



SCARDA



SCARDA

(Strengthening Capacity for Agricultural Research and Development in Africa)

Annual Report 2009

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Foreword

The programme on Strengthening Capacity in Agricultural Research and Development in Africa (SCARDA) commenced in April 2007. Its purpose is to improve the capacity and performance of participating NARS in key areas of their agricultural research for development functions.

The Year 2009 was characterized by two donor-commissioned SCARDA programme reviews: Mid-Term Review (MTR) conducted in April 2009 followed by an Update Review in September 2009. The recommendations of the MTR had far-reaching implications on the continuity of the Programme, and this necessitated an urgent Programme-wide Strategies and Lesson-learning (PSL) Workshop, which was convened in late April 2009 to harness inputs from all the project partners to respond appropriately to the recommendations.

The major outcomes of the PSL workshop included:

- Explicit incorporation of change management and mentorship strategies in the programme implementation plans
- Incorporation of cross-cutting and social inclusion issues (e.g. communication and gender mainstreaming)
- Overhaul of programme log frame
- Elaboration and installation of an M&E implementation strategy
- Development and implementation of a new management system

However, even though the partners had a renewed hope of getting the programme back to track as they left the PSL workshop, immediate implementation of the proposed programme changes was not possible due to lack of funds. Indeed, for the same reason, majority of activities outlined in the SCARDA implementation calendar for 2009 were held in abeyance. This inability to continue with project implementation due to erratic funding occasioned a sense of disillusionment among partners. FARA only managed to sustain some critical activities such as the M.Sc. training and management obligations. Partial pre-financing by ASARECA also enabled implementation of some planned activities in the SRO.

The other factor that hampered activity implementation at SRO and FI levels was delay in enlisting service providers. Notably, engagement of the LSP for SADC/FANR and the service provider for ARM workshops in ASARECA were only finalised well into the year.

Despite these difficulties, the programme registered some modest achievements towards output delivery. The gains of programme implementation highlighted in this Report arose mainly from

intermittent activity implementation in the first and last two quarters of the year. It is also noteworthy that a new programme management system was installed in the latter half of the year and has evidently served to improve coordination, planning and reporting.

It was only in late December 2009 when the donor implemented the new funding mode involving pre-financing through direct disbursement of funds to the SROs as was recommended in the MTR Report. The receipt of project funds by the SROs brought optimism and renewed spirit amongst partners; but most of the activities initially planned for 2009 had to be reconsolidated for full implementation in 2010.

Dr. Monty Jones

Executive Director, FARA





1. Background information

Title of Research Programme:	Strengthening Capacity for Agricultural Research and Development in Africa (SCARDA)
Period Covered by Report:	1 January–31 December 2009
Name of Lead Institution and Director:	Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) – Dr. Monty Jones
Key Partners:	
SROs	ASARECA, SADC/FANR, CORAF/WECARD
LSPs/SP	NRI, RUFORUM, ANAFE, AGRHYMET
Countries Covered by Research:	Rwanda, Burundi, Sudan, Botswana, Lesotho, Zambia, Mali, Ghana, Democratic Republic of the Congo, The Gambia.

	Planned	Actual
Start Date:	1 January 2008	14 March 2008
End Date:	30 June 2010	30 June 2010
Total Programme Budget:	Sterling £ 7, 845,360	Sterling £ 7, 845,360



2. Summary

2.1 SCARDA Output Statements

The SCARDA programme, funded by the UK's Department for International Development (DFID), is envisioned to achieve the following: *Output 1* - agricultural research management systems and managerial competencies to conduct high quality research strengthened in participating national agricultural research systems (NARS); *Output 2* – the capacity of participating NARS to undertake quality agricultural research for development strengthened; *Output 3* - the relevance of training programmes in agricultural universities to current market demand established; *Output 4* – SCARDA approach for capacity strengthening is validated. The programme was designed to simultaneously deliver on the four outputs in three sub-regions of Sub-Saharan Africa, viz.: ASARECA, CORAF/WECARD and SADC/FANR. Anticipated benefits of SCARDA implementation relate mainly to ultimate improvements in institutional, organizational, and human capacities, including strategies that improve agricultural research and innovations to meet the needs of the poor.

2.2 Agricultural Research Management, Change Management, and Mentorship

A generic agricultural research management (ARM) strategy was developed, at the programme level, from the institutional analyses initially conducted in the various Focal Institutions (FIs). The ARM strategy involves a series of workshops that include tailor-made management training and mentorships to deliver on Output 1. The workshops help participants develop change management action plans (CMAPs) to catalyze beneficial change for the FIs. CORAF/WECARD was the first to begin implementing ARM workshops, in late 2008. Momentum was sustained in the SRO into 2009 and culminated in the second ARM workshop in March 2009. This workshop enabled participants to finalize the CMAPs they had drafted during the first ARM workshop. The final CMAPs for each FI outlined the constraints and risks for implementation, a list of actions for capacity strengthening (or change), and an implementation plan that would be initiated in succeeding months before a final 'reflective' workshop. However, inadequate funds prevented further ARM implementation in the SRO for the rest of the year.

The ARM strategy in SADC/FANR mirrors that adopted in CORAF/WECARD. As a prelude to the ARM workshops, two change management seminars were held in Zambia and Lesotho during the 2nd project planning quarter of 2009. Participants at these seminars were able to develop draft CMAPs for their respective FIs. Subsequently, the 1st ARM workshop for SADC/FANR was held

in October 2009 at which the participants, mainly senior managers from the FIs, presented their draft CMAPs. The CMAPs will be finalized during the 2nd ARM in 2010.

The ASARECA approach to ARM differs from that of the other two sub-regions. The service provider, PICO Team, maintained that the multi-level nature of desired institutional change required a systemic intervention not amenable to a modular training approach. PICO then modified the generic ARM approach, with no loss to the essence nor intent of the training. This modified approach was ratified at an ASARECA PMT meeting, and subsequently at the SCARDA-ECA Service Providers' Workshop in September 2009. The PICO Team then initiated the first of four learning workshops (for each of the FIs) for the ISAR and ISABU in December 2009. Special topics aimed at instilling change in the FIs were delivered at the workshop, peer learning groups were formed to focus on identified areas for change, and the participants drafted change plans to be critiqued in succeeding learning workshops before implementation.

Senior managers of FIs and SIs in all the three SROs have already been involved in institutional analysis of management issues, have agreed on priority management areas that require strengthening, and are committed to the change management process by attendance at ARM workshops and management short courses. By December 2009, about 270 FI and SI senior staff from the three SCARDA implementing sub-regions had been trained in various management subject areas.

In ASARECA, mentor-mentee pairs were formed during the first round of change management workshops conducted for ISAR and ISABU in 2009. In CORAF/WECARD and SADC/FANR, mentorships have been undertaken through follow-up visits by the service providers (GIMPA and Afrique Communication in CORAF/WECARD and ESAMI in SADC/FANR) and NRI change agents to specific FIs in the sub-regions for further development of draft CMAPs. A regional total of 89 FI staff members were mentored in 2009. The disaggregation of mentorship engagements based on gender, management cadre, and age has not been strictly observed in the project implementation reports.

Although CMAP implementation was disrupted in most of 2009 in CORAF/WECARD due to funding constraints, nascent changes in institutional management systems inspired by the CMAPs were already apparent in some focal countries. For example, the government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo had taken upon itself to build upon SCARDA-mediated institutional changes by reinforcing policies to reform the various agricultural research centres into a NARI.

2.3 Quality Research

The SRO quarterly plans for quality agricultural research for development clearly indicate the range of professional and technician short courses under Output 2. These plans had been derived from initial institutional analyses of participating FIs (and in some SROs, were modified during subsequent deepening institutional analyses) and approved by the respective FI management. Each plan also provides an implementation timeline, milestones, service providers, indicators of achievement, and budget. Implementation milestones for 2009 as detailed in the work plans could not be wholly achieved due to inadequate funding.



SCARDA-sponsored MSc students at KNUST, Kumasi, Ghana, with Dr. Richard Akromah of KNUST (seated centre) and Dr. Nelson Ojjo, SCARDA Program Officer (standing right).

However, a number of professional short courses contributing to Output 2 were held in the various SROs during the year under review. In ASARECA, two training courses in integrated pest management (IPM) were conducted for Rwanda and Burundi. A M&E/Learning and Communications workshop was also held in Kigali from 12th to 16th January 2009. The same workshop was held in Lusaka in the SADC/FANR from 25th – 28th February 2009 and subsequently in Bamako in CORAF/WECARD from 30th March to 2nd April 2009. An Innovation Systems Approach workshop was held for SADC/FANR in Zambia in November, 2009. Two farmer participatory research for development (FPR4D) training courses were also conducted in Botswana and Lesotho, SADC/FANR. By December 2009, 121 participants had undergone professional training in the three SROs; 88% were from FIs and 12% from SIs. A technician training course was conducted only in ASARECA by NaCCRI, Uganda, in November 2009 for 24 technicians; 38% were women (8 each from Burundi, Sudan, and Rwanda. However, disaggregation, or breaking down of participants by FI or SI, gender, and age was not effectively done. The other SROs were not able to launch their technician trainings due to lack of project funds. The satisfaction level expressed by participants at each of the ARM and professional trainings in all the three SROs was higher than 70%.

In ASARECA, 34 SCARDA MSc students, mainly middle cadre FI staff aged 25–35 years, are registered in universities; 10 are women. In SADC/FANR, 17 students are registered for MSc training; 15 are in SRO universities and 2 at the University of Greenwich, UK. Most of the students are aged 25–49 years, mainly scientists at the FIs, with women comprising about 20%. In the CORAF/WECARD, majority of students had secured university placement by December, 2008. However, two students were registered on the NRI-UoG MSc programme in Food Safety & Quality Management in February 2009, making a total of 27 SCARDA-sponsored MSc

students from the sub-region. One student in CORAF/WECARD completed her studies in 2009; most of the remaining students are expected to finish by October 2010.

2.4 Graduate Demand Studies

Initial activities to deliver on Output 3 were mainly initiated in the second quarter of 2009 in all the SROs. However, only in ASARECA could the study be conducted, completed and results and recommendations presented by the service provider to a meeting with deans of faculties of agriculture and vice chancellors of universities, by December 2009.

2.5 The SCARDA Approach and Response to MTR Recommendations

The donor-commissioned SCARDA Mid-Term Review (MTR) was conducted between 16th and 27th February 2009 to provide an overall assessment of progress toward achievement of programme purposes and output delivery, assess the likelihood that the programme would be successful, and recommend changes to ensure success. The MTR Report outlined a number of measures and recommendations to which the project was expected to respond. The Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) organized and held a programme-wide strategies and lesson-learning (PSL) workshop in Accra, Ghana, from 26th April to 1st May, 2009, to address issues in the MTR Report. The PSL proceedings, and how they responded to each MTR recommendation, have been documented. FARA submitted a Revised SCARDA Action Plan to DFID in mid-May 2009. The plan set out how FARA and its partners had already taken actions in response to some MTR recommendations, and how it would address the others. Subsequently, the MTR Update Report, released in October 2009, recommended further actions in certain project management areas. A programme-wide PMT meeting was held on 16 November 2009 to address issues relating to updating the revised logical framework, accelerating the pace of implementation of the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system, population of baselines, testing survey methodologies, making 'storylines' more clear, and preparing M&E reports at the output level.

The SCARDA Management Teams at FARA the Secretariat and SROs all agree that the MTR recommendation for a no-cost extension for another 6 – 12 months is warranted, considering the programme's inordinate delays. A rigid timeline does no justice to the innovativeness of a process-programme like SCARDA, where the work plan necessarily derives from experiences gained after implementation. The new management strategy, developed from MTR recommendations, has streamlined project coordination at all levels. Coupled with timely fund disbursement, the activity turnover to postulated project end-date should unequivocally demonstrate tangible output-to-purpose impacts. Unfortunately, time will not likely allow complete implementation of the envisaged activities. Therefore, if residual funds by June 2010 permit it, there will be need for a no-cost extension.

The PMT concept alluded to above was founded in ASARECA and has since been adopted by the other two SROs and at programme level. The review of programme management systems in SCARDA undertaken in May and June 2009, yielded a new SCARDA management system that was installed in the latter half of the year. The new management system enacts a formal quarterly planning and reporting cycle, bottom-up planning of activities and operational budgets,

top-down accountability to achievement of planned activities, and rigorous financial planning and reporting in a single currency: the pound sterling.

The SCARDA project performance management plan (or M&E strategy) was completed in late January 2009. The plan sets out FARA's responsibilities regarding project performance management, within a framework of agreements with each of the three SROs. An updated performance management plan was later prepared mainly to simplify the original one. Because FARA had no M&E expert until late 2009, NRI— working with the SCARDA Management Team at FARA— continued to ensure that the SCARDA M&E system was installed and functional, in response to the MTR recommendations. The performance management system is now in place and is being used by project partners (although the quality of the reporting needs to be improved).

Proceedings of the PSL workshop include a summary of lessons identified during group discussions. With support from NRI, guidelines for process documentation to consolidate lessons learned by the focal institutions were prepared. In all SROs, the PMTs consolidate lessons learned during SCARDA implementation. Some lessons and experiences, detailed in the PMT minutes, help guide subsequent implementation activities.

2.6 Examples of Positive Change and Achievement of Other Project Output-to-purpose Statements

Employee mid-point surveys carried out in late 2009 indicate that by June 2010, FIs will be able to identify benefits (expected and actual) from specific SCARDA-initiated interventions for change management. Examples of positive change and improved NARS relationships already identified include: *FI staff are oriented to engage more effectively with complex institutional changes; technical staff are included in financial management committees; short-term courses help improve both management and research skills; and farmer participatory research is clear indication of the desire among all key institutions to strengthen linkages so they can deliver their mandates more effectively.* There is evidence that FIs are seeking to more actively engage with other organizations with similar objectives. But only 20% of respondents in the employee mid-point surveys conducted in late 2009 agreed that SCARDA has improved linkages and relations with key stakeholders.

By September 2009, about 42% of FIs had plans for social inclusion. Gender mainstreaming is currently the main social issue being addressed at the FI level through workshop nomination forms to ensure that women participate in the ARM workshops and professional short courses. But the gender balance is still lopsided with only 20% women participation regionally (Annex 1). This shows the under-representation of women in FI managerial positions.

The study findings for graduate demand in ASARECA were disseminated to vice-chancellors and deans of universities only in September, 2009. Graduate demands for the other SROs will hardly be completed and disseminated by June 2010. Therefore, the use of graduate demand study findings by at least 50% of key tertiary education institutions by June 2010 is clearly improbable.

The 'SCARDA approach' will be reviewed and possibly endorsed at a second programme-wide strategies and lesson-learning (PSL 2) workshop in April 2010. The PSL 2 outcome will then be communicated to SRO boards and management of participating NARS for endorsement.



3. Introduction

Strengthening Capacity for Agricultural Research and Development in Africa (SCARDA) is a DFID-funded programme of FARA whose implementation phase commenced in March 2008. The programme has a total budget of Sterling £ 7.8 million and is stipulated to end on 30 June 2010. The purpose of SCARDA is *'to strengthen the institutional and human capacity of African agricultural research and development systems to identify, generate and deliver research outputs that meet the needs of poor people'*. The programme intends to accomplish this purpose by piloting a new integrated and holistic approach (dubbed the 'SCARDA Approach') to institutional and human capacity strengthening involving 12 FIs and their key NARS partners from 10 countries spread across the three sub-regions of Sub Saharan Africa, viz.: ASARECA, CORAF/WECARD and SADC/FANR.

