other consortia established did not secure resources to facilitate the partnership to implement project ideas. This further demonstrated the fact that continued partnership engagement is premised on implementation of activities and without resources, the partnership largely remained virtual platforms.
- The critical success factors for winning grant funding as demonstrated by the ULPs and Consortia that received grant funding included among others (a) flexibility and readiness to strategically recruit and/ or expand partnerships and adjust research agenda to align with expectations outlined in the respective Call for Proposals. Particularly for the Consortia, it was difficult to remain focused on the original value chains based on which they were enlisted in PAEPARD. Fortunately, the

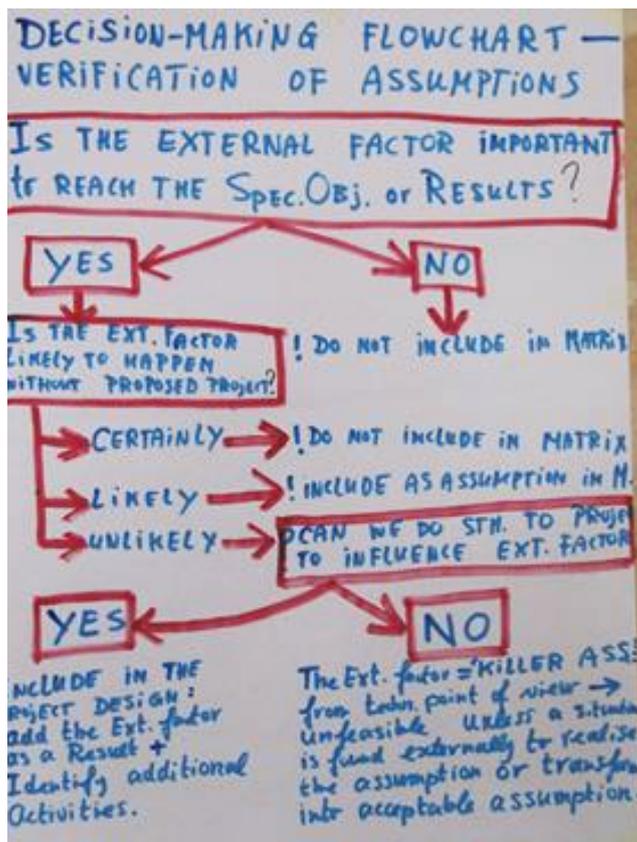
Table 2: Capacity needs matched with research priorities

Capacity Needs	Research Priorities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning • Policy analysis and research • Partnership formation brokerage and networking • Knowledge management • Resource mobilization/proposal writing • Convening dialogue/farmer mobilization • Human resource management/ technical expertise • Regional integration in programming • Markets and market linkages • Postharvest handling/ value addition • Financial Reporting • Corporate governance • Communication and public relations • Strategic planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food security <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Postharvest technologies - Animal husbandry - Aquaculture - Environment and climate change • Knowledge management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Indigenous knowledge - Documentation of innovations - Transfer of technologies - ICT and management information systems • Institutional development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monitoring and Evaluation - Capacity building of technical personnel/human resource development - Mobilization of farmers and policy advocacy - Corporate governance - Partnerships and Networking

¹ PAFO members are five (5) regional organizations of small farmers in Africa namely: EAFF (Eastern African Farmers Federation), PROPAC (Regional Platform of Farmers’ and Producers’ Organizations of Central African), ROPPA (Network of Farmers’ and Agricultural Producers’ Organisations of West Africa); SACAU (Southern African Confederation of Agricultural Unions) and UMAGRI (North African Farmers’ Union).



commodity value chains and associated research for development focus being addressed are priorities at respective national levels and will strategically contribute to the accelerated achievements of the global agenda on Food and Nutritional Security. In line with this observation, it is important for MSPs to align their broader objectives to global frameworks and prepare to engage in various commodity values chains and not just one commodity. This provides opportunity for attracting partners and resources to support undertakings.



