



**Integrated agricultural research for  
development (IAR4D) multi-stakeholder  
Innovation Platform (IP) Processes**



## Preface

The preparation of this document on IAR4D multi-stakeholder principles and IP processes was a result of:

- The experiences and lessons learnt on Conseil ouest et centre africain pour la recherche et le développement agricole/ West and Central Africa Council for Agricultural Research and Development (CORAF/WECARD) and National agricultural research systems (NARS) management and implementation of the Integrated Agricultural Research for Development (IAR4D) multi-stakeholder processes using innovation platform (IP) as one of the key tools for participatory and collective action to facilitate livelihood or development impact initiatives, and
- The Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa's (FARA) internally commissioned review of the Sub-Saharan Africa Challenge Program (SSA CP), as well as the CTA's Agriculture Science & Technology Innovations (ASTI) training module.

Multi-stakeholder processes including IAR4D and IP have been developed with differences reflecting context specific conditions and preferences. This document is not a blue print but a guide.

## 1. Principles of IAR4D

A variety of Integrated Agricultural Research for Development (IAR4D) multi-stakeholder Innovation Platform (IP) frameworks and processes have been developed with differences reflecting individual conditions, preferences, context, and specificity. In adopting the IAR4D multi-stakeholder process within the context of the innovations systems, four “defining principles” were proposed.

IAR4D integrates:

- the perspectives, knowledge and actions of different stakeholders around a common theme
- the learning that stakeholders achieve through working together
- analysis, action and change across the economic, social, environmental, and livelihoods and welfare of end users and consumers
- analysis, action and change at different levels of spatial, economic, and social organisation

Adherence to these principles is measured by the degree to which the following five “process principles” have been achieved.

- Existence of an IP that serves as the platform to diagnose problems, explore opportunities and investigate solutions. The diverse social and economic IP actors are facilitated in order to bring about mutually desirable change through competencies, skills, and incentives to jointly innovate through learning by doing, to address constraints and opportunities based on priority entry-point(s) and/or value chain segmentation; and this defines the type of IP(s)
- Non-linear collective and collaborative interaction among IP actors instead of the linear researcher-extension-farmer technology transfer model
- Research for development that addresses priority key constraints and opportunities agreed by IP actors based on value chains
- A process that is multidisciplinary and participatory including participatory approaches and dissemination pathways such as those influenced by markets
- Institutional and human capacity strengthening for IAR4D actors through systemic experiential learning and sharing of best practice

## **1.2 Factors contributing to success of IPs**

They include:

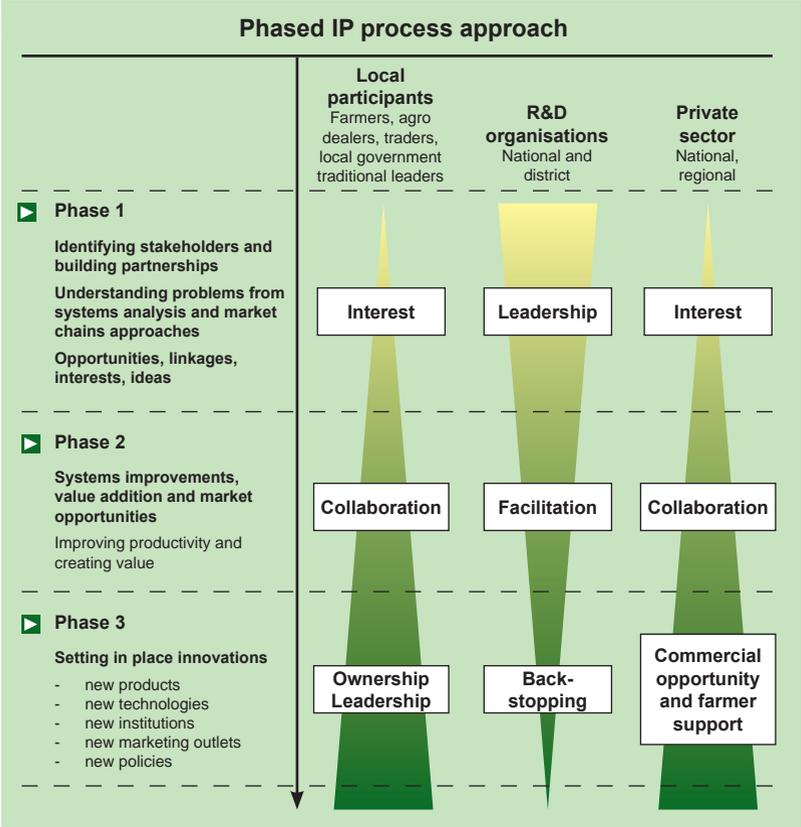
- measurable quantitative or qualitative interest of the key actors
- trust, confidence and understanding between and among IP actors
- good leadership and facilitation skills of the facilitating institution and focal person(s)
- good communication and networking skills of the diverse economic and social actors
- equity and timely access to resources, buy-in, commitment and ownership by downstream actors
- time and availability of individuals and groups especially the private sector
- drivers and/or champions of change
- participatory and/or collective action approaches and learning tools