The SCARDA approach is a shift from the traditional view of capacity strengthening as a linear, one-dimensional, and supply-driven process to that of a multi-faceted, facilitated and supported process of sustainable change for whole organisational and institutional strengthening through the provision of tailor-made capacity strengthening packages based on:

- Well-grounded institutional analysis to understand gaps as well as internal and external factors
- Targeted intervention to meet specific capacity constraints
- Wide stakeholder involvement with all actors of the agricultural innovation system at regional, sub-regional and national levels
- In-built responsiveness to unanticipated developments encountered during implementation through a 'do, learn, reflect and improve' approach
- Doing things in a different manner
- Application of new knowledge for greater impact
- Provision of tools and approaches which empowers the partner organisations to address their particular needs

The tailor-made packages of capacity strengthening activities for the FIs address the full range of priority capacity needs in research management, scientific quality, continuing professional development and the collaborative capacity of associated actors in innovation. The capacity strengthening packages also reflect the needs of the development partners of the FIs and participating SI staff. This will strengthen multi-stakeholder partnerships and ensure that the outcomes of SCARDA activities lead to stronger national agricultural innovation systems. SCARDA relies on learning platforms in order to capture lessons and share experiences as a basis for improving its performance and for up- and out-scaling to ensure sustainability.



4. Capacity strengthening outputs

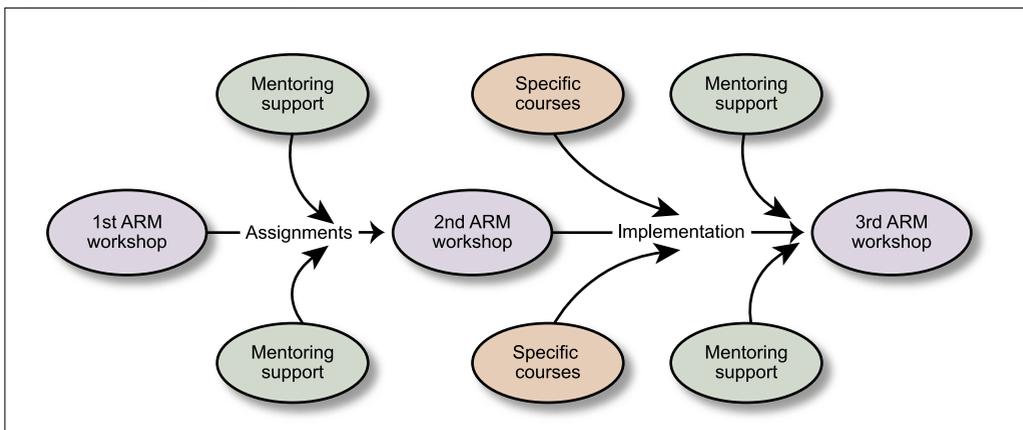
4.1 Output 1: Agricultural Research Management Systems and Managerial Competencies

4.1.1 Strategic ARM capacity development plan developed and fully implemented by March 2010

Initial ARM plans were developed for all implementing sub-regions by June 2009; but these were refined, especially for ASARECA and SADC/FANR, during the second half of the year when the respective service providers for the sub-regions had been engaged.

The CORAF/WECARD sub-region was first to develop strategic ARM capacity development plan involving a series of three workshops ingrained with mentorships and tailor-made professional courses (Fig. 1). This has since been dubbed the ‘transactional approach’ due to its inherently fixative nature¹. The 1st ARM workshop was held in Kumasi, Ghana, from 1st to 6th December 2008. The workshop provided the basic ‘tools’ for ARM to stimulate interest and outline key issues to strengthen capacity. An integral aspect of the workshop was the introduction of CMAPs as the avenue for effecting desired management changes at FIs. The CMAPs will

Figure 1: The Change Management Model in CORAF/WECARD



1. See the Final Mid-Term Review Update Report by Ken Robson

help put theory into practice and consolidate lesson-learning. They will be developed for each FI and supported by individual and institutional mentoring components through direct contacts and visits. Participants developed draft CMAPs at the second ARM workshop, held in Bamako, Mali, from 22nd to 26th March 2009. The third and final ARM workshop series was scheduled for later in 2009, but had to be postponed to 2010 due to continued lack of funding.

In SADC/FANR, the approach to ARM capacity strengthening mirrors that of CORAF/WECARD. It was intended that NRI would leverage experience gained in the two previous CORAF/WECARD workshops to benefit local service providers who would conduct the ARM change management workshops in SADC/FANR. The first sub-regional ARM workshop was held in October 2009 in Gaborone, Botswana. ESAMI was the main facilitator, backstoped by NRI personnel. The workshop was attended by 24 senior managers from all of the FIs as well as senior managers from selected SIs. The workshop delivered on a number of subject themes including change management, strategic management, resource mobilization, and resource management. Draft CMAPs had been developed during previous seminars in Zambia in August and Lesotho in September 2009. The Contact Persons of each FI presented the draft CMAPs during the 1st ARM workshop. It was agreed that these would be further developed for discussion and finalization at the 2nd ARM workshop, now rescheduled for 2010. The priority will then be for the focal institutions to begin rapid implementation of activities so that initial progress could be assessed by the end of the next quarter. It is noteworthy that the change management seminars and ARM workshop in SADC/FANR have included participants from both universities and agricultural research institutes (ARIs) as opposed to only ARIs in the CORAF/WECARD and ASARECA sub-regions.

In ASARECA, the strategic plan for ARM has been developed by the contracted service provider, PICO Team, and implementation is ongoing. The PICO Team’s approach to ARM capacity strengthening is a combined and integrated implementation of change management and mentorship thrusts with an in-country focus (Fig. 2). This method is based on systemic competency development to effect institutional change and has been dubbed the ‘translational approach’².

Figure 2: The Change Management Concept adopted in ASARECA



Four sessions or workshops were initially planned for each country, targeting at least 30 top leaders in the FIs. But only two workshops will be feasible before 30 June 2010, due to time and budgetary constraints. The overall objective of the workshops is to strengthen research management, leadership, and mentorship at the three FIs: ISAR, ISABU, and ARC. The expected impact is change in mindset and approach to people management as indicated by team dynamics and performance. The first learning workshops on Research Management, Leadership & Mentoring were held at ISAR, Rwanda, from 30th November to 4th December 2009, and at ISABU, Burundi, from 7th to 11th December 2009. The first workshop for ARC,

2. See the Final Mid-Term Review Update Report by Ken Robson

Sudan, is scheduled for early 2010. Because of funding delays, the second round of workshops may not be held until the April–June quarter of 2010. The formation of peer learning groups and identification of change projects for each group is an interesting aspect of the PICO Team’s ARM workshops. The sustainability of the change momentum at FIs will be based on the learning groups and projects. These change projects are similar to the CMAPs of the capacity strengthening model adopted in CORAF/WECARD and SADC/FANR.

4.1.2 Target of 406 people trained by June 2010

About 270 FI and SI staff (88% from FIs and 12% from SIs) from the three sub-regions that are implementing SCARDA had been trained in various management subject areas by December 2009. By June 2010, 406 staff members of participating institutions are expected to have undergone ARM trainings; 93% are expected to come from FIs. Disaggregation of data by FI, subject area, level of responsibility, gender, and age has not been exhaustive, but Annex 1 gives available data.

4.1.3 At least 20% of FI staff with management responsibilities will have been mentored

The PICO Team’s approach to change management in ASARECA has a strong mentorship component. Mentor-mentee pairs were formed during the first change management workshops conducted for ISAR and ISABU in 2009. Forty-eight (50%) of the FI management staff were mentored. The mentorships target mid- and junior-level staff who may also be SCARDA-sponsored MSc students. The PICO Team provided a list of mentored FI staff in their workshop reports. Mentorships have also been undertaken through follow-up visits by sub-regional service providers like GIMPA and Afrique Communications in CORAF/WECARD and ESAMI in SADC/FANR. NRI change agents have also served as mentors to 20 FI staff members in CORAF/WECARD and 21 in SADC/FANR. A regional total of 89 (about 30%) FI staff members were mentored in 2009. A list of mentor-mentees based on gender, management cadre, and age will be generated once complete data have been obtained from the SROs.

4.1.4 At least two management tools developed and implemented in each FI by June 2010

Change management action plans developed during the second ARM sub-regional workshop in CORAF/WECARD outline clear intentions to make specific changes in each participating FI. For example, the CMAP for CRAL, Congo, aims at creating a NARI from the 13 existing research centres and a logical process to meet this objective was outlined in the CMAP. The main focus of CMAPs for the other FIs in the sub-region is on business, to ensure future operational and financial sustainability.

In Rwanda, the change projects suggested by peer learning groups are geared to supporting institutional reforms already underway. The research institute, ISAR, and the crop and live-stock extension services are being brought under one umbrella organization. Research will be decentralized and new ‘zones’ (geographically defined units) will be the drivers and core implementers of research and extension. A change project defined during the ARM workshop in Rwanda was to develop a mechanism to engage top ISAR management in addressing challenges and opportunities presented by the ongoing reorganization and how ISAR can position itself to take advantage of these opportunities. In Burundi, organizational change is on ISABU’s agenda; strategic planning for the change is still at a relatively early stage. Participants were encouraged

to reflect on how they can play an active and constructive role in the change process. To facilitate constructive engagement, participants identified the key values and principles that should underpin the changes. The discussions provided opportunity for participants to express fears, concerns, and uncertainties—but constructively. Outputs of the discussions provide valuable material for senior management when designing the change projects.

In SADC/FANR, the FIs did not finalize concrete CMAPs in 2009. Initial concepts on development of change management plans were presented during the first ARM, held to create awareness and stimulate interest in basic tools of leadership and management from 12th to 15th October 2009. As a follow-up, the FI participants were required to develop CMAPs to bring about the changes their institutions desired. This process was supported by mentorship by change agents from the mentoring organization through direct contact and visits to FIs. The next step will involve CMAP implementation and documentation of lessons learned. Results will be shared in sub-regional and regional workshops.

Examples of nascent positive changes and improved NARS relationships already identified in some participating NARIs include: FI staff are oriented to engage more effectively with complex processes of institutional change; technical staff have been included in financial management committees; and short-term courses are helping improve both management and research skill. The farmer participatory research activities in SADC and the emerging interest in innovations systems are clear indicators of FI desires to strengthen linkages with other actors so they can deliver on their mandates more effectively. In the Congo, the local government is building upon SCARDA-mediated institutional changes by reinforcing policies to reform the various agricultural research centres into a NARI.

4.1.5 At least 70% of the participants express satisfaction with training and mentorship by May 2010

Sixty-five percent of the participants at the first CORAF/WECARD ARM, held in Ghana in December 2008, indicated that most workshop objectives had been achieved. Furthermore, over 85% of the participants found content of the modules very useful, and 75% said that knowledge gained at the workshop had raised their capacity, awareness, and interest. Sixty-five percent hoped that the workshop would help them strengthen research management in their institutions within 12 months—but 93% of the participants in the second ARM workshop responded that knowledge gained would help them strengthen research management.

Most FI participants at the first ARM in SADC/FANR, held in Botswana in October 2009, indicated that the course was either very good (66%) or excellent (26%). All respondents indicated that the training course would be valuable to others in their organizations. These ARM course ratings are available in reports provided by the SRO Focal Persons and service providers. Effectiveness of ARM course delivery is also affirmed in reports of SRO PMT meetings.

4.2 Output 2 – Quality Agricultural Research for Development

4.2.1 Strategic capability strengthening plan on quality agricultural research developed and fully implemented by March 2010

The SRO quarterly plans on quality agricultural research for development clearly indicate the range of professional and technician short courses under Output 2. These plans were derived from

initial institutional analyses of participating FIs (and, in some SROs, modified during subsequent deepening institutional analyses) and approved by FI management. The plans also provide an implementation timeline, milestones, service provider, indicators of achievement, and budget.

Reports published in SCARDA Vol. 2 give evidence, especially from SADC/FANR, of the value of engaging senior managers in the institutional analyses conducted in the FIs. Signed letters of commitment and even participation in the courses attest to the level of support that the management of participating FIs have accorded implementation of this SCARDA thrust.

Competitive bidding was used to select service providers (SPs) for the courses. ASARECA and SADC/FANR have SP contracts that are binding through project completion, while CORAF/WECARD renews some SP contracts every quarter. The lead service providers (LSPs) are actively engaged in quality assurance from course design and organization through delivery (except in cases where the LSP is also the course facilitator). The SPs prepare workshop reports for the courses and the LSPs, quality assurance reports. Both reports are submitted to the SRO Focal Person who consolidates and submits them to FARA. Procedures for payment for LSP and SP services are provided in the engagement contracts and have generally been adhered to (except when the project suffered an extended lack of funding in 2009).

Meetings of the FI and SRO PMTs are used to review activity implementation and lessons learned. Under the new SCARDA management system, activity implementation is also reviewed during the SRO Planning & Review meetings in the last week of every quarter, attended by the SCARDA Programme Officer. Changes relating to course implementation are considered during these meetings.

Figure 3: CORAF/WECARD SCARDA MSc student doing hand pollination



Implementation milestones for 2009, detailed in the work plans, could not be achieved due to inadequate funding, but CS plans for quality agricultural research for development (AR4D) in all SROs are expected to be completed by June 2010.

4.2.2 Target number (78) of NARS staff complete MSc training by end of programme

In ASARECA, 34 SCARDA MSc students, mainly middle cadre FI staff aged 25–35 years, are registered in sub-regional universities; 10 are women. All the students had completed their coursework, with research proposals approved by departmental supervisors, by December 2009. However, one student was able to start his studies only later in the year when the course on Research Methodology was launched at JKUAT in October 2009. In the first quarter of 2009, a number of proposal-writing workshops for the MSc students were organized at their various universities by RUFORUM, the LSP for SCARDA-ECA. The scientific writing skills the students learned at these workshops helped greatly in developing their proposals. About 95% of the students had initiated research, and data collection was already underway. The LSP visited the host universities to monitor students' progress and submitted quality assurance reports to the SRO. All students are expected to have finished their studies by July 2010, except the students undertaking Research Methodology at JKUAT, who will need extended time beyond the project end date of 30 June 2010.

In SADC/FANR, 17 students are registered for MSc training in 14 sub-regional universities; 2 other students are registered at the University of Greenwich, UK. Most of the students are scientists at the FIs, from 25 to 49 years old, with women comprising about 20%. The initial plan was for each student to conduct research in his or her home country on a topic agreed upon through consultations between academic supervisors and the FIs. But logistical and time pressures made this plan difficult to implement in half of the cases. The MSc students from SADC/FANR registered later than students from the other SROs, but most will finish their coursework by July 2010.

The National University of Lesotho (NUL) and the University of Zambia (UNZA) did not prioritize their MSc training. Instead, NUL chose to focus on the Farmer Participatory Research (FPR) Programme, the proposed Support Unit for Teaching, Research, and Agricultural Development (SUTRAD) initiative, and academic twinning to re-orient its research toward national priorities and enable it to form strategic partnerships in areas where it lacked core capacity. This was in response to government criticisms regarding relevance of its research. UNZA, on the other hand, emphasized the upgrading of research skills of staff, including technicians, mainly through tailor-made short courses.

In CORAF/WECARD, most students had been placed in universities by December 2008. But two students were registered in the NRI-UoG's MSc programme in Food Safety & Quality Management in February 2009, making a total of 27 SCARDA-sponsored MSc students from the sub-region. The UoG students joined after the official starting date. Classes had already begun, but arrangements were made for the students to attend extra classes so that they would not be disadvantaged. Students in the MSc programme in Food Safety & Quality Management will complete their training in the UK, while those on the MSc programme in Natural Resources returned to their home countries to conduct project work in late June 2009. They later resumed at the UoG in October 2009 to finish writing their research projects and complete coursework. Considering that the students' research project proposals would not likely be written by January 2010, it was agreed that their stay in the UK should be extended until the end of February 2010.

