Inception Report

SCARDA

Strengthening Capacity for Agricultural Research and Development in Africa

Volume 1

Main Report

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Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa

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Executive Summary

The purpose of the programme Strengthening Capacity for Agricultural Research and Development in Africa (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”. SCARDA will achieve this purpose by working with key research and development institutions in sub-Saharan Africa to help them fulfil their mandates more effectively. At the same time, the ability of capacity strengthening organizations to deliver relevant and high quality services will be sustainably enhanced. The Programme will adopt an innovative approach by developing and implementing tailor-made packages of capacity strengthening activities for focal institutions. These packages will address the full range of priority capacity needs in research management, scientific quality and continuing professional development and the collaborative capacity of associated actors in innovation. The capacity strengthening packages will also reflect the needs of the development partners of the target institutions and staff from other institutions which will be encouraged to participate. This will strengthen multi-stakeholder partnerships and ensure that the outcomes of Programme activities lead to stronger national agricultural innovation systems. SCARDA will use 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.

SCARDA is led by the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) in partnership with other key stakeholders and is supported by the Department for International Development (UK). The Programme is being implemented in the three sub-regions of sub-Saharan Africa by the sub-regional organizations (SROs). The programme began in February 2007 with an inception phase. During the inception phase scoping studies were conducted in each of the sub-regions to identify specific capacity needs and recommend a programme of action. Following stakeholder workshops in the sub-regions and at the Continental level, a detailed implementation plan for the Programme was finalised. This report summarises the key findings of the inception phase and presents the plan for a 30-month implementation phase.

The scoping studies confirmed that there are serious weaknesses in agricultural research management in many national agricultural research institutes (NARIs), agricultural training colleges and university faculties of agriculture. These deficiencies relate to shortcomings in management systems and in specific management competencies. Taken together, they severely constrain the ability of the institutions to meet the needs of their clients. There are serious limitations with partnership arrangements, particularly with public and private agricultural extension agencies and farmers’ organizations. The
ability of research and development institutions to meet emerging challenges and to capitalise on new opportunities is constrained by deficiencies in key skills areas such as biotechnology, biodiversity, biometry and seed systems. The capacity of researchers to meet the requirements of new ways of working with a wide range of stakeholders is limited by their lack of ‘soft’ and ‘hard’ systems skills. Similarly, there is a clear need among established professionals to develop their expertise in crucial areas such as gender analysis, intellectual property rights and packaging research outputs for end users.

Traditional capacity strengthening approaches have had less than expected success with disappointing impact on poor farmers. However, experiences from Latin America have shown that these weaknesses in agricultural research and development systems can be addressed through targeted capacity strengthening interventions at the institutional level, provided these are carefully planned and are holistic in nature. SCARDA has therefore developed a comprehensive approach that will be applied by working with Focal Institutions and their development partners to develop and implement specific packages of capacity strengthening activities. The capacity strengthening needs of each Focal Institution will be identified through a rigorous institutional analysis conducted by a team of specialists working with senior management and staff representatives. The output of the institutional analysis will be an action plan addressing key capacity needs which will be matched to the most suitable service providers to meet the specific requirements of the institution. The institutional analysis itself will be an important capacity strengthening activity and will equip the institution with the tools to review its future performance including succession planning. One member of the analysis team will continue to provide support to the institution by monitoring the progress of the activities and assisting with the change management process.

In line with the proposal which was provisionally approved by DFID in February 2007, the Programme has two components:

A. Strengthening competencies and capacity in agricultural research management

B. Strengthening capacity for professional development in agricultural research and development

SCARDA will have the following four outputs:

1. Agricultural research management systems and competencies to conduct high quality research strengthened in African NARS (linked to Component A).

2. The capacity of African NARS to undertake quality agricultural research for development sustainably strengthened (Components A and B).

3. Tertiary agricultural education and training institutions empowered to match the capacity building offered to changing market demand (Components A and B).

4. SCARDA approach for capacity strengthening is documented, validated with and owned by key stakeholders (Components A and B).

The primary activities associated with the four outputs will be:

1. **Short courses; post-training support**, including individual mentoring; **reflