



Introduction

- Study on partnership between Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and the Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Southern Africa (ASARECA).
- A sub-regional not-for-profit association of the National Agricultural Research Systems (NARS) of 11 countries in Eastern and Central Africa: Burundi, DRC, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Rwanda, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda.

Functions of ASARECA

- Develop a shared vision among stakeholders.
- Coordinate collective action for ARD at sub-regional level and empower end users of ASARECA's programmes.
- Contribute to the development of appropriate knowledge, methodologies, information and technologies.
- Facilitate the transfer of knowledge, information and technology.

Functions of ASARECA (contd)

- Mobilize and allocate resources for agricultural research, training and education.
- Facilitate efficient operation of the NARS at the national level and the sharing of research outputs and benefits among NARS.
- Work towards the conservation of natural resources and the adoption of improved methods of agricultural production.

MECHANISMS FOR NGOs AND FOs PARTICIPATION



GOVERNANCE
STRUCTURES

PLANNING
PROCESSES

PROJECT DEVPT &
IMPLEMENTATION

Challenges: Participation in governance structures

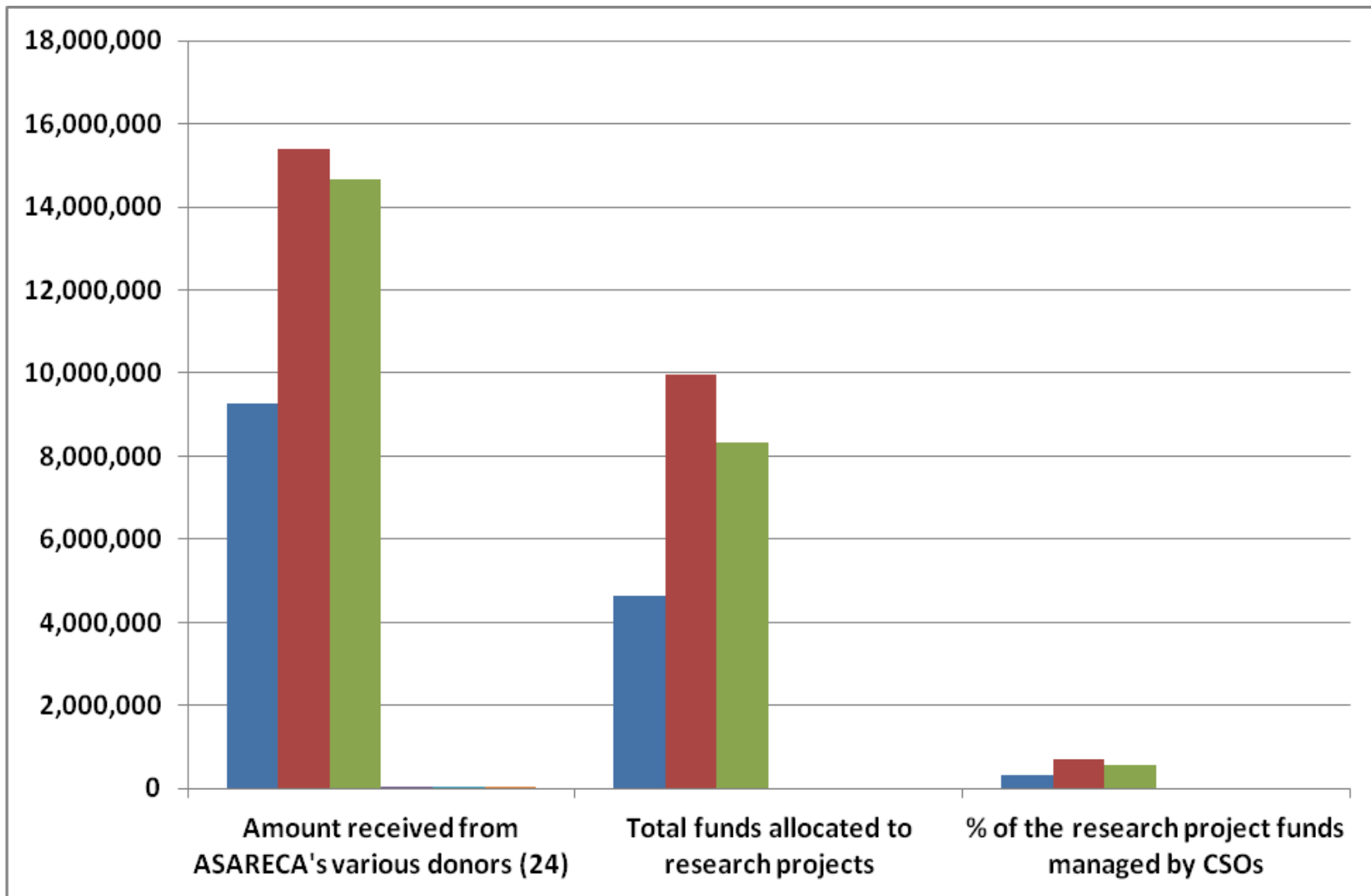
- **General Assembly:** No consultations, no feedback mechanisms and no link between FOs and NGOs in ARD.
- **Board of Directors:** FOs that are affiliated to EAFF are represented on the Board but other FOs are not. There is also no mechanism for the NGO representative to report to NGOs.
- **Business committee:** Representatives do not draw their mandate from the CSOs in ARD.