- dissemination pathways and critically, market-led pathways
- functional learning through joint analysis, documentation, and learning and sharing of experiences and knowledge
- facilitating and managing perceptions, competing interests, risks, access to resources and lack of incentives among the diverse social and economic IP actors

### **1.3 IAR4D Partnership arrangements and processes of SSA CP**

**Phase 1** encompassed two main stages. During the first stage, the interested R&D institutions begin the process of identifying and establishing a research theme and stakeholder roles. During this process capacity strengthening of participating organisations was undertaken including researchers from NARS, International Agricultural Research Centres (IARCs), FARA/subregional research organisations (SROs) and development agencies (extension services), non-governmental organisations (NGOs), staff of Ministries of Agriculture and national farmer representatives, where they existed and wished to participate. Shortly thereafter, Task Forces (TFs) identified the geographical areas where intervention is likely to take place. During the second stage of Phase 1, local stakeholders including farmers and farmers' groups, local extension workers, local input dealers, NGOs, district or local government authorities became active participants upon invitation by the R&D organizations. This process sought to obtain common understanding of challenges/opportunities, existing linkages, interests and ideas for intervention in the selected areas through systems and value chain analysis and identification of opportunities for action. A conceptual framework for the establishment of the IPs is presented in Figure 1, showing a three phase approach with multiple steps.

**Phase 2** confirmed the roles of different partners, and in some IPs, bye-laws were agreed upon, defining objectives and partner roles. This promoted the deepening of understanding around common priorities and development and implementation of an action plan. Research activities that would ultimately result in technology development were initiated on a participatory basis. Participatory learning through assessment of performance and progress would also take place. At the same time, input and output markets including financial opportunities were assessed and linkages established. During the IAR4D process, continued learning occurred, becoming part of a local monitoring and



*Figure 1: Conceptual framework for IP establishment and functioning at the Sub-Saharan Africa Challenge Programme sites*

evaluation system that encouraged assessment and learning from process and practice. Field days were organised for learning, and for assessment of performances.

**Phase 3** allows IPs to assess the performance of innovations in terms of new policies, new institutions, capacity needs, technologies developed, market linkages, and information and knowledge flows.

### 1.3.1 IAR4D IP process and key steps of the SSA CP

#### **Phase 1 – stage 1**

##### ***Preparatory phase for IP formation - Engagement***

Establish existing situation

Policies, institutions, capacities, existing plans and ongoing initiatives

Capacity building, supporting, lobbying and backstopping

FARA/SRO/Participating IARCs, NARS and other/national support groups

Identification of areas, site selection and process facilitation

IP task forces

#### **Phase 1 – stage 2**

##### ***Engagement with stakeholders – seeking a common understanding of opportunities for agricultural development***

Creating a common vision, understanding and vision, buy-in and trust

Deepening discussion through awareness raising and knowledge inputs

Prioritisation of constraints and opportunities, deepening understanding around common priorities

Value chain and systems analysis

Identification of opportunities for action

#### **Phase 2**

##### ***Action planning – deepening understanding around common priorities***

Development of district and community level action plans

Clarifying and agreeing roles of different stakeholders

##### ***Participatory learning and action research – through multi-stakeholder action***

Technology development, adaptive research backed by strategic research, if necessary

Assessing input and output markets including financial opportunities

Participatory learning

##### ***Assessment and learning from process and practice [Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)]***

Assessment of performance and progress

Use of Field days and interactive media

Learning lessons and adapting for improvement of process and practice

Policies, institutions, capacities, technologies, markets, information flows

#### **Phase 3**

##### ***Adapting and re-planning – reassessing priorities, plans and activities***

Improving innovations

Policies, institutions, capacities, technologies, markets, information flows

#### **Next cycle (Phase 1-3)**

Engagement, action planning, participatory learning, assessment, adapting and re-planning