Students at the KNUST, Kumasi, and University of Dschang in Cameroon, had already begun their second academic year. The second year students at Abomey-Calavi University, who had started their research work, mobilized their own sources of funds to continue data collection. Extensions of scholarships for these students may be necessary to enable them finish their research. Overall progress of the four SCARDA MSc students at NRI-UoG was good, especially considering the challenge of completing the programme within a 12–14 month time frame.

4.2.3 5% of FI Research scientists mentored by May 2010

Mentoring is now directly linked to capacity strengthening in agricultural research management (Output 1) in all of the SROs. In ASARECA, the concept of mentoring young scientists was introduced to teams of researchers in Rwanda, Burundi, and Sudan during the workshops on design of change management. But it was learned that not all students could be mentees, because some had worked for their institutions for more than 10 years and could themselves be mentors to others. Furthermore, some of the students are managers who head units in their institutions. Therefore, it was imperative to engage students from the beginning of the learning workshop so they could learn leadership skills and management concepts. It was suggested that students in the next workshop should participate in the entire workshop without separation from the managers. Some university lecturers followed up the students' research in their home countries during the last quarter of 2009. For example, a Makerere University lecturer visited ISAR to check on the research progress being made by a student from that FI.

In SADC/FANR, mentoring of the two MSc candidates at the University of Greenwich by selected local university staff was arranged. The LSP for SADC/FANR, ANAFE, also participated in discussions regarding mentors for other staff attending universities in the region, with a purpose of developing a mentoring strategy in situations where the candidates would not conduct research in their own countries. Mentorship did not start for the other students because implementation of their research projects was delayed due to lack of funds.

In CORAF/WECARD, MSc candidates in KNUST have been mentored by research scientists from the Crop Research Institute as well as their regular university supervisors.

4.2.4 25% of FI research scientists and 10 SI staff trained in at least one subject area by March 2010

Training workshops were held in each of the three sub-regions with the objectives of 1) enhancing the capacity of staff from the main partner organizations in M&E, organizational learning, and communications, and 2) developing sub-regional plans for M&E/learning and communications. In ASARECA, the workshop was held in Kigali from 12th to 16th January 2009 and focused on developing M&E skills of participants. The workshop for SADC was held in Lusaka from 25th to 28th February 2009 and for CORAF/WECARD, in Bamako from 30th March to 2nd April 2009. In these two workshops initial skills training was followed by exercises in which specific plans were drafted. Facilitators prepared training reports, as in all SCARDA training events. The reports included an evaluation by participants. Quality assurance was provided by representatives from RUFORUM, SADC/FANR, and CORAF/WECARD.

Immediate outputs from the courses were: 1) M&E and learning plans were drafted for CORAF/WECARD and SADC, 2) a communications plan was drafted for SADC, and 3) arrangements were made to develop a communications plan for CORAF/WECARD in mid-April. Workshop

participants were equipped with skills needed to identify and develop progress indicators; their capacities to track and report on progress were also enhanced. The expected outcome of these workshops is FI implementation of M&E for SCARDA, appropriately integrated into the SRO-level M&E systems.

Table 1 shows the proportions of FI and SI staff in SADC/FANR who have been trained in M&E.

Table 1: Disaggregation of workshop participants by gender, age, and management position

Short Course Subject Area	FI Staff attending		SI Staff attending		Researchers attending by age			Researchers attending by Responsibility
	M	F	M	F	20-39	40-49	50+	Middle Assistant Manager, Scientist
M&E training workshop	6	1	0	1		2	6	8

The FPR courses provided a mechanism for initiating a multi-stakeholder programme of participatory research as part of the outreach programmes of the two universities involved in Botswana from 9th to 13th February 2009, and Lesotho from 16th to 20th February 2009. Research plans were developed in both countries. Delays in funding (although insufficient funding was mobilized) meant that progress in implementing the programmes was limited, but significant. In Lesotho, stakeholders met, using their own resources, to plan the programme and to select the communities to begin on-farm research for the next season.

In ASARECA, PICO Team facilitation during learning workshops embraces a peer learning group approach involving even the SCARDA MSc students. RUFORUM has also ensured that MSc students in all host universities in the sub-region interact closely with PhD students, for

Figure 4: Farmer participatory research workshop in Lesotho



example through some shared lectures and seminars. This approach responds to SCARDA-ECA's intention of enhancing the quality of research and training by peer interaction.

4.2.5 25% of FI technicians trained in at least one subject area by May 2010

In the quarter under review, this OVI can be reported only for ASARECA; the other SROs did not have technician training courses. The technician training course that NaCCRI conducted for ASARECA in November 2009 attracted 24 technicians; 8 each from Burundi, Sudan and Rwanda. Thirty-eight percent were women. Group attendance was high (>95%) throughout the workshop, indicating high interest in the subject matter and relevance to participants' needs.

4.2.6 At least 70% of participants express satisfaction with training and mentorship in the identified competence areas by May 2010

Table 2 shows participants' evaluations of the farmer participatory research (FPR) training during the third quarter in SADC/FANR.

Table 2: Evaluation of FPR Training conducted in SADC/FANR

	Participant's assessments of achievement of learning and delivery objectives				Participants (no.) who completed evaluation form
	Not at all	Some	Moderate	A lot	
FPR, Botswana	0	8%	47%	45%	17
FPR, Lesotho	0	5%	31%	64%	19

In both countries, Botswana and Lesotho, participation in the FPR workshop clearly broadened participants' understanding of how to build partnerships with the farming community and methods of conducting FPR. Participants also gained some insight into the need to involve a wide range of partners in their research, and how to ensure that research outcomes meet their clients' need and expectations.

In CORAF/WECARD, two MSc students registered at UoG/NRI who returned to their home countries to carry out their project work expressed appreciation for the degree of support they have received from NRI staff, through supervisory visits and communication via phone and email. An MSc student in Food Safety & Quality Management who conducted her project work in The Gambia gave similar feedback.

In ASARECA, participants' evaluation of the course 'Applying Communication, Planning, Monitoring & Evaluation Principles to IAR4D,' conducted by NRI in Kigali, Rwanda, from 12th to 16th January 2009, for directors and senior managers of the FIs, showed an average satisfaction level of about 70%. Post-course feedback from the SCARDA contact person at ISAR in Rwanda showed that he and other senior management staff considered the IPM training course for agricultural technicians held in May 2009 'excellent.' The ISAR contact person provided all the resource materials for the IPM course to his SCARDA counterpart in ISABU, Burundi, demonstrating a spirit of cooperation between the two FIs.

Feedback from participants in the IPM course subsequently held in Bujumbura, Burundi, from 5th to 9th October 2009 was extremely positive. All participants considered the knowledge and approach of the two NRI trainers in the two highest categories ('above average' and 'excellent'). A significant number of participants thought that the level of the course was not sufficiently

demanding. This may have been due to the fact that there was a mixture of technicians and researchers; some had considerable experience in pest and disease management, and some had less experience. Participants expressed appreciation for the high quality of the electronic resource materials distributed at the end of the course. Sixteen of the 18 participants considered the knowledge gained ‘definitely useful’ (the highest category). The overall level of satisfaction with the IPM course was high in all categories with ‘Usefulness of the Course’ getting the highest overall rating.

4.3 Output 3 – Graduate Demand Studies

4.3.1 The study approach and methodology developed and agreed upon by each SRO by May 2009

Initial activities to deliver on this Output were initiated in the 2nd Quarter of 2009. A service provider was engaged to undertake the study in ASARECA, CORAF/WECARD signed contracts with a team of consultants to undertake the study, and the ToR for engaging consultants was finalized in SADC/FANR.

4.3.2 Results and recommendations reviewed and adopted by the SROs

In the third quarter, it was seen that the study could be conducted, completed, and the report submitted to the SRO only in ASARECA. This was possible due to pre-financing by ASARECA. CORAF/WECARD and SADC/FANR did not have funds to implement the studies.

4.3.3 Results and recommendations tabled and discussed by the Governance Bodies of the Network of Universities

The service provider who conducted the study in ASARECA presented the results and recommendations to a meeting with Deans of Faculties of Agriculture and Vice Chancellors of universities in the sub-region in August 2009. This meeting was organized by RUFORUM. Also attending the meeting were representatives from other stakeholders: FARA, the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA) and ANAFE as well as facilitators from PICO Team and NaCCRI. The report of the graduate demand study conducted in ASARECA and the communiqué from the stakeholders’ meeting have been submitted to FARA.

Key findings of the ASARECA graduate demand study include:

- The demand for graduates in agriculture who have the right skills and mindsets can be expected to be strong in the coming decades if universities invest in building up their constituency among farming communities and development institutions. The skills required of graduates include farmer training skills, implementation of adaptive or on-farm demonstrations or trials, financial management, skills in chain addition to agricultural value, and business start-up advisory and entrepreneurial skills. These should be combined with the aptitude to participate from the outset as potential innovators in the system.
- Women are seriously under-represented among agricultural graduates at all levels. While gender issues are widely accepted and many agricultural specialists are fully attuned to gender sensitivity, an understanding of how to mainstream gender issues and, most important, to fully engage women at all levels of agricultural development is less evident

- A widespread perception among employers is that agricultural graduates are weak in problem analysis and solution skills. They may receive theory in coursework, but do not seem able to put theory into practice. Regional universities are modifying their programmes, but the pace of change needs to reflect the urgency required to rectify the focus and quality of the training.
- The change to emphasis on agricultural education and training (AET) from diploma to degree level training in the sub-region over the past decade is significant. There is a real opportunity for the regional university and research networks, such as RUFORUM and ASARECA, to provide leadership and vision for this change. At present, many employers of graduates are not well informed about, or connected to, such regional networks
- AET institutions (and faculties within those institutions) need distinct and real autonomy, with producers and stakeholders on their governing bodies. This will provide a powerful incentive to link training with market demand
- There is a real opportunity, and considerable mutual benefit, for a coordinated effort where universities and NGOs plan and implement initiatives to develop high-quality systems of agricultural education for the regions.

4.4 Output 4 - SCARDA Approach & Response to MTR Recommendations

4.4.1 SCARDA implementation plan responding to MTR and incorporating programme-wide issues developed and agreed upon by the end of May 2009

The donor-commissioned SCARDA MTR was conducted from 16th to 27th February 2009 to provide an overall assessment of progress toward achievement of the project purpose and output delivery, to assess the likelihood that the project will be successful, and to recommend changes to the project to ensure success. The MTR Report outlined a number of measures and recommendations to which the project was expected to respond. FARA organized a programme-wide strategies and lesson learning (PSL) workshop in Accra from 26th April to 1st May 2009 to address issues raised in the MTR Report. The PSL proceedings, and how the PSL responded to each MTR recommendation, have been documented. FARA constituted expert working groups or ‘communities of practice’ just before the PSL to collate responses on key project issues highlighted in the MTR Report. This was in consultation with sub-regional teams for synthesis and validation during the PSL. The expert groups were to focus on change management, communications, gender and diversity, mentoring, and M&E. Each group produced reports addressing specific MTR recommendations and outlining how to incorporate the suggested changes into the programme implementation structure.

FARA submitted a SCARDA action plan to DFID in mid-May 2009. The plan set out how FARA and its partners had already taken actions in response to some of the MTR recommendations and indicated how it would address others. The plan included strategies and implementation approaches for programme-wide issues of M&E, communications, gender and diversity, change management, and mentoring.

4.4.1.1 Gender mainstreaming

Specific indicators have been included in the programme log frame and special forms have been designed for recruitment of FI participants to the ARM workshops. Participation of women was deliberately supported. For example, at least 20% of participants included in capacity

strengthening events should be women. Workshop reports are also required to disaggregate participants' data on the basis of affiliation, age, gender, management cadre, and level of education (see Annex 1). Gender participation in the SCARDA capacity strengthening activities in SADC/FANR was addressed by adoption of a nomination form for short course participants that includes data on gender, age, and position in the organization. This relates to the Gender & Diversity guidelines, which the working group developed. All FIs were asked to complete this template for the planned short courses. Some used the form to submit their nominations. The following table exemplifies the gender data for participants/nominees to a management workshop in the sub-region.

Table 3: Gender data for participants nominated for a training workshop in SADC/FANR

FI	SI		Gender (FI)		Age			Position		
	M	F	M	F	30-40	41-50	51-60	Scientists	Middle	Senior Manager
NRDC	1	1	3		3	2			2	3
UNZA	1		3	1		1	4		4	1
NUL	1		3	1		2	3		4	1
DAR			3	2		2	3		4	1
BCA			3	2		2	3		4	1

Building on recommendation from an ASARECA consultancy conducted under Output 3, a proposal was made to NRI staff to carry out a study of good practice in mainstreaming gender and diversity in the SADC/FANR agricultural universities. This was approved; the study will begin in January 2010. But greater efforts will clearly be needed during the next quarter to ensure that gender and diversity issues are adequately addressed in the implementation of activities. Use of participant nomination forms with data on gender, age, and managerial position will continue for recruiting participants to the ARM workshops and to short courses for professionals and technicians.

4.4.1.2 Mentorships

The general approach for mentoring of FI staff in the sub-region was discussed in a one-day meeting before the first ARM workshop. In SADC it was agreed that ESAMI, the service provider for ARM, would be approached as a mentoring provider for research managers. The mentoring of two MSc students conducting research in their own countries was addressed through the development of mentoring agreements that local mentors signed. ANAFE was requested to review the draft mentorship document during the PMT meeting held in October 2009.

4.4.1.3 Change management

Guidelines for generic change management were designed by the relevant expert group and submitted to FARA. The FI change management plans are largely based on the generic guidelines except for idiosyncratic differences in approach that the SRO service provider may advocate. Specific management courses that cut across all sub-regions have been identified and ingrained into the ARM workshops. Steps to address mentoring were also suggested and are being implemented, especially in ASARECA. Some basic concepts and principles of change management were introduced in the change management workshops held with five SADC/FANR FIs at the

end of the second quarter and in the third quarter, 2009. These were then linked to the SCARDA plans for the FIs and - using force-field analysis - directions of desired changes were defined by the participating focal institutions and their counterparts from SIs. In Zambia, this was done using an agricultural innovation systems approach to define the functions where change was needed. The two satellite institutions from Zambia also attending the workshop did force field analysis for their own organizations using the agricultural innovation systems approach. The FI change management plans will be revisited in the second SADC/FANR ARM workshop and managers from satellite institutions who attend will also undertake force-field analysis. This gives SCARDA the potential to have a wider impact in the NARS context.

4.4.1.4 MTR Update Report

The MTR Update Report, released in October 2009, recommended the following project management areas for further action:

1. Updating the Revised Logical Framework with regard to:
 - a) Quantification of OVIs where there is reference to target numbers and target proportions, and
 - b) Rewording of Outputs 3 & 4 as intended results rather than as activities.
2. Accelerating the pace of implementing the M&E system, population of baselines, testing survey methodologies, elucidation of 'storylines,' and preparation of M&E reports at Output level
3. Consideration of a no-cost extension for another 6 to 12 months

A FARA PMT meeting was held on 16 November 2009 to address the above issues relating to updating the Revised Logical Framework. Attending were the Deputy Executive Director, NSF Directors, SCARDA Programme Coordinator, SCARDA Programme Officer, and FARA M&E Expert. The meeting resolved the following:

- That the SCARDA Project Team quantify the aforementioned OVIs based on reasonable evidence, field experience, and budget allocations, and
- That the output statements in the SCARDA Revised Plan of Action be reframed as follows:
 - Output 3 – *The relevance of training programmes in agricultural universities to current market demand established, and*
 - Output 4 – *SCARDA approach for capacity strengthening is validated.*

No SRO, perhaps with the exception of ASARECA, had the capacity to address the recommendation on the M&E system during the third quarter as activities were virtually grounded for lack of funds. M&E implementation is best delegated to the SRO M&E Experts who have the necessary logistical capability and local accountability. The M&E issue will be given special attention both at FARA and SRO levels in the fourth quarter, January–March 2010, because funds have been made available and activities are underway in all SROs.