Challenges: Participation in planning processes

- CSOs not included in the development of ASARECA's overall strategy and in development of research agenda therefore.
- There is no mechanism for CSOs that do not participate in the programme strategy development workshops to give their input.

Challenges: Participation in research projects

- Lack of awareness about ASARECA.
- Very short deadlines for submission of concept notes (CNs).
- Lack of qualified scientists to lead research projects.
- Lack of capacity to develop fundable research proposals.
- Inadequate structures and systems to meet World Bank/ASARECA's reporting requirements.



CSO participation in research projects in 2010

Programme	No of CSOs	No of NARIs	Total No of institutions
Staple Crops	33	27	75
High Value Non-Staple Crops	0	9	13
Agro-biodiversity and Biotechnology	0	2	4
Natural Resources Management and Biodiversity	7	12	26
Policy Analysis and Advocacy	11	34	47
Knowledge Management and Up-Scaling	1	3	6

Challenges: Effective partnerships

- Lack of common interests and shared expectations among FOs, NGOs, NARIs, and training institutions.
- Lack of coordination and collaboration among NGOs and FOs so as to be able to play a meaningful role in ARD, learn from each other's experience and influence ARD research towards increased focus on family farming and sustainable agriculture.
- Lack of mutual respect, transparency and accountability between researchers and CSOs and between NGOs and FOs.

Challenges: Effective partnerships (contd)

- Delays in implementing planned activities due to a large number of partners and due to bureaucracies in the NARIs.
- High staff turn-over among national NGOs that requires regular and on-going training in partnership building to get staff on track.
- Lack of experience of CSOs working with NARIs and universities and vice versa.
- Lack of documentation of successful research projects involving CSOs.

Challenges: Effective partnerships (contd)

- Lack of awareness (among ASARECA staff) about the capacity and financial challenges of national NGOs.
- Most scientists attached to research projects are busy and do not delegate their responsibilities when unavailable leading to delays in project implementation.
- Scientists working within the narrow sphere of scientific research and not as development and change agents.
- Scientists having a tendency not to fully share research processes/research outputs.

Challenges: Participation in technology uptake

- Lack of strategies for involvement in research and for up-scaling research innovations.
- Inability of national CSOs to provide co-funding for research projects and for up-scaling research innovations.
- Lack of appreciation of the AIS approach that brings together all stakeholders along a production value chain.
- Lack of user-friendly publications and unnecessary delays in developing simple publications that can be used by smallholder farmers.
- Lack of skills in communication, planning, market development and M&E.

Challenges: Influencing agricultural policies

- Limited CSO engagement with ASARECA's Policy Analysis and Advocacy and Agro-Biodiversity and Biotechnology programmes.
- Lack of an open and constructive dialogue between ASARECA and CSOs on sustainable agriculture.
- ASARECA's extensive involvement in the promotion of GMOs which is not appreciated by CSOs who are promoting family farming and sustainable agriculture.

Recommendations: Participation in governance structures and planning processes

- Both FOs and NGOs create a coordination body and be able to speak with one voice.
- Elect leaders at sub-regional level to represent CSOs in ASARECA's governing bodies.
- Engage with ASARECA and agree on representation of elected leaders in governing bodies and planning processes.

Recommendations: Participation in research projects

- Through the CSO networks, create awareness about ASARECA's mandate, roles and programmes.
- Through CSO representatives on governing bodies, lobby ASARECA to circulate CNs among CSO networks and for more time to develop CNs.
- Mobilise resources and build the capacity of CSOs in developing fundable proposals with hypothesis to be tested and methodology to be used.

Recommendations: Effective partnerships

- Mobilise resources and train a pool of trainers for building partnerships with various stakeholders in ARD including FOs, NARIs, universities, local and central governments.
- FOs and NGOs need to engage at national and sub-regional levels and come up with strategies for working together and speaking with one voice.
- ASARECA to document and share examples of partnerships that have added value through good collaboration with various stakeholders.

Recommendation: Effective partnerships (contd)

- ASARECA to identify potential partnerships in ARD and nurture these partnerships.
- Create awareness and lobby research institutions for mutual respect, transparency and equality of all partners.
- Initiate the signing of MoUs with ASARECA and research and training institutions for cooperation and capacity building.

Recommendations: Technology uptake

- Package research innovations and develop joint proposals for up-scaling such innovations.
- Lobby the European Commission for support towards a comprehensive capacity building programme and long-term support for up-scaling research innovations.
- ASARECA to produce more publications and audio-visuals that meet farmers' needs.

Recommendations: Technology uptake (contd)

- Document the Catholic Relief Services case study on leading scientific research and circulate it widely.
- ASARECA to establish linkages with CSO networks and work with them to upscale research innovations.

Recommendations: influencing policies

- Mobilise resources for training CSOs in advocacy and lobbying skills.
- Deepen awareness of national, sub-regional and international policies and frameworks and work with organisations involved in advocacy on such issues to avoid duplication.

Recommendations: Influencing policies (contd)

- CSO networks need to engage with ASARECA on issue of GMOs and the possible impact on sustainable agriculture.
- Partner with ASARECA's Policy Analysis and Advocacy Programme to influence policies and frameworks that affect smallholder farmers.

Conclusion

CSOs involvement in research projects contributes significantly to smallholder farmers benefiting from research interventions. There are however major challenges related to partnership between the different stakeholders in ARD which need to be addressed. If the different stakeholders can work as equal partners in research, they will come up with innovations that meet the goal of benefitting smallholder farmers.

Thank you!!!