## 2. Innovation Platform

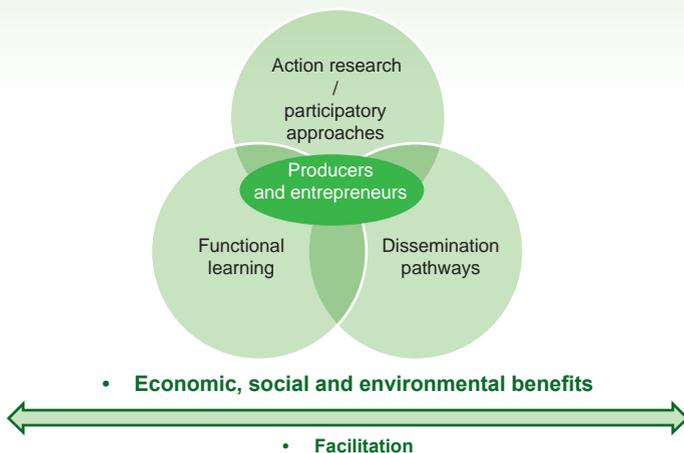
Innovation platform has been defined in many ways. It comprises stakeholders and/or collaborators of diverse social and economic actors and the institutions that govern their behaviour, all working towards a common objective. In principle, the platform considers innovation as a dynamic systemic process and recognises that innovation can emerge from many sources, complex interactions, and knowledge flows.

Frameworks were developed as shown in the diagram to inform ARD actors on perspectives and thinking needed to establish the IPs. The IP tools (Figs. 2, 3 and 4) aim to enhance NARS capacity to generate innovations in a systematic and dynamic way, based on quantitative and qualitative information and data. This way, the NARS will contribute to knowledge generation and dissemination, and hopefully impact rural livelihoods, especially of the poor.

While Figure 2 informs the creation of a researcher-managed knowledge generation and dissemination IP, Figures 3 and 4 on 'innovation platform for technology adoption (IPTA)' along value chains specifically target widescale dissemination and adoption of successful agricultural best bets (technologies, innovations and best bet practices) by producers, processors and entrepreneurs along value chains.

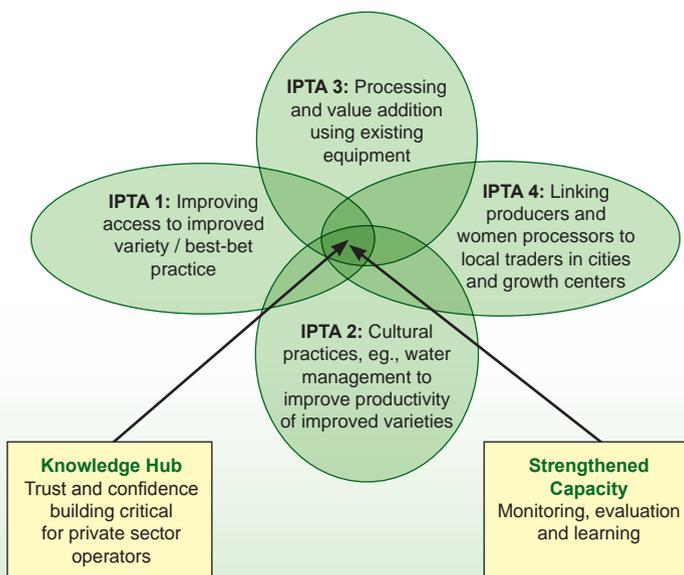
The researcher-managed IP (Fig.2) suggests the facilitation of the IP through the active participation of relevant interest groups and actors at the earliest practical and most cost effective stage of technology, innovation and/ or best bet practice development. The IP process on any given constraint or opportunity should be based on priority(ies) and evidence-based segmentation on interventions necessary to address the problem or take advantage of the opportunity. These segments of the priority(ies) that are effectively the various stages of the IP technology or best bet practice development process, are all interconnected and linked throughout the innovation process through experiential learning and sharing. The IPs should be dynamic and be able to analyse interests, interactions, and relationships taking into account; perceptions, competing interests, risks, access to resources, and lack of incentives among the diverse social and economic actors. The process should ensure forward and backward linkages between and among each segment of the technology and/ or best bet practice under development.