Participatory engagements in development projects focused on equipping partners to identify and arrive at informed decision in the process of respond to Calls

- The five PAFO members engaged in PAEPARD have sub-regional mandates with membership at national level. This provides a model for greater and effective reach of PAEPARD interventions. In the case of consortia, the selected institutions were mainly focused at national level priorities with the exception of a few that had members cutting across borders. The national level focus limited the scope of expansion to create opportunities to respond to Calls for proposals that in most cases necessitated regional collaboration.

- Participation of European Practitioner organizations in established MSP was less than expected. This was mainly because of home institutional limitations that would not allow for match-funding arrangements. Most Calls for Proposals require both “in-kind” and “own” contribution from partner institutions. While the “in-kind” contribution (e.g., staff-time, office space, etc.) is common practice both in Africa and Europe, there are no budgets at European partner institutional level to cover the up to 20% own contributions required in matched-funding arrangements. Even in the case of Africa Partners, most research for development activities are donor funded and the “own contribution” was in most cases opportunity to leverage resources from different funding streams.
- Among the private sector stakeholders in Europe (mainly fresh produce export-import), there was generally a poor appreciation of what researchers can offer to respond to their needs, in a timeframe and with practical results that can help solve the challenges faced by business. Therefore, there is a strong need for appropriate platforms for regular and structured dialogue between operators and researchers on clearly targeted issues. This presents opportunity for practitioner organizations to work with knowledge institutions (such as Universities and Research Institutes) and support placements of young scholars to undertake research and experiential learning.

4. Conclusion and recommendations

Partnership development takes time, and it is important to in-build sufficient time-periods for inception activities. While donors judge project proposals on the quality and strength of the partnerships, rarely are time and funds made available at the outset to develop and build those partnerships. In terms of MSPs rather than establish new partnerships it would be more plausible for the PAEPARD and other institutions/ programmes with similar mission to work through the multiplicity of small farmers organizations (Table 3) that comprise the membership of PAFO’s member institutions and empower them to effectively contribute to desired impacts.

Several research for development partners consider non-research stakeholders only as target beneficiaries. Consequently, most calls for proposals do not accommodate non- research stakeholders as equal partners in design and implementation of research for development projects. Meaningful involvement of non-research actors in the design and implementation of ARD programmes promotes adoption of best practice. Policy decision-makers and donors to consider inclusive ARD partnerships with opportunity as appropriate for non-research stakeholders (FOs, private sector/industry and NGOs) leading such partnerships.

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Table 3. Members of PAFo and their subsidiaries