SCARDA management teams at SROs and at FARA Secretariat all agree that the recommendation for a no-cost extension is warranted considering the inordinate delays the programme has suffered since inception. A rigid timeline does no justice to the innovative vein of a process-programme like SCARDA, where the work plan necessarily derives from experiences gained

from prior implementation. The new management strategy developed from the MTR recommendations has served to streamline project coordination at all levels. Coupled with timely disbursement of funds, the activity turnover to postulated project end-date should unequivocally demonstrate tangible output-to-purpose impacts. Unfortunately, time will probably not allow complete implementation of the envisaged activities. Therefore, residual funds by June 2010 permitting, there will be a need for a no-cost extension.

Cross-cutting issues were highlighted during the ARM workshop held in Gaborone from 12th to 15th October 2009. As in earlier ARM workshops in CORAF/WECARD, particular attention was given to placing change management as the underlying process governing the development and implementation of activity plans. As a result, there is now growing recognition of the importance of change management as a concept and an increased understanding of how to apply its principles to support beneficial change.

4.4.2 MTR recommended measures to strengthen programme management and improve rate of implementation in place by July 2009, and functional to end of programme.

The PMT concept founded in ASARECA has since been embraced by the other two SROs. The basic membership of the PMT comprises the SRO Focal Person, the LSP Focal Person, the FI Contact Persons, and a representative from the NRI. The SCARDA Program Officer also attends, when possible, as an *ex officio* member. The SRO PMTs meet at least once every quarter to review progress, learn lessons, and plan for next steps. Minutes of PMT quarterly meetings are available.

The review of programme management systems in SCARDA was undertaken in May and June 2009. The review report included several proposed actions that will help FARA manage the programme more effectively. The revised management system was developed in consultation with the SROs, so it has support of all key partner organizations involved in management. Key risks have been identified and risk mitigation strategies put in place. During the second quarter (July–September, 2009), the new programme management system was installed in response to the SCARDA Mid Term Review recommendations.

The new SCARDA Management System (see Annex 4) reinforces the PMT benefits and was specifically designed to:

- Ensure linkage between setting of project plans and taking management action as informed by actual experience
- Improve information flow within the management structure
- Ensure realistic and accessible planning at all levels of the project
- Ensure that accountability is not compromised by implementation of the subsidiarity principle
- Improve financial planning and facilitate disbursements of funds, and
- Ensure periodical and concise reporting to the Senior Programme Management Team at FARA and DFID.

At the FARA level, the programme senior management team comprises the Executive Director, Deputy Executive Director, all Directors of Networking Support Functions, Director for Human Resources and Finance, SCARDA Program Officer, and the Finance Officer.

The main system amendments and key operational features of the new SCARDA Management System are appended to this Report. Suffice it to say that the new system enacts a formal quarterly planning and reporting cycle, bottom-up planning of activities and operational budgets, top-down accountability for achievement of planned activities, and rigorous financial planning and reporting in a single currency: the pound sterling. A meeting was held at the FARA Secretariat on 30 November 2009 attended by the SCARDA Coordinator, SCARDA Programme Officer, and John Linton of NRI to finalize installation of the New SCARDA Management System. John Linton later submitted a final copy of the Review of the SCARDA Management System in December 2009.

FARA signed a fund disbursement and reconciliation agreement with the University of Greenwich. Subsequently, DFID signed an agreement and released an accountable grant of £ 2 million to the University of Greenwich for disbursement to SROs and FARA. With the first advance fund transfer, the New Management System for SCARDA is now fully functional and has registered considerable improvement in the planning of activities and budgets as well as timely disbursement of funds. These improvements are expected to improve the overall implementing rate of planned activities. The new quarterly reporting format has also now been in use for two quarters.

During the year under review, implementing the new management system (such as visits by SRO Focal Persons to FIs to draw up work plans) as part of the bottom-up approach to planning was hampered by lack of funds for travel especially to the FIs based in other countries. As such, inputs from other stakeholders (FIs and LSP) were mainly solicited through e-mail and telephone dialogue in regard to their priority activities for the next quarter and verification of draft work plans.

4.4.3 Communication Strategy and Plan developed by end of May 2009 and functional to end of Programme

The SCARDA communication plan is closely aligned with FARA's overall communication plan. It provides the framework within which sub-regional plans for communications are being developed. In ASARECA, the capacity of the FIs to identify their communications needs and preferred mechanisms was enhanced through a series of M&E workshops held in all of the sub-regions. Participants were exposed to different communication approaches and supplied with the basic knowledge and skills to develop a communication strategy. They were also made aware of the basic principles and concepts of learning-based systems and processes. ASARECA has a new knowledge management strategy that will benefit the development of a communications plan for SCARDA-ECA.

In CORAF/WECARD, the M&E workshop included a full day on preparation of a plan for lesson learning and documentation. This was an input to the subsequent development of a draft communications plan in Dakar, Senegal, from 16th to 17th April 2009. Inputs from the FIs in CORAF/WECARD later helped in finalizing the plan during the PSL Workshop in Accra. A communications plan for SADC was drafted in early 2009 and was also finalised at the PSL workshop held in Accra from 27th to 30th April 2009.

The SCARDA Communications Discussion Group (D-group) was set up during the year under review and helped to converge views for various expert groups such as gender & diversity, M&E, communication, and mentoring, in preparation for the PSL workshop. The first edition of the programme-wide newsletter *SCARDA Outcomes* was also published. ASARECA had SCARDA

news items posted on the RUFORM website and CORAF/WECARD also dedicated a section of its sub-regional newsletter to SCARDA-related news. Recommendations of the communications expert group that were agreed upon during the PSL Workshop have since been sustained in the programme through maintenance of D-groups, PMT minutes, back-to-office reports, and e-mail exchanges. The second edition of the quarterly *SCARDA Outcomes* was published and distributed to all stakeholders by e-mail in December 2009. The SCARDA Annual Report, 2008, was edited and submitted for printing in December 2009. The FARA Secretariat and SROs continued to communicate, mainly by e-mail and telephone, on coordination issues. The D-groups will be re-activated in the fourth quarter to inform the agenda for the PSL-II Workshop, scheduled to take place at the FARA Secretariat by May 2010.

NRI submitted a paper on capacity strengthening, featuring a substantial section on SCARDA with some input from FARA, to DFID. This was shared with grantees of two new programmes jointly funded by DFID and a UK research council (BBSRC). Electronic copies of the CMAPs were circulated and experiences were shared during a workshop in London in December 2009.

Regarding internal communication in the SADC/FANR, contact persons of FIs report back to heads of institutions on meetings they have attended about SCARDA. The SRO focal person has kept regular contacts with all FIs through email and telephone calls, and has even visited local FIs in Botswana. The same methods have been effectively used to contact other partners such as FARA, ANAFE, NRI, CTA, and ESAMI.

Progress in external communications has also been made on a number of fronts. Through the farmer participatory research (FPR) training workshop held in Botswana, a local newspaper carried an article about the SCARDA project implemented by SADC/FANR, in collaboration with three member states. Furthermore, SADC/FANR included an article about SCARDA in the FANR brochure and annotated agenda for Ministers of Agriculture. ANAFE, the Lead Service provider for SADC/FANR, also featured SCARDA in the August 2009 ANAFE Newsletter.

In August 2009, presentations on SCARDA were delivered to staff and students at Sokoine Agricultural University in Tanzania and the University of Malawi. The presentations focused predominantly on research management and emphasized links with EDULINK, a project on leadership and management led by RUFORUM. The main findings of the study on the demand for agricultural students conducted in ASARECA during 2009 were presented in September to a meeting of Pro Vice Chancellors and Deans of RUFORUM member universities held in Mombasa. That same month, a report on SCARDA was made to the Global Conference on Agricultural Research and Development (GCARD) Africa electronic discussion group.

4.4.4 Programme Performance Management Plan & Strategy Developed, Adopted and Functional to End of Programme

The SCARDA project performance management plan (or M&E strategy) was completed in late January 2009. The plan sets out FARA's responsibilities regarding project performance management, within a framework of agreements with each of the three SROs. The plan has five main elements:

- A generic framework of project performance indicators, including related performance targets and descriptions of indicators.
- A description of the responsibilities for managing and measuring project performance at FARA and other operational levels.

- A discussion of the focus of project performance monitoring and its linkages with lesson learning and the SCARDA communication strategy and plans.
- A description of the project performance reporting system and formats.
- A road-map for embedding project performance management and monitoring at key operational levels.

An updated performance management plan has since been completed. A major advance was inclusion of a revised log frame with OVIs that better measure results that the project seeks to achieve. These OVIs integrate more explicitly gender targets and focus on documenting positive change through tools such as satisfaction surveys.

As with the communications strategy, the approach adopted had been to use the generic project plan at the FARA level as a basis for developing sub-regional plans. This had been promoted through a series of M&E workshops and subsequent interaction with M&E experts in the various partner organisations. The workshops held in SADC/FANR and CORAF/WECARD produced project performance measurement plans at SRO and FI levels. A draft performance management plan was then developed for CORAF and this served as a model for similar plans for SADC and ASARECA. The idea was to have a harmonised approach to the PMP prior to the PSL workshop held in Accra from 27th to 30th April 2009. The plans included indicators and targets which were finalized during the PSL workshop.

As FARA had no M&E expert until late 2009, NRI worked with the SCARDA Management Team at FARA to ensure that the SCARDA M&E system was installed and functional, in response to the MTR recommendations. The NRI M&E specialist met with the SADC Focal Person and an M&E expert from Botswana, and agreed on a plan for consolidating the baseline information and carrying out a mid-point staff survey. A similar meeting was held with the ASARECA Focal Person and the contact person for RUFORUM. Survey forms were completed by staff in most of the focal institutions in ASARECA and SADC; the process for CORAF was also initiated during 2009.

The performance management system is now in place and is being used by the project partners, although the quality of reporting should be improved. Training in the use of the M&E tools (e.g. quarterly reporting forms, employee mid-point survey forms, workshop nomination and evaluation forms, process documentation, and elucidation of storylines) was expected to continue into the last quarter of 2009, but was not possible due to lack of funding. FARA organized the second programme-wide PMT meeting in Nairobi in September 2009, which was attended by all the SRO focal persons, all LSP contact persons, and NRI representatives. During the PMT, a side meeting was held to review and plan activities and budgets for the last quarter of 2009 (October–December) in accordance with the operating management system for SCARDA. A slot for engaging with the M&E expert from NRI was provided to enable all SROs to be updated on elements of the new performance management plan (PMP) and to acquaint them with next steps to finalize activity targets and baseline data collection.

Based on the operating programme-wide PMP, a quarterly meeting was later held in Botswana in SADC/FANR to introduce the new strategy and initiate M&E baseline data collection and mid-term surveys of FIs in Botswana, Lesotho, and Zambia. Four levels of management are involved in planning, monitoring, and reporting. The management levels include SADC/FANR as facilitator, ANAFE as Lead Service Provider, service providers, and FIs as beneficiaries.

Baseline data forms for FIs, employee mid-point survey questionnaires, and sample frames were provided to the FI contact persons in August 2009. Completed baseline data forms for FIs were received from NRDC and NUL and forwarded to the NRI M&E expert. But there had been delays in completion of these forms by the other three FIs. The planned workshop for baseline collection in the sub-region did not occur, due to lack of funding. Baseline data population should be addressed urgently as it is a basis for project progress monitoring and preparation of information for progress evaluation. Technical reports were jointly compiled with NRI on FPR training workshops, and change management seminars held in Zambia and Botswana. Roles of the SCARDA partners involved in the Project Management Plan were also addressed during the Nairobi PMT meeting in October 2009. Use of process documentation forms was already underway, especially in SADC/FANR. By December 2009, all SRO focal persons were using the quarterly reporting form to systematically consolidate activity implementation toward output delivery.

4.4.5 Lessons and best practices learned from the SCARDA approach, documented and shared with key stakeholders by the end of May 2010.

Proceedings of the PSL workshop included a summary of lessons identified during the group discussions. With NRI support, guidelines for process documentation to consolidate lessons learned by the focal institutions were prepared. In all SROs, the PMTs are used to consolidate lessons learned during SCARDA implementation. Some of the lessons and experiences, detailed in the PMT minutes, are used to inform subsequent implementation activities. The report of the SCARDA Service Providers Workshop, convened by ASARECA from 17th to 18th September 2009, in Entebbe, Uganda, highlights specific lessons, experiences, and strategies for implementation in the sub-region. The quarterly *SCARDA Outcomes*, Vol., No. 3, for the period October – December, 2009, published by the SCARDA Management Team at the FARA Secretariat also contains certain specific lessons and experiences gained from programme implementation. A paper presented to DFID by NRI in late 2009 on capacity strengthening for agricultural research and development in Africa also provides a good discussion agenda on some lessons learned from SCARDA activities.





5. Capacity strengthening impacts

Table 4 assesses the extent to which the project purpose indicators had been achieved, and associated impact implications, by December 2009.

Table 4: Extent of Achievement of Milestones at Output Level by December 2009

Purpose: The capacity and performance of participating NARS improved in key areas of Agricultural Research for Development (AR4D) functions

OVI	Progress on Milestones in New Format Log-Frame	Recommendations / Comments
By June 2010, Focal Institutions are confident that performance will improve in response to specific SCARDA-initiated change management interventions	<p>By September 2009, the number of FIs with $\geq 80\%$ of staff that felt that SCARDA will make managers more effective was 7 of the 12 participating FIs, according to FI employee mid-point surveys. Also, the number of FIs with $\geq 80\%$ of staff that felt confident that SCARDA will strengthen and improve the performance of at least one management system in their organization was also 7 of 12.</p> <p>In the SADC/FANR, an employee mid-point survey carried out at NRDC revealed that 60% of the employees interviewed (20% women) were already conscious that SCARDA had started to address management weaknesses in regard to human resources, lack of a broad-based research strategy, staff development and financial management at the FI. The baseline situation at onset of SCARDA intervention was characterized by lack of funding for MSc training, shortage of qualified manpower to conduct high quality research activities, and lack of representation of junior staff in the financial management system.</p>	This OVI is highly likely to be achieved by June 2010
Examples of positive change, improved performance and improved NARS relationships in all participating NARS by June 2010	<p>Through SCARDA intervention, employee mid-point surveys - for example - at NRDC in the SADC/FANR, indicate that FI staff are currently on MSc training on key areas, technical staff have been included in the financial management committees, and short-term courses are helping improve both management and research skills.</p> <p>The establishment of the Support Unit for Teaching Research and Agricultural Development (SUTRAD) as a coordination mechanism for agricultural research and development in Lesotho has been fostered by SCARDA. Guidance and support will be continued as SUTRAD develops. The FPR activities in SADC and emerging interest in innovations systems are clear indications of FI's desires to strengthen linkages with other actors so they can deliver on their mandates more effectively. This was very evident during the Change Management workshops in Lesotho and Zambia and during an earlier workshop in Botswana (2008 reporting period). At NRDC in Zambia, one of three core objectives in its new change management plan is to strengthen linkages with other organizations and to improve its performance management systems. A similar process is taking place in CORAF/WECARD in which the focal institutions seek to engage more actively with other organizations with similar or related objectives.</p>	By June 2010, this purpose OVI is likely to be largely achieved.