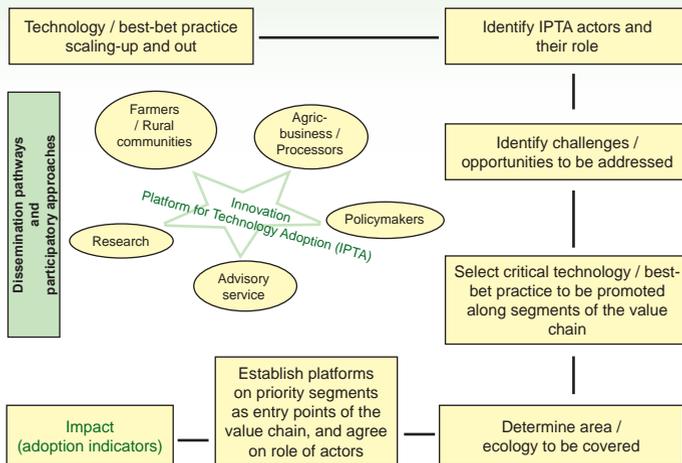




*Figure 2. Innovation Platform model for generating and using knowledge*

*Figure 3. Innovation Platform for Technology Adoption (IPTA) on value chains*





**Figure 4. Setting up Innovation Platform for Technology Adoption (IPTA)**

### 3. Types of innovation

- Technological innovations
- Institutional innovations
- Market innovations
- Policy innovations

### 4. Key success stories on IPTA: the case of Burkina Faso

- “We used to conduct isolated small scale tests with INERA. When we adopted the IPTA approach in 2008 through INERA facilitation however, we had more interactions with all relevant stakeholders on the maize value chain and within 2years, we inspired commercial production of certified seed maize among farmers. Today, we are witnessing the emergence of seed maize farmer entrepreneurs each producing 3-6 tons of quality seed maize per ha”. Dagano Moussa Joseph, President FEPPASI (farmer organization) Province de la Sissili, Burkina Faso
- “We have reached a stage of our evolution (FEPPASI) whereby farmer households are at the level of entrepreneurship skills development in seed maize production and commercialisation of grain maize. Our challenge is the governance of producer entrepreneurship”... Dagano Moussa Joseph, President FEPPASI (farmer organisation) Province de la Sissili, Burkina Faso

- “Before our engagement with the IPTA process, processors and maize farmers had mistrust and lack of confidence over grain maize price. When we engaged in the IPTA process, we agreed to conduct joint analysis of a fair profit margin for both parties based on our respective investments. Evidence showed that both parties are making profit on their investments and processors are making a difference of only CFA 1.00 over and above the profit margin of the producers”...Biago Samssonna, President de ATCB (Processor organization of Burkina Faso)
- “I cultivated 5 ha of hybrid maize Bondofa because I know that I have a reliable market and will make a profit. I will therefore be able to afford hybrid seed for subsequent seasons” ... certified seed producer -- Zogdia Moctare, Burkina Faso
- “Last year, the seed certification service tested my seed maize harvest and reported 98% germination and I was very happy and proud, and made money” ...certified seed producer -- Alaji Nabii Sayoba, Burkina Faso
- “I joined the IPTA to improve my skills on maize production in order to increase my yields. I used to harvest 10 bags of 50 kg grain maize per ha, which increased to over 50 bags of 50 kg grain maize per ha and now, my yields are 5-6 tons per ha” ...emerging seed maize farmer entrepreneur -- Daouda, Burkina Faso
- “We should institutionalise learning visits because this makes us visualise and learn practical skills on the functioning of the IPTA model or tool along the value chain including interactions and relationships between and among platform actors; and the expected outputs and outcomes”..... Dissemination of New Agricultural Technologies in Africa (DONATA) Focal Persons of Cote d’Ivoire, Mali, Congo Brazzaville, Sierra Leone, Senegal, Liberia, Benin, Chad, Gambia, Guinea Conakry, Niger
- Within 2-years 1,245 ha, including 85 ha of certified hybrid and OPV seed maize, was cultivated by farmers of FEPASSI and average yields of 3.5-4.5 tons per ha was obtained across IPTAs at different localities /communities...DONATA/Institut de l’environnement et de recherch e agricoles (INERA)

#### **Acknowledgement**

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## Vision

A sustainable reduction in poverty and food insecurity in West and Central Africa through increased agriculture-led economic growth and improvements in key aspects of the agricultural research system

## Mission

Sustainable improvements in agricultural productivity, competitiveness and markets in West and Central Africa by meeting the key demands of the sub-regional research system as expressed by target groups

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