EAFF	Syndicat Rwandais des Agriculteurs et Eleveurs (INGABO), Rwanda	PROPAC	ROPFA	SACAU	UMAGRI
Confédération des Associations des Producteurs Agricoles pour le Développement (CAPAD), Burundi	National Co-operative Confederation of Rwanda (NCCR), Rwanda	Confederação das associacoes de camponeses cooperativas agropecuarias de Angola (UNACA), Angola	Plate-forme Nationale des Organisations Paysannes et des producteurs Agricoles du Bénin (NNOPPA), Benin	Botswana Agricultural Union (BAU), Botswana	Union Nationale des Paysans Algériens (UNPA), Algeria
Djibouti Agro-Pastoralist Association, Djibouti Cooperative Centrale du Nord-Kivu (COOCENKI), DRC	South Sudan Agricultural Producers Union (SSAPU), South Sudan	Concertation Nationale des Organisations Paysannes du Burundi (CNOP Burundi), Burundi	Confédération paysanne du Faso (CPF), Burkina Faso	Lesotho National Agricultural Union ENAFU), Lesotho	Central Agricultural Cooperative Union (CACU), Egypt
Fédération des organisations Producteurs du Congo au Nord-Kivu (FOPAC), DRC	Uganda National Farmers' Federation (UNFFE), Uganda	Concertation Nationale des Organisations Paysannes du Cameroun (CNOP-CAM), Cameroon	National Coordinating Organisation for Farmer Associations of The Gambia (NACOFAG), Gambia	Confédération des Agriculteurs Malagasy (FEKRITAMA), Madagascar	Syndicat Général des Agriculteurs et Eleveurs Libyens, Libya
Ligue Des Organisations Des Femmes Paysannes Du Congo (LOFEPACO), DRC	Uganda Co-operative Alliance (UCA), Uganda	Conseil National de Concertation des Producteurs Ruraux du Tchad (CNCPR), Chad	Farmers Organisations Network of Ghana (FONG), Ghana	Farmers' Union of Malawi, Malawi	Fédération Mauritanienne de l'Agriculture, Mauritania
Syndicat De Defense Des Interests Paysans (SYDIP), DRC	National Union for Coffee Agribusinesses and Farm Enterprise (NUCAFE), Uganda	Conseil national des Organisations Paysannes de Guinée (CNOP-G), Guinea	Conseil National de Concertation des Producteurs Ruraux du Tchad (CNCPR), Chad	National Smallholder Farmers' Association of Malawi, Malawi	Union Marocaine de l'Agriculture (UMA), Morocco
Oromia Coffee Farmers Co-operative Union (OCFCU), Ethiopia	Mtandao wa Vikundi Vya Wakulima wa Tanzania (MVIWATA), United Rep. of Tanzania	Concertation Nationale des Organisations Paysannes de Centrafrique (CNOP CAF), Central African Republic	Quadro nacional de Concertação das Organizações Camponeses e produtores agrícolas da Guiné Bissau (QCOPGB), Guinea Bissau	Uniao Nacional de Componesses, Mozambique	Sudanese Farmers and Pastoralists Union, Sudan
Oromia Pastoralists Association, Ethiopia National Confederation of Eritrean Workers (NCEW), Eritrea	Tanzania Federation of Co-operatives (TFC), United Rep. of Tanzania	Concertation Nationale des Organisations Paysannes du Congo (CNOP Congo), Congo	Association nationale des Organisations de Producteurs agricoles de Côte d'Ivoire (ANOPACI), Ivory Coast	Namibia National Farmers' Union (NNFU), Namibia	Union Tunisienne de l'Agriculture et de la Pêche (UTAP), Tunisia
Kenya National Federation of Agricultural Producers (KENFAP), Kenya	Agricultural Council of Tanzania (ACT), United Rep. of Tanzania	Federation Nationale des Organisations Paysannes de la Guinée Equatoriale (FENOCGE), Equatorial Guinea	Liberian farmers Union Network, Liberia	Namibia Agricultural Union, Namibia	
Kenya Livestock Producers Association (KLPA), Kenya Co-operative Alliance of Kenya (CAK), Kenya		Confédération Paysanne du Congo (COPACO), DRC	Coordination nationale des Organisations paysannes du Mali (CNOP-M), Mali	Seychelles Farmers' Association (SeyFA), Seychelles	
Rwanda Farmers' Federation (IMBARAGA), Rwanda		Concertation Nationale des Organisations Paysannes du Gabon (CNOP Gabon), Gabon	Plateforme paysanne du Niger (PFP-N), Niger	Agri-South Africa, South Africa	
		Fédération Nationale des Petits Producteurs de Sao Tome et Principe (FENAPA STP), Sao Tomé and Príncipe	Conseil national de Concertation et de Coopération des ruraux (CNCR), Senegal	Swaziland National Agricultural Union (SNAU), Swaziland	
			National Farmers Association of Sierra Leone (NAFSL), Sierra Leone	Agricultural Council of Tanzania (ACT), United Rep. of Tanzania	
			Coordination togolaise des Organisations paysannes et de Producteurs agricoles (CTOP), Togo	Zambia National Farmers' Union (ZNFU), Zambia	
				Zimbabwe Farmers' Union (ZFU), Zimbabwe	
				Commercial Farmers' Union, Zimbabwe	



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