OVI	Progress on Milestones in New Format Log-Frame	Recommendations / Comments
In at least 30% of participating NARS, key stakeholder are satisfied that their linkages with FIs arising from SCARDA interventions have improved by June 2010.	The survey also indicates that NRDC has opened new linkages with other stakeholders and created new platforms with satellite institutions. Also, that the linkages will continue to promote sharing of information and working together in research activities. However, only 20% of respondents in the employee mid-point survey conducted in September 2009 at NRDC agreed that SCARDA has contributed to improved linkages and relations with key stakeholders. A more rigorous survey targeting key stakeholders in the innovation system will be undertaken toward the programme end-date to address this purpose OVI. However, the FPR intervention in NUL, Lesotho, coupled with the innovative systems workshops in the sub-region, hold good promise for promoting an innovative systems approach to research. In the other participating FIs, immediate SCARDA-enabled linkages are at the macro-level involving interactions with SIs, universities and government agencies.	It is expected that the Programme will be able to largely achieve this purpose OVI by June 2010.
Participating organizations are implementing SCARDA related measures to mainstream gender, HIV/AIDs, pro-poor and other social inclusion issues by June 2010	By September 2009, the percentage of FIs with plans for social inclusion was about 42%. Currently, the main social inclusion issue being addressed is gender mainstreaming at the FI level through workshop nomination forms to ensure representative women participation in the ARM workshops and professional short courses. Seminars on gender analysis have also been conducted in some SROs as well as studies on gender issues, especially in the ASARECA sub-region.	This purpose OVI will be partially achieved at programme end-date.
Use of graduate demand study by at least 70% of target tertiary education institutions by June 2010	So far, only SCARDA-ECA has managed to deliver on Output 3 that directly addresses this purpose statement. But even then, the study findings were disseminated to vice-chancellors and deans of universities in the sub-region only in September, 2009. The rest of the SRO will just barely complete dissemination of graduate demand study findings by June 2010.	The delay occasioned by lack of funding has rendered the achievement of this purpose very unlikely.
Endorsement of SCARDA approach by all SRO Boards and 90% of NARS senior management by June 2010	There will be a second programme-wide strategies and lesson-learning (PSL 2) workshop in April 2010 at which the SCARDA Approach will be reviewed and possibly endorsed. The outcome of the PSL 2 will then be duly communicated to SRO Boards and management of participating NARS for endorsement.	This purpose OVI is likely to be largely achieved.





6. Lessons learned

The Proceedings of the Learning Platform Workshop for Focal Institutions and Partners of the SADC-SCARDA Project, held in Botswana from 27th to 29th January 2009, outlined a number of lessons learned from the scoping studies, institutional analysis and the inception period that contributed toward improvement of planning, management, monitoring and evaluation of the project including the communication of information or experiences. A summary of some of the pertinent lessons learned follows³:

- After each investigation/study there was need to provide time for reflection and validation of findings as SCARDA is about experiential learning. In undertaking the studies, FIs, however, noted that the participatory approach adopted during planning was essential and should be a working principle in SCARDA.
- More time should be allocated in the future for both FIs and development partners to conduct a comprehensive institutional analysis, since this activity forms the basis of identifying gaps for tailor-made capacity strengthening. It was also noted that the budget/financial resources for programming SCARDA were inadequate. FIs were informed after the budget was developed that they were to share it with their development partners, i.e. SIs.
- In the future, more time should be made available for FIs and their SIs to reflect and synthesize outcomes or findings from studies to improve understanding of concepts and potential value to project implementation.
- Dissemination, documentation and sharing of information are critical not only to realize Output 4 of the SADC-SCARDA Project, but to ensure that the process also contributes toward building partnership and trust among stakeholders.
- When new agricultural research management concepts/systems are introduced, FIs and other stakeholders need adequate time to understand and internalize them.
- A specialized regional organization dealing with agricultural research and development matters should be established to provide leadership, and design effective mechanisms to communicate and disseminate results and experiences.
- MoUs should be signed before project implementation to avoid delays and promote active participation of all relevant stakeholders.

3. Details of lessons learned from this workshop are available in the full report submitted to FARA

- There is a need to develop an M&E framework at all levels (FARA, SADC, and FIs) to document, disseminate, and share experiences of lessons learned. The framework should form part of the SADC-SCARDA work plan.

These lessons largely informed deployment of SCARDA in the SADC/FANR sub-region in respect to FPR approach, innovative systems thinking, sequencing of events and activities, linkages with national policy objectives and programs, integration of gender and diversity issues, and ensuring that articles of formal engagements are pre-concluded before program launch.

As SCARDA implementation progressed it became increasingly apparent that more attention should have been paid to strengthening the capacity of the implementers and laying in place strategies for addressing turnover of individuals engaged in programme implementation. In a traditional project, the centralised management can ensure that whenever there are staff changes, the new recruits are properly briefed and prepared for the responsibilities they are expected to accept. However, for a project like SCARDA with a complex implementation structure in compliance with the principle of subsidiarity, staff changes lead to a dilution of the understanding gained in the preparatory phases because the partner institutions do not have great depth of staff engaged in the project with the time to train newcomers.

The Proceedings of the SCARDA PSL - I workshop held in April 2009 highlighted the following summary of strategic lessons identified during group discussions at the workshop:

- SCARDA is a mega learning platform and all project implementing partners (FARA, SROs, LSPs, and FIs), require adequate orientation, training, and reinforcement on the principles of SCARDA to promote implementation efficiency.
- The LSPs constituted an interface between SROs and SPs to ensure that in their service delivery, they adhered to the SCARDA principles.
- SCARDA as a learning platform has exposed weaknesses in all the implementing entities in the modalities for implementation of a complex Africa-wide capacity strengthening project; these weaknesses need to be well characterised to drive institutional capacity strengthening.
- Regular, well-structured SCARDA project management briefings and meetings are required to review programme activities and to activate learning to improve efficiency of project implementation.
- Prior conclusion of legal instruments on project implementation modalities would have facilitated start up of SCARDA project activities.
- Long term project activities, such as postgraduate training and mentoring, need to be initiated early in the project implementation cycle to commit anticipated total financial provisions for the activities.
- Implementation of professional skills development courses should be designed to adhere to the principles of action followed by reflection leading to improved attitudinal changes.
- Proactive documentation of the SCARDA implementation process and lessons learned could serve as an important researchable tool to inform the management and implementation of new and similar projects.
- The establishment of SCARDA Project Management Teams (PMTs) improved communication and collective decision making for efficient project implementation.

- The use of local and regional universities for training of SCARDA postgraduate students could significantly strengthen the capacity of NARI research staff and improve relationships among national agricultural research and training institutions.
- The agricultural research management capacity strengthening activities in CORAF have shown commonalities of problems across the FIs. Similar management tools can be applied to address these problems.
- Support from NRI to the focal institutions to develop their action plans for research management has demonstrated that organizational mentoring is an essential element in enhancing agricultural research management capacity. This should be built on by involving change management specialists from within the region to help focal institutions successfully implement the desired organizational changes.
- More efficient selection and placement of the SCARDA MSc students could be achieved through giving greater recognition and consideration to language skills development and the special needs of women for agricultural research and development.

The development and installation of the M&E system places a lot of demand on project managers when it is done mid-stream. This has been exacerbated by weak M&E capacity at all levels of SCARDA implementation, especially at the FI level. Agreement on the baselines for qualitative indicators had delayed and thus affected the quality of progress reporting. A key lesson emerging from this is that M&E should be integrated firmly into project planning, review, and decision-making at an early stage of the project. Also, that adequate resources need to be allocated to support M&E activities at all levels. However, it should also be recognized that there are very few examples of M&E systems for capacity strengthening projects in research for development and that, even with these difficulties, SCARDA is making a contribution to the development of new approaches.

In most of the year under review, project partners never had much opportunity to utilize the new guidelines for process documentation that had been developed and circulated by NRI. Experience has shown that there is usually insufficient time during PMT meetings to adequately address sharing and documentation of experiences. Additional time should be allocated to cover this, but it will also be necessary to provide support to the focal institutions to develop their ‘storylines.’

During the design stage of SCARDA, it was envisaged that MSc students would return to their home organizations to conduct their project work. It was believed that this would help ensure that the research topics are aligned with the priority needs of the FIs and even contribute directly to existing programme activities. But in most cases, students stayed at their host universities to do their project work. This change in plan was mainly due to concerns about delays in completing project work if the students returned to their own organizations. There were also uncertainties as to whether students would get the necessary supervision and resources to carry out research of adequate quality. The experience of the MSc students registered at NRI has highlighted the latter point and this may be compounded if the time for project work is very short—these students are expected to complete their programmes within 12 months! Family obligations may cause students to delay the start of their research and it will inevitably take time for them to prepare activities such as surveys where respondents have to be identified and appointments made.

A major cause of concern to all partner organizations in SCARDA has been the uncertainty about when payments will be made to cover the costs of MSc studentships. This has the potential

to affect the quality of teaching services provided by host universities to the students. It may also mean that students receive their stipends late. When funds are released to the SROs they have been used to settle outstanding accounts and the universities have generally been the most immediate recipients. This unplanned and *ad hoc* approach has emerged because of the project's funding difficulties, although FARA and the SROs have done what they could under difficult circumstances to make the necessary payments to the universities. An important lesson arising from this is that once a commitment has been made to support studentships, it should not be compromised by other issues. When MSc studentships are supported through a project, there should be a financing arrangement that allows payments on schedule irrespective of funding mechanism.

A main lesson that emerged from the early stages of SCARDA implementation is that insufficient time was allocated to the initial stages of the institutional analysis in the FIs. This arose, in part, because priority was given to developing detailed activity plans which were required for the approval of the implementation phase. As such, it took longer to develop a common understanding of what the project was trying to achieve and how the FIs could engage in it most effectively. Insufficient attention was given to the financial resources that the FIs would need to host training events and support learning platforms. It was assumed that most of these costs would be contributions in kind from the FIs. This was unrealistic, considering the serious resource constraints under which FIs operate.

The change management plans adopted by some FIs takes into account the fact that the organization operates in an unsupportive policy environment and that evidence is needed to encourage policymakers to implement appropriate reforms (for example, by offering salaries and incentives that will attract high quality staff and reduce the high attrition rate that exists at present). Hence, there has sometimes been focus on improving communication skills to promote enhanced information flows to policy makers and other stakeholders. However, it is recognized by organizations participating in SCARDA that projects cannot allocate resources to directly influence the external environment. The project relies on the participating organizations at every level to lobby for an improved enabling environment as part of its regular core activities. Experience has shown that this is a major challenge which must form part of a broader advocacy approach if it is to bring results.

A growing body of evidence indicates that institutional learning is an essential pre-requisite to improved decision making by research managers and thus, to beneficial institutional change. This is particularly relevant for capacity strengthening initiatives where behavioural change is often the key to success and where support needs to be sustained over relatively long periods. For these reasons, SCARDA has a strong learning orientation and this implies that the planning, monitoring, and evaluation framework should be flexible enough to accommodate unpredictable change. An attempt has been made to achieve an appropriate balance between accountability and learning in the design of the project performance management plan. However, more could have been done to develop clear targets of achievement during the institutional analyses and to integrate M&E more rapidly into the overall project management system.

Reports from implementing SROs indicate that in the new SCARDA Management System, planning, management of planned activities, and M&E have been made easier. However, the roles and responsibilities of service providers were still indistinct in certain circumstances and needed to be clarified to avoid conflict and duplication of efforts. Another lesson learned was that FIs

have to be assisted with the development of their story telling and communication of the stories to their stakeholders. In addition, the FPR capacity strengthening workshops undertaken in the SADC have provided a mechanism for bringing together representatives from different partners in the agricultural innovation system, thereby facilitating their mutual engagement. This will contribute to participatory institutional analyses and building of the wider institutional networks and linkages for developing collaborative market-led research agenda that meets the needs of end-users. However, building strong research management systems is a process that may need a longer term intervention, e.g. a minimum of 3 years for a visible and lasting impact on the institution.

Cross-cutting issues have been highlighted during the ARM workshops in various SROs. Particular attention was given to placing change management as the underlying process governing the development and implementation of activity plans. As a result, there is now a growing recognition of the importance of change management as a concept and an increased understanding of how to apply change management principles to support beneficial change. The SCARDA mentorship programmes executed during change management workshops have promoted the engagement of all levels of management staff of participating institutions. The change management workshops have bridged the gap between senior and lower level managers. In addition, participation of senior management staff of research institutions is very critical since they are in position to advocate for favourable organizational policy changes.

At the SCARDA-ECA Service Providers' Workshop⁴ held in Entebbe, Uganda, 18–19 September 2009, the following programme-wide lessons emerged:

- With hindsight, it is evident that agreement in a meeting or confirmation of a document does not substitute for proactive structured training.
- For a project that is implemented in compliance with the subsidiarity principle, staff changes lead to loss of institutional memory as institutions do not have great depth of staff engaged in the project who have the time to train newcomers.
- In a traditional project, centralized management can ensure that whenever there are staff changes the new recruits are properly briefed and prepared for the responsibilities they are expected to accept; and
- There will be a continuous need for orientation throughout the life of a programme.

4. A report of this workshop is available with FARA



7. Working with partners

In SADC/FANR, the farmer participatory research (FPR) trainings conducted during the third quarter in Botswana and Lesotho had broadened the understanding of participants on how to build partnerships with the farming community and methods of conducting FPR. Also, they gained some insight into the need to involve a wider range of partners in their research, and how to ensure that research outcomes meet the needs and expectations of their clients. The FPR capacity strengthening provides a mechanism for bringing together representatives from different partners in the agricultural innovation system and showing how they can better work together. As such, it contributes to participatory institutional analysis and building the wider institution for developing a research agenda which is more market led and meeting the needs of end-users.

There have been better linkages among participating research organizations in ASARECA. This has enhanced cooperation through sharing of information and learning in the area of agricultural research and innovations within the NARS in the three countries and beyond. An example is the SCARDA information sharing platform that has linked NARS in Rwanda, Burundi, and Sudan to other agricultural networks, even to those in other SROs. Such information includes grants for funding research, post graduate training opportunities, new technologies, and other research related information that is important for the research institutions to remain up-to-date and competitive.





8. Communication

The programme-wide communication strategy has been internalized by the SROs, often building upon existing strategies. Several facets of the programme communication strategy articulated during the PSL - I workshop have been implemented. Specifically, the D-groups are functional and were particularly useful in consolidating positions from the various pre-PSL - I deliberations of the various experts groups. E-mail communication in various programme matters has continued to be the dominant communication pathway. The SCARDA webpage, as part of the FARA website, is functional and regularly updated with new information. During 2009, a number of features on SCARDA appeared on the ASARECA, RUFORUM, CORAF/WECARD, and SADC/FANR websites. Three issues of the quarterly bulletin, *SCARDA Outcomes*, for April–June, July–September, October–December, 2009, were produced and widely circulated to programme partners.





9. Implementing M & E

The M&E system has been largely implemented at the various programme levels. The programme log frame has been redesigned in response to the recommendations of the MTR review. The output statements have been revised, targets quantified, and the generic log frame cascaded to SRO and FI levels. The OVIs and milestones are being used to track progress in regard to output delivery and purpose achievement. A performance management plan, or M&E strategy, complete with indicator descriptions, is also in place. Section 7.4.4 gives a background on the development and functionality of SCARDA M&E system. Various tools ranging from the employee mid-point survey, workshop registration, workshop participation/evaluation, baseline survey, quality assurance forms, quarterly report, and annual report forms are already in use at FI, SRO, and programme levels to gather M&E data. Concern has however been raised as whether all these forms are necessary. Retrospective population of baseline data is already underway in most of the FIs. Technical reporting formats, especially for quarterly and annual reports, are also in use. Guidelines for developing storylines and documentation of lessons learned at FI level have also been designed. Employee mid-point surveys have been carried out particularly in ASARECA and SADC/FANR.





10. Management

Details of new programme management innovations introduced subsequent to the PSL workshop have been discussed above. Obviously, some challenges remain particularly in regard to the subsidiarity engagement. For example, there are still delays in submission of operational and financial reports, work plans, and fund requests. This has hampered adherence to the outlines of the new management system. Also, prompt fund disbursements from SROs to service providers and universities hosting SCARDA MSc students have not been strictly observed.



There were changes in SCARDA coordination at the FARA Secretariat during 2009. Dr Irene Annor-Frempong (left) became the Project Coordinator from August 2009. She takes over from Mr. Ralph von Kaufmann, who is currently the Coordinator for the new FARA initiative on Universities, Business and Research in Agricultural Innovations (UniBRAIN). Previously, Irene was the SCARDA Programme Officer, a position that has since been assumed by Prof. Nelson Ojijo Olang'o (right) from November 2009.





11. The way forward

This will involve three key steps:

- Documentation of the SCARDA process and success stories;
- Appraisal of SCARDA: its processes, methodology, and management; and
- Development of SCARDA II.

Early thoughts on a possible direction for SCARDA II focus on follow-up ARM training with the current FIs to consolidate the gains already made in SCARDA I, while buttressing advocacy engagements with higher level policy makers in national governments (e.g., Agricultural Committees of National Assemblies, Directors of Agriculture in the Ministries, Directors of Planning and Finance in Ministries, and Permanent Secretaries/DGs of Ministries) aimed at:

- i. Out scaling of ARM activities to selected satellite institutions, which could be regarded as the next set of FIs for SCARDA II;
- ii. Focusing attention on capacity strengthening in Agricultural Information Management; with particular reference to the following:
 - a. Communicating agricultural research to a wide audience, including to policymakers in national governments, the farming community, and the private sector,
 - b. Strengthening the culture of communication of the outputs of agricultural research and development,
 - c. Strengthening institutional capacities in the production of agricultural publications, and
 - d. Developing *Communities of Practice* in agricultural information management and agricultural communication.
- iii. Strengthening capacity to build capacity; through capacity strengthening actions/training in the development and management of capacity strengthening programmes in FIs.
- iv. Out-scaling graduate demand study to be much more focussed and re-designed to address the issues identified in and the recommendations of the *Report of the Africa Commission – Realising the Potential of Africa’s Youth May 2009*.
- v. Promoting stronger linkages and participation with carefully selected and relevant partners to add value. Such partners might include CTA, Association of African Universities, African Capacity Building Foundation, etc.

Implementation mechanism: There will be the need to re-design the Project Implementation Arrangements (PIAs) with re-defined roles for the SROs and FIs. The concept of LSP in the PIA will be critically reviewed.

12. Annexes



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12.1 Disaggregated Workshop Participants Lists

Target number of people trained (by FI, management subject area, level of responsibility, gender, age group)	Management Subject Area, Venue, Date	Total, (Date of training)	FI staff attendance			SI staff attendance			Attendance by age			Responsibility		
			M	F	M	F	25-39	40-49	50+	Senior Manager	Middle Manager	Other		
	ME & Communication workshop in SADC, Zambia, Feb 2009	15	10	3	2	2	-	4	4	9	3	8	4	
	FPR, Lesotho, 9 – 13 February 2009	28	11	0	13	4					15	6	5	
	AIS, Botswana, 16 – 20 February 2009	27	11	3	15	2					3	15	14	
	AIS, Zambia, 16 – 20 February 2009	27	8	5	12	2		6	6	4	13	11	3	
	2 nd Inst. Analysis & CM Workshop, 19 May 2009, BCA, Botswana	19	14	5				3	3	16	9	9	1	
	2 nd Inst. Analysis & CM Workshop, 20 May 2009, DAR, Botswana	22	16	6							4	5	13	
	2 nd Inst. Analysis & CM Workshop, 10 - 14 Aug 2009, NRDC & UNZA, Zambia	19	16	3				6	5	8	9	8	2	
	ARM 1, Botswana, 12 – 15 Oct 2009	25	14	7	3	1		2	10	13	21	4	0	
	CTA M&E workshop, 9 – 13 November, 2009, Namibia	8	6	1	0	1		2	1	5		8		

Target number of people trained (by FI, management subject area, level of responsibility, gender, age group)	Management Subject Area, Venue, Date	Total	FI staff attendance		SI staff attendance		Attendance by age				Responsibility		
			M	F	M	F	25-39	40-49	50+	Senior Manager	Middle Manager	Other	
	ARM 1, Kumasi, Ghana, (1 – 6 Dec 2008)	20	16	1	3	0	0	3	17	20	0	0	
	ARM 2, Bamako, Mali, (22 – 26 Mar 2009)	18	14	1	3	0	0	3	15	18	0	0	
	M&E & Communication workshop, 30 March – 2 April, 2009	13	10	0	3	0	0	1	12	12	1	0	

Target number of people trained (by FI, management subject area, level of responsibility, gender, age group)	Management Subject Area, Venue, Date	Total	FI staff attendance		SI staff attendance		Attendance by age				Responsibility		
			M	F	M	F	25-39	40-49	50+	Senior Manager	Middle Manager	Other	
	M&E, Communication & Planning workshop in SADC, 12 – 16 January 2009, Kigali, Rwanda	18	15	3	0	0	0	4	11	3	3	8	4
	IPM Workshop, 5 – 9 October 2009, Bujumbura, Burundi,	23											
	ARM 1 (ISAR)	52											
	ARM 1 (ISABU)	57											

12.2 Revised Logical Framework

Narrative summary	Indicators of achievement	Means of verification	Risks and assumptions
<p>Super goal</p> <p>Poverty is sustainably reduced in sub-Saharan Africa.</p>	<p>S-i. Annual increase in GDP from agricultural sector</p> <p>S-ii. Increase in proportion of rural population living above the poverty data line</p> <p>S-iii. Decline in the proportion of household expenditure on basic food items</p> <p>S-iv. Improved performance of agriculture sector public-private partnerships</p>	<p>S-i. Government statistics</p> <p>S-ii. FAO and World Bank, ADB, Economic Commission for Africa statistics and reports</p> <p>S-iii. COMESA and other regional organisation reports</p> <p>S-iv. Agricultural Sector Performance Reviews</p>	
<p>Goal</p> <p>NARS contribution to poverty reduction in sub-Saharan Africa substantially and sustainably enhanced.</p>	<p>G-i. Portfolio of NARS research priorities and strategies aligned to national Poverty Reduction and Environmental Strategies in 90% of participating countries by 2015.</p> <p>G-ii. Proportion of NARS research outputs made available to uptake pathways increases by at least 50% in 90% of participating countries by 2020.</p> <p>G-iii. Improved rate of adoption of technologies, methods and policies by intermediate and end users in 90% of participating countries by 2020.</p> <p>G-iv. NARS staff retention and satisfaction levels improve substantially in 90% of participating countries by 2020.</p>	<p>G-i. NARS reviews and programme evaluations. Strategic Plans of NARS actors, SROs. NARS and SRO annual reports.</p> <p>G-ii. National Research Programmes Annual reports and Information products (e.g. "Catalogues").</p> <p>G-iii. NARS Client feedback and end user adoption surveys.</p> <p>G-iv. NARS staff satisfaction surveys.</p>	<p>Relevant regional and national policies relating to agricultural services, trade and environmental conservation are implemented.</p> <p>Governments continue to support agriculture and poverty reduction as priorities.</p> <p>Equitable distribution of benefits from agriculture related innovations occurs.</p> <p>Key actors (public and private) in agricultural innovation work in partnership, responding creatively to emerging opportunities and challenges.</p>

Narrative summary	Indicators of achievement	Means of verification	Risks and assumptions
<p>Purpose</p> <p>The capacity and performance of participating NARS improved in key areas of their Agricultural Research for Development (AR4D) functions.</p>	<p>P-i. By June 2010, Focal Institutions are confident that performance will improve in response to specific SCARDA initiated change management interventions</p> <p>P-ii. Examples of positive change, improved performance and improved NARS relationships in all participating NARS by June 2010.</p> <p>P-iii. In at least 30% of participating NARS, key stakeholder are satisfied that their linkages with FIs arising from SCARDA interventions have improved by June 2010.</p> <p>P-iv. Participating organizations are implementing SCARDA related measures to mainstream gender, HIV/AIDS, pro-poor and other social inclusion issues by June 2010</p> <p>P-v. Use of graduate demand study by at least 70% of target Tertiary Education Institutions by June 2010</p> <p>P-vi. Endorsement of SCARDA approach by all SRO Boards and 90% of NARS senior management by June 2010</p>	<p>P-i. SCARDA Learning Workshop reports, mid and end of project surveys – using recall</p> <p>P-ii. SCARDA Learning Workshop reports, mid and end of project surveys – using recall</p> <p>P-iii. SCARDA Learning Workshop reports, mid and end of project surveys – using recall</p> <p>P-iv. SCARDA Learning Workshop reports, mid and end of project surveys – using recall. FI annual reports</p> <p>P-v. SCARDA Learning Workshop reports, mid and end of project surveys – using recall. FI annual reports</p> <p>P-vi. Minutes of SRO board meetings, interviews/dialogue with NARS management, FI annual reports.</p>	<p>Levels of investment in African NARS are sustained along with commitments to increase these.</p> <p>Steps to prevent and mitigate the specific effects of HIV-AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis on NARS human capacity continue and improve.</p> <p>Regional mechanisms for sharing relevant knowledge and products are sustained and continue to improve.</p> <p>Lessons on capacity strengthening approaches from SCARDA and related initiatives are incorporated into future NARS policies and investments.</p> <p>Measures to address the constraints to improving staff recruitment, reward and retention systems, and also wider performance management systems for NARS are implemented via civil service reform.</p> <p>The agricultural higher education curriculum will be revised to address the demand assessment.</p>

Outputs	Indicators of achievement	Means of verification	Risks and assumptions
<p>Output 1. Agricultural research management systems and managerial competencies to conduct high quality research strengthened in participating NARS.</p>	<p>1.1 Twelve (12) strategic ARM capacity development plan developed and fully implemented by March 2010</p> <p>1.2 Target number of people (406) trained by (FI, management subject area, level of responsibility, gender, age group)</p> <p>1.3 Proportion of FI staff (5%) with management responsibilities mentored (level, gender, age group)</p> <p>1.4 At least 2 management tools developed and implemented to address key areas of management system improvement in each FI by June 2010</p> <p>1.5 At least 70% of participants express satisfaction with ARM training and mentorship in the participating NARS by May 2010</p>	<p>Institutional analysis reports. ARM CS plans from FIs and SROs. Quarterly reports (FARA, SROs, FIs)</p> <p>ARM Trainer's reports & SRO course attendance records</p> <p>Baseline staffing data & Mentors Reports</p> <p>Institutional analysis reports. ARM CS plans from FIs and SROs. Quarterly reports (FARA, SROs, FIs). Lessons reports</p>	<p>Senior managers in participating institutions continue to actively support an internal change management process</p> <p>SCARDA trained and mentored managers remain in their institutions.</p> <p>Any new policies, directives and related programmes introduced in next 12 months re-enforce and/or complement improvements introduced.</p> <p>Contracted providers of ARM capacity strengthening service providers add value by sharing training materials and approaches.</p> <p>Existing levels of resources, including IT infrastructure, and communications for FIs to implement related performance improvements remain constant or improve.</p>

Outputs	Indicators of achievement	Means of verification	Risks and assumptions
<p>Output 2. The capacity of participating NARS to undertake quality agricultural research for development strengthened</p>	<p>2.1 Strategic CS plan on quality agricultural research for development in all FIs developed and fully implemented by March 2010</p> <p>2.2 Target number of NARS staff (79) completed and number in SCARDA funded M Sc training by End of Project (subject area, level, gender, age group)</p> <p>2.3 Target proportion (5%) of FI Research scientists mentored (level, gender, age group) by May 2010</p> <p>2.4 Target proportion (75%) of FI research scientists & No of SI staff trained in at least one subject area (level, gender, age group) by March 2010</p> <p>2.5 Target proportion (100%) of FI technicians trained in at least one subject area (level, gender, age group) by March 2010</p> <p>2.6 At least 70% of participants express satisfaction with training and mentorship in the identified competence areas relating to AR4D in the participating NARS by May 2010</p>	<p>2.1 Institutional analysis reports. CS plans from FI's and SROs. Quarterly reports (FARA, SROs, FIs)</p> <p>2.2 University & LSP M Sc progress reports to student's FIs and SROs</p> <p>2.3 Baseline staffing data & Mentor's Reports</p> <p>2.4 Baseline staffing data & trainer's reports and SRO course attendance records.</p> <p>2.5 Student feedback to SRO and FI, reported in quarterly reports</p> <p>2.6 Trainer's reports, training evaluation reports. End of project participant satisfaction survey</p>	<p>AS ABOVE</p> <p>SCARDA trained M Sc candidates return to their institutions,</p>

Outputs	Indicators of achievement	Means of verification	Risks and assumptions
<p>Output 3. The relevance of training programmes in agricultural universities to current market demand established</p>	<p>3.1 The study approach and methodology developed and agreed upon by each SRO by May 2009</p> <p>3.2 Results and recommendations reviewed and adopted by the SROs</p> <p>3.3 Results and recommendation tabled and discussed by the Governance Bodies of the Network of Universities</p>	<p>3.1 SRO quarterly reports & study inception report (if available)</p> <p>3.2 SRO quarterly reports & Minutes from SRO meetings</p> <p>3.3 SRO quarterly reports & Feedback from governance bodies</p>	<p>Consultants add value to study by sharing methods and approaches.</p> <p>Universities will accept relevance of findings for their curriculum review process.</p>
<p>Output 4. SCARDA approach for capacity strengthening is validated.</p>	<p>4.1 SCARDA implementation plan responding to MTR and incorporating project wide issues (gender, change management, mentoring) developed and agreed by end of May 2009</p> <p>4.2 MTR recommended measures to strengthen project management and improve rate of implementation in place by July 2009 and functional to end of project.</p> <p>4.3 Communication strategy and plan developed by end of May 2009 and functional to end of project.</p> <p>4.4 Project performance management strategy and plan developed and adopted by partners by end of June 2009 and functional to end of project</p> <p>4.5 Lessons and best practices derived from SCARDA approach documented and shared with key stakeholders by end of May 2010.</p>	<p>4.1 PSI workshop report. Revised work plan submitted to DFID</p> <p>4.2 Quarterly reports (FARA, SROs, LSPs, Fis). Minutes from management meetings</p> <p>4.3 Communication strategy and plan documents. Quarterly reports (FARA, SROs, LSPs, Fis). Website and e-groups usage reports.</p> <p>4.4 Performance management strategy and plan documents. Quarterly reports (FARA, SROs, LSPs, Fis). Annual reports (FARA, SROs, LSPs)</p> <p>4.5 Lessons sections of management meeting minutes, quarterly and annual reports, website and e-groups usage reports. Workshop reports, Strategy document on up-scaling. Case studies and "policy briefs".</p>	<p>Senior decision makers will sign agreements without further delay.</p> <p>Continuity of involvement all SCARDA focal persons throughout the remainder of the project.</p> <p>Existing electronic information sharing platforms and support programmes in FARA and SROs are maintained and continue to improve and Fis have ready access to internet services.</p> <p>Project partner designated individuals responsible for M&E and process documentation remain available for, these functions</p>

Activities	Implementation Milestones/Targets (April 2009 to June 2010)	Implementation risks and strategies proposed to manage these.
<p>Output 1. Agricultural research management systems and managerial competencies to conduct high quality research strengthened in participating NARS.</p> <p>1.1 Deepening institutional analysis activities,</p> <p>1.2 Agricultural research management (ARM) workshops</p> <p>1.3 ARM related coaching, mentoring and change facilitation activities,</p> <p>1.4 Change management plan development and implementation,</p> <p>1.5 Review of ARM capacity strengthening and change management process.</p>	<p>1.1 Activities for deepening institutional analysis defined by and completed by</p> <p>1.2 ARM training workshops initiated by and completed by (with gender participation targets)</p> <p>1.3 ARM related mentoring, gender and diversity, coaching and learning facilitation plans agreed by and completed by (with gender participation targets)</p> <p>1.4 ARM related change management plans agreed by and completed by</p> <p>1.5 Internal review of ARM CS change management process undertaken and documented by</p>	<p>Risk 1.1: Senior management are distanced from institutional analysis and related management innovations.</p> <p>Risk Management Strategies:</p> <p>1.1a. Regular briefing of FI senior managers by SCARDA focal persons – summary of institutional analysis findings</p> <p>1.1b. Invite senior managers to SCARDA related ARM meetings and activities.</p> <p>Risk 1.2: Delays in identification and contracting of local ARM training and mentoring service providers and inappropriate mentors (CORAF & SADC only).</p> <p>Risk Management Strategies</p> <p>1.2a. Prioritise search for providers and identify and use “fast-track” mechanisms for quality assurance and contracting of these.</p> <p>1.2b. FARA and SROs ensure guidance on quality assurance is available to LSPs and other decision makers.</p> <p>Risk 1.3 Minimal participation from staff in agreeing change management priorities and plans.</p> <p>Risk Management Strategy:</p> <p>1.3a. Arrange meetings in FIs to discuss and endorse plans,</p> <p>Risk 1.4: Resources and guidance for internal review process not prioritized.</p> <p>Risk Management Strategy:</p> <p>1.4a. Plan and budget for internal reviews and develop guidance for these as a priority</p>

Activities	Implementation Milestones/Targets (April 2009 to June 2010)	Implementation risks and strategies proposed to manage these.
<p>Output 2. The capacity of participating NARS to undertake quality agricultural research for development strengthened</p>	<p>Risk 2.1: "Provider" Universities don't comply with progress reporting requirements (CORAF & SADC?) ..</p> <p>Risk Management Strategy:</p> <p>2.1a. LSPs provide reporting formats and get agreement from Universities (e.g. via exchange of emails) on reporting as a priority.</p> <p>Risk 2.2: Delays in identification and contracting of technical and professional training and mentoring service providers (CORAF & SADC only).</p> <p>Risk Management Strategy:</p> <p>2.2a. As above for 1.2.</p> <p>Risk 2.3: Pressure to meet tight deadlines on professional and technical training and mentoring will compromise quality of provision.</p> <p>Risk Management Strategies:</p> <p>2.3a. Prioritise development of quality assurance mechanisms for planning and monitoring delivery of this service,</p> <p>2.3b. Prioritise detailed pre-scheduling of all short courses with all involved partners to optimize scope for forward planning.</p> <p>2.3c. Go for quality over quantity (this relates to budgeted time for course preparation and reporting)</p>	<p>2.1 M Sc Training programme for identified researchers</p> <p>2.1 LSP M Sc Training programme quarterly progress reports submitted to SROs on time from June 2009 to June 2010</p> <p>2.2 Short courses for identified technicians</p> <p>2.2 First technician short course initiated no later than and last technician short course completed by (with gender participation targets)</p> <p>2.3 Short courses for identified researchers</p> <p>2.3 First professional short course initiated no later than and last professional short course completed by (with gender participation targets)</p>

Activities	Implementation Milestones/Targets (April 2009 to June 2010)	Implementation risks and strategies proposed to manage these.
2.4 Mentoring for identified researchers	2.4 Mentoring of researchers initiated no later than and progress documented and reviewed by (with gender participation targets)	Risk 2.4. CS service providers are reluctant to collaborate with each other in development and delivery of training materials and share experiences. Risk Management Strategies: 2.4a Discuss collaboration and IPR aspects in initial dialogue and include clauses in contracts with service providers, 2.4b. Evidence record of the above during selection, 2.4c. Joint planning of CS inputs with all main service providers present (ASARECA workshop example). 2.4d. Include key service providers in lesson workshop/s, 2.4e. Encourage CS trainers to establish their own learning group/s.
2.5 Other AR4D strengthening activities (inc. strengthening outreach and linkage capacity of FIs)	2.5 Outreach and linkage capacity strengthening activities initiated no later than and progress documented and reviewed by	2.5 Targeted staff are not available to participate in courses as scheduled Risk Management Strategies: 2.5a Ensure all FIs and relevant staff are consulted when setting dates for training courses.
Output 3. The relevance of training programmes in agricultural universities to current market demand established		
3.1 Development of methodology and approach for study of relevance of agricultural training programmes to market demand,	3.1 Study approach and methodology agreed by end of May 2009	Risk 3.1 Agricultural training institutions will not "own" the study results. Risk Management Strategy: 3.1a Involve relevant decision makers in training institutions in study design and give them regular progress reports.
3.2 Implementation of study and documentation of results,	3.2 Study completed and report accepted by SROs by October 2009	
3.3 Sharing of study results with stakeholders.	3.3 Results and recommendation shared with key stakeholders by March 2010	

Activities	Implementation Milestones/Targets (April 2009 to June 2010)	Implementation risks and strategies proposed to manage these.
Output 4. SCARDA approach for capacity strengthening is validated.		
4.1 Management and Coordination of project implementation process	<p>4.1.1 SCARDA management teams at Project and SRO level formed by May 2009 and meet at least every 4 months to the end of the project</p> <p>4.1.2 All agreements with LSPs signed by May 2009</p> <p>4.1.3 All agreements/contracts with other all other service providers signed no later than June 2009.</p>	<p>4.1.1 Resources for regular meetings will be limiting. Risk Management Strategy:</p> <p>4.1a Budget for meetings and dovetail project management meetings with planning & learning workshops and sub-regional training events</p> <p>4.1.2/3 Further delays in signing of agreements Risk Management Strategy:</p> <p>4.1.2/3a Build and maintain good working relationships with LSPs and other service providers; develop trust. In fast-tracking ensure terms are clear and agreed in advance and payments are made for services without undue delays.</p>
4.2. Embedding project planning, performance monitoring and reporting activities into project management.	<p>4.2.1 Project log-frame fully revised and submitted to DFID by 15th May 2009.</p> <p>4.2.2 Harmonised revised costed work-plan submitted to DFID by 15th May 2009.</p> <p>4.2.3 Project Performance Management Strategy and Plan submitted to DFID by 15th June 2009.</p> <p>4.2.4 Project Performance Management System training & validation workshop completed by 26th June 2009.</p> <p>4.2.5 From July 2010 quarterly reporting system used by all partners and used for project management to end of project.</p>	<p>4.2 Project Management and partners will not fully "own" and use the M&E system developed Risk Management Strategies</p> <p>4.2a Single workshop ASAP with all involved in project management and reporting to refine and endorse the proposed M&E system and plans for reporting and project performance management,</p> <p>4.2b Support/mentoring from M&E practitioners on embedding the M&E system for all individuals involved in project reporting and decision-making.</p>
4.3 Embedding communication activities into project management and learning.	<p>4.3.1 SCARDA communication action plans at SRO and FARA level agreed by June 2009</p> <p>4.3.2 Relevant Websites and D-groups are functional and accessible to all project partners by March 2009</p>	<p>4.3 Project Management and partners will not fully "own" and use the Communication Plans developed Risk Management Strategy:</p> <p>4.3a Support/mentoring from communication practitioners on embedding the communication system for all individuals involved in project reporting, decision-making and sharing of lessons,</p>

Activities	Implementation Milestones/Targets (April 2009 to June 2010)	Implementation risks and strategies proposed to manage these.
4.4 Main-streaming cross-cutting issues into the project process,	4.4.1 Action plans for mainstreaming gender, mentoring and change management submitted to FARA by 8 May 2009 and incorporated into overall project work-plan by 14 th May 2009.	4.4 Project Management and partners will not fully “own” and use the Cross-cutting Plans for gender (marginalisation of women, Younger, older researchers in CS activities), mentoring and change management Risk Management Strategies: 4.4a. Agree socially inclusive criteria for selection of participating individuals and communicate these to all parties making decisions regarding workshop design and invitations and nominations to participate. 4.4b support/mentoring (“On-line”?) from gender, mentoring and change management practitioners on mainstreaming the plans for all individuals involved in project decision-making and service provision
4.5 Documentation and Lesson Learning, validation and sharing activities.	4.5.1 Process documentation support and training provided to key focal individuals by 4.5.2 Lesson learning framework and mechanisms developed and in place by July 2009 4.5.3 2 nd Lesson learning and validation workshop/s held and documented by May 2009 4.5.4 Lesson sharing and dissemination activities completed by June 2010.	4.5 Sharing and learning will be limited by “success and/or blame culture” and lack of trust. Risk Management Strategies 4.5a. Incorporate trust building and monitoring tools with learning and sharing processes. 4.5b. Establish informal learning groups with codes of conduct.

12.3 Financial Summary for the Period 1st January – 31st December, 2009

As indicated in the table below, a total budget of Stg £ 6,666,490 was available for the project by 31 December 2008. The total amount received from the donor during the year under review was Stg £ 3,782,371, the bulk of which directly transferred to SRO accounts by University of Greenwich in late December 2009. FARA managed to pre-finance a significant portion of the Stg £ 2,149,714 expended in the earlier part the year to sustain critical project activities. The cumulative project expenditure as at 31 December 2009 was Stg £3,295,849 constituting an overall spend rate of about 42% against the project implementation budget of Stg £ 7,845,360. The available balance to effect activities at the start of 2010 was Stg £ 1,632,657, while the total budget balance for the project was Stg £ 4,516,776.

SCARDA Financial Summary for 1 st January – 31 st Dec 2009			
Activity	Balance Budget		Variance
	As at Dec 2008 UK£	Expenditure for the period Jan–Dec 2009 UK£	
OUTPUT 1	1,577,136	382,338	1,194,798
Institutional Analysis	475,425	53,521	421,904
Research Management	1,101,711	328,817	772,894
OUTPUT 2	3,425,055	862,815	2,562,240
Quality Research	1,940,195	689,750	1,250,445
Professional Skills	1,248,958	124,047	1,124,911
Tracer Studies	235,902	49,018	186,884
OUTPUT 3	420,550	143,788	276,762
Lead Service Providers	420,550	143,788	276,762
OUTPUT 4	1,175,586	750,977	424,609
M&E	147,579	66,115	81,464
Communications System	225,587	5,264	220,323
Mid-term Reviews & Workshop	105,088	51,374	53,714
Programme Coordination	697,332	628,224	69,108
Capital costs	68,163	9,796	58,367
GRAND TOTAL	6,666,490	2,149,714	4,516,776
Summary for Jan – Dec 2009			
Total Receipts	3,782,371		
Total Expenditure	2,149,714		
Balance C/F to 2010	1,632,657		
Cumulative Summary to 31 Dec '09			
Cumulative Total Receipts			4,960,681
Cumulative Total Expenditure			3,295,849
Balance carried Forward			1,664,832
Available Budget			4,516,776
Total Budget			7,845,360

12.4 SCARDA New Management System⁵

Purpose:

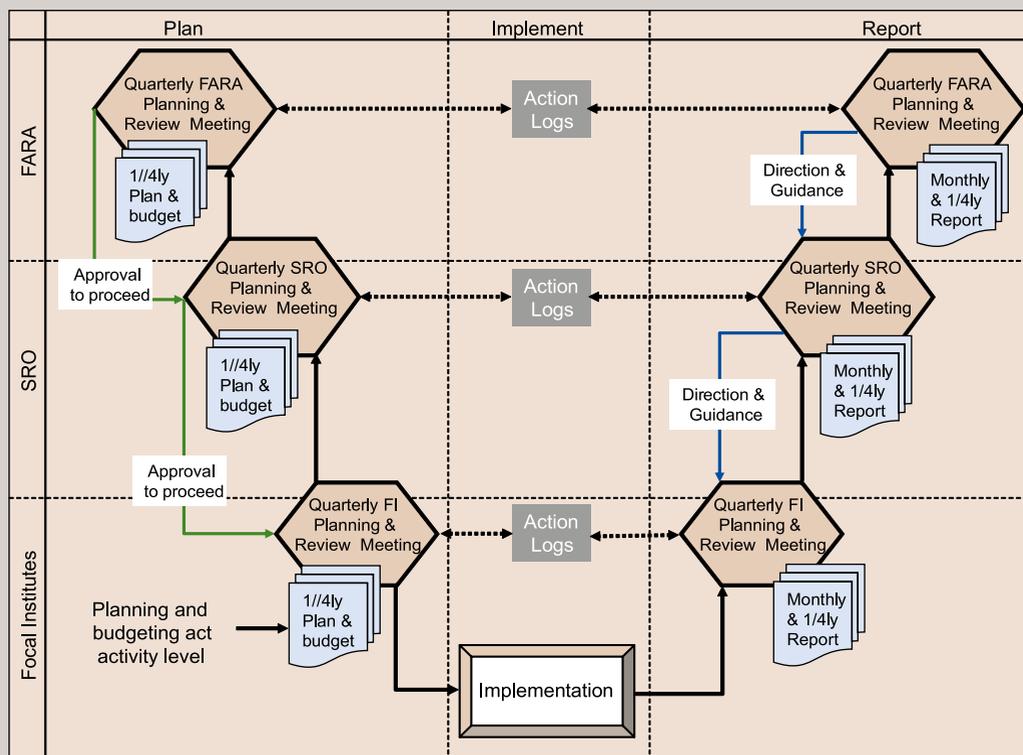
The system will assist the SCARDA management team to challenging, realistic and well costed plans of a quarterly basis for the implementation of SCARDA. It will allow management at all levels to review progress at monthly intervals and enable them to identify problems and to undertake management action to solve these problems promptly. It will assist management to identify opportunities and manage for success. It will ensure rigorous financial management and will assist SCARDA management to effectively manage finances and cash-flow. It will provide FARA management with regular overviews of SCARDA performance and will enable FARA management to identify critical problems and opportunities. This will assist in advising the development of broader capacity strengthening strategies in the African agricultural research systems.

The System:

The system, comprising of interlinked operational and financial components, is based on a quarterly cycle of planning and reporting at the three SCARDA management levels: Focal Institutions, SROs and FARA.

The Operational Management, Planning and Reporting System:

The operational system is summarised in Figure 1, below:



5. Based on the system proposed by Dr. John Linton, NRI, UK.

The Operational planning, management and reporting system is based on quarterly meetings, held at three levels of SCARDA management:

1. Focal Institution Planning and Review Meeting:

Purpose

The purpose of the meeting is to prepare and commit to a quarterly work plan and budget for a given Focal Institution, taking in to consideration the requirements of the focal institutions, the available resources and the experiences gained through implementation to date.

Location, participants and timing

A meeting will be held at each focal institution and will be attended *at a minimum* by the SRO SCARDA Focal Person and the members of the management team at the focal institution who are responsible for SCARDA. The SRO SCARDA Focal Person should be the chair. There are twelve focal institutions. The most that a single SRO has to deal with is five. Undertaking five such meetings over a two week period, once a quarter, should be quite manageable. Given the need for the outcome of this meeting to feed in to the quarterly funding cycle, the meetings should be held during the second half of the second month of the quarterly funding cycle.

Working Documents

The working documents for the meeting are:

- Updated operational and financial reports for the preceding period
- Proposed activities for the coming period, with budgets if possible; If budgets are not available, participants should be prepared to develop these during the meeting.

Action Logs

Any actions, resulting from the meeting should be written down and assigned to an individual with a 'due by' date. These actions should be kept in hard copy in the form of an action log. People who have these actions assigned to them should commit in writing to undertake these actions.

Agenda

The proposed agenda is as follows:

- Review of Action Log
- Review of performance during the previous period; identification of variances to plan; assignment of actions to address variances.
- Consideration of plans and budgets for the coming period; are they challenging; do they correspond with the SCARDA and FI objectives; are the budgets realistic and within the resources of SCARDA; are they realistic and doable; what actions need to be assigned to ensure that they happen; can those actions be assigned, given the level of management authority of those attending the meeting.

- Review of the work plan and budget for the life of SCARDA: does the performance to date and the plans for the coming quarter have any implication of the ‘life of project’ work plan? If so, what and what actions need to be taken as a result?
- Other operational and financial issues: Actions to be taken.
- Review of Action Log and commitment to actions assigned.

2. SRO Planning and Review Meeting:

Purpose

The purpose of the meeting is to prepare and commit to a consolidated regional quarterly work plan and budget at SRO level. This will take in to consideration the consolidated outputs from the FI planning and review meetings.

Location, participants and timing

A meeting will be held at each SRO and will be attended *at a minimum* by the FARA SCARDA Coordinator or Programme Officer, the SRO SCARDA focal person and the NRI SCARDA Link person. The FARA SCARDA Coordinator/Program Officer should be the chair. Given the need for the outcome of this meeting to feed in to the quarterly funding cycle, the meetings should be completed by the end of the first full week of the third month of the quarterly funding cycle.

Working Documents

The working documents for the meeting are:

- Updated regional operational and financial reports for the preceding period
- Proposed activities for the coming period, with budgets.
- Action Logs

Agenda

The proposed agenda is as follows:

- Review of Action Log
- Review of operational and financial performance during the previous period; identification of variances to plan; assignment of actions to address variances.
- Consideration of plans and budgets for the coming period; are they challenging; do they correspond with the SCARDA and SRO objectives; are the budgets realistic and within the resources of SCARDA; are they realistic and doable; what actions need to be assigned to ensure that they happen; can those actions be assigned, given the level of management authority of those attending the meeting.
- Review of the work plan and budget for the life of SCARDA: does the performance to date and the plans for the coming quarter have any implication of the ‘life of project’ work plan? If so, what and what actions need to be taken as a result?
- Other operational and financial issues: Actions to be taken.
- Review of Action Log and commitment to actions assigned.

3. SCARDA Senior Management Team Planning and Review Meeting:

Purpose

The purpose of the meeting is to prepare and commit to a consolidated SCARDA quarterly work plan and budget. This will take in to consideration the consolidated outputs from the FI planning and review meetings.

Subject to approval, the quarterly work plan will form the basis of an advance funding request to DFID.

Location, participants and timing

A meeting will be held at the FARA Secretariat in Accra and will be attended *at a minimum* by the FARA Executive Director, the SCARDA Senior Management Team and the NRI Technical Director for SCARDA. Given the importance of financial management in this project, it is suggested that the FARA Deputy Director also attend. The FARA Executive Director should be the chair.

Given the need for the outcome of this meeting to feed in to the quarterly funding cycle, the meetings should be completed by the end of the first full week of the third month of the quarterly funding cycle.

Working Documents

The working documents for the meeting are:

- Updated consolidated operational and financial reports for the preceding period
- Summary of proposed activities for the coming period, with budgets.
- Brief quarterly operational report (no more than 3 pages)
- Action Logs

Agenda

The proposed agenda is as follows:

- Review of Action Log
- Review of operational and financial performance during the previous period; identification of variances to plan; assignment of actions to address variances.
- Consideration of plans and budgets for the coming period; are they challenging; do they correspond with the SCARDA objectives; are the budgets realistic and within the resources of SCARDA; are they realistic and doable; what actions need to be assigned to ensure that they happen; can those actions be assigned, given the level of management authority of those attending the meeting.
- Review of the work plan and budget for the life of SCARDA: does the performance to date and the plans for the coming quarter have any implication of the 'life of project' work plan? If so, what and what actions need to be taken as a result?
- Other operational and financial issues: Actions to be taken.
- Review of Action Log and commitment to actions assigned.

It is noted that all SROs have Project Management teams, comprising SCARDA Focal Person, Lead Service Provider, NRI Link Person and FIs. This group meets when necessary, and sometimes remotely. Also a similar regional body has been established. These groups complement the management procedures rather than replicate them. Over the next months, the functions will be synchronised.

Once formal approval by FARA of the proposed work plan and budget has been given, the SCARDA Coordinator should formally advise the SRO and invite them to submit a funding request on the basis of their quarterly work plan.

4. Financial System

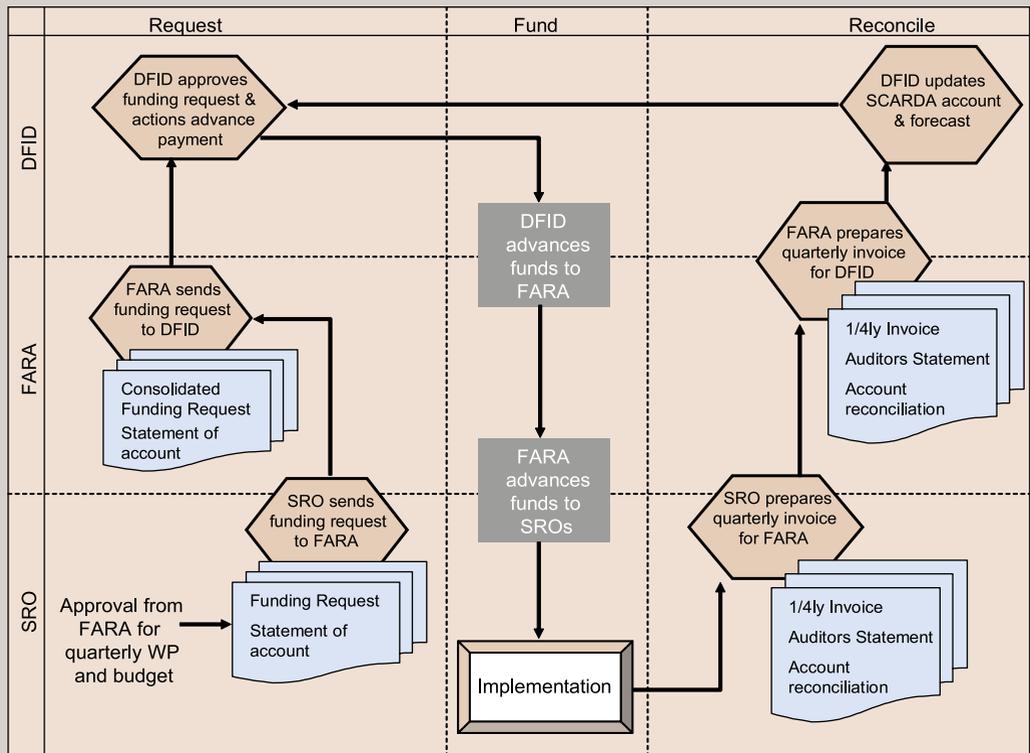
The proposed financial management system has been designed to meet SCARDAs requirements for pre-financing, without negative impact on FARAs cash flow, while ensuring high levels of transparency and accountability.

The system is summarised in Figure 2, below:

The procedures are as follows:

The quarterly budget & expenditure forecast at SRO level is prepared through the operational planning and management process, described in the previous section. On approval of this forecast, the SRO will submit to FARA a funding request for the coming quarter. This is not necessarily the same as the expenditure forecast and should be accompanied by a statement of their account. This statement should include:

- Balance of funds at the time of the request
- *Less* an estimate of any commitments to be met between the time of the request and the end of the quarter.



Thus, the funding request should be the amount of funds required to implement the coming quarter's work plan *less* the expected balance of funds at the end of the quarter. FARA will consolidate SRO requests and incorporate its own forecasted requirement. A funding request and consolidated statement of account will be prepared and sent to DFID. Subject to approval, DFID will authorise payment to FARAs dedicated £Stg account. On receipt of funds, FARA will send advances to the SROs.

The above steps, 1-5, will be undertaken **prior** to the quarter's end. This will ensure that funds are available at the start of the quarter. The following maximum lead times are assumed:

- SRO submission of funding request: 2 days from approval of quarterly work plan and budget
- FARA submission of funding request: 2 days from receipt of SRO funding requests
- DFID remittance of funds to FARA: 1 week from receipt of funding request from FARA
- FARA remittance of fund to SROs: 1 day within receipt of funds from receipt of funds from DFID
- TOTAL LEAD TIME: 2 weeks.

Funds will be reconciled through invoices as follows:

Within one week of the end on the quarter, the SRO will prepare an invoice for FARA. This invoice will include:

- Agreed costs incurred by the SRO
- Service provider and FI costs.

The invoice expressed in Pounds Stirling will show the total amount claimed during the preceding quarter. From this will be deducted any advances that have been received. As SCARDA will be operating on advance payments, it is not anticipated that any payments will be made in respect of an invoice. Rather, the SROs statement of account will be updated. Within two weeks of the end of the quarter, FARA will prepare an invoice for DFID. This invoice will include:

- Agreed costs incurred by FARA
- NRI and other service provider costs
- Costs incurred at SRO level, as detailed in the SRO invoices.

The invoice expressed in Pounds Stirling will show the total amount claimed during the preceding quarter. From this will be deducted any advances that have been received. It is suggested that external auditors be appointed to verify these invoices. This is not overly costly. This is also a procedure that is applied by other donors such as DANIDA. It does bring several advantages:

- It removes the need to attach extensive supporting documents to an invoice.
- It provides third party scrutiny
- It provides independent and external proof of financial probity.

Finally, it is stressed that all accounts, budgets and financial reports should be expressed in Pounds Sterling.

Acronyms and abbreviations

AGRHYMET	Centre Regional de Formation et d'Application en Agrométéorologie et Hydrologie Opérationnelle
ANAFE	African Network for Agriculture, Agroforestry and Natural Resources Education
ARC	Agricultural Research Corporation, Sudan
AR4D	Agricultural Research for Development
ARI	Agricultural Research Institute
ARM	Agricultural Research Management
ASARECA	Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa
CMAP	Change Management Action Plan
CORAF/WECARD	Conseil ouest et centre Africain pour la recherche et le développement agricole / West and Central African Council for Agricultural Research and Development
CRAL	Centre de Recherche Agronomique de Loudima, Congo
CS	Capacity Strengthening
CTA	Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation, The Netherlands
DFID	Department for International Development, UK
D-Groups	Discussion Groups
ECA	East and Central Africa
ESAMI	Eastern and Southern African Management Institute
FARA	Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa
FI	Focal Institution
FPR	Farmer Participatory Research
FPR4D	Farmer Participatory Research for Development
GCARD	Global Conference on Agricultural Research & Development
GIMPA	Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration
IAR4D	Integrated Agricultural Research for Development
IPM	Integrated Pest Management
ISABU	Institut des Sciences Agronomiques du Burundi
ISAR	Institut des Science Agronomiques du Rwanda
JKUAT	Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture & Technology, Kenya
KNUST	Kwame Nkrumah University of Science & Technology, Ghana
LSP	Lead Service Provider
M&E	Monitoring & Evaluation
MTR	Mid-Term Review

NaCCRI	National Crops Resources Research Institute, Uganda
NARI	National Agricultural Research Institute
NARS	National Agricultural Research System
NRI	Natural Resources Institute, UK
NUL	National University of Lesotho
OVI	Objectively Verifiable Indicator
PICO	People, Innovation and Change in Organizations, Team
PMT	Project Management Team
PSL	Programme-wide Strategies & Lesson-learning
RUFORUM	Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture
SADC/FANR	Southern African Development Community/Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources
SCARDA	Strengthening Capacity for Agricultural Research & Development
SI	Satellite Institution
SP	Service Provider
SRO	Sub-Regional Organization
SUTRAD	Support Unit for Teaching, Research and Agricultural Development
UNZA	University of Zambia
UoG	University of Greenwich, UK

Contents

FARA is the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa, the apex organization bringing together and forming coalitions of major stakeholders in agricultural research and development in Africa.

FARA is the technical arm of the African Union Commission (AUC) on rural economy and agricultural development and the lead agency of the AU's New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) to implement the fourth pillar of the Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP), involving agricultural research, technology dissemination and uptake.

FARA's vision: reduced poverty in Africa as a result of sustainable broad-based agricultural growth and improved livelihoods, particularly of smallholder and pastoral enterprises.

FARA's mission: creation of broad-based improvements in agricultural productivity, competitiveness and markets by supporting Africa's sub-regional organizations (SROs) in strengthening capacity for agricultural innovation.

FARA's Value Proposition: to provide a strategic platform to foster continental and global networking that reinforces the capacities of Africa's national agricultural research systems and sub-regional organizations.

FARA will make this contribution by achieving its *Specific Objective* of sustainable improvements to broad-based agricultural productivity, competitiveness and markets.

Key to this is the delivery of five *Results*, which respond to the priorities expressed by FARA's clients. These are:

1. Establishment of appropriate institutional and organizational arrangements for regional agricultural research and development.
2. Broad-based stakeholders provided access to the knowledge and technology necessary for innovation.
3. Development of strategic decision-making options for policy, institutions and markets.
4. Development of human and institutional capacity for innovation.
5. Support provided for platforms for agricultural innovation.

FARA will deliver these results by supporting the SROs through five Networking Support Functions (NSFs):

NSF 1. Advocacy and resource mobilisation

NSF 2. Access to knowledge and technologies

NSF 3. Regional policies and markets

NSF 4. Capacity strengthening

NSF 5. Partnerships and strategic alliances

FARA's donors are the African Development Bank (AfDB), the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the Centre de Coopération Internationale en Recherche Agronomique pour le Développement (CIRAD), the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA), the Department for International Development (DFID), the European Commission (EC), the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), the Syngenta Foundation, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), the World Bank and the Governments of Italy and the Netherlands.



The programme for Strengthening Capacity for Agricultural Research and Development in Africa (SCARDA) is coordinated by FARA and implemented by the three sub-Saharan subregional research organizations (SROs)— ASARECA, CORAF/WECARD and SADC-FANR— and NRI provides the technical backstopping.

The overall purpose of SCARDA is '*To strengthen the institutional and human capacity of African agricultural research and development systems to identify, generate and deliver research outputs that meet the needs of poor people*'. This purpose is being achieved through an innovative approach that addresses the whole integrated capacity strengthening needs of 12 national agricultural research and development institutions that are known as Focal Institutions. A wider range of Satellite Institutions is also involved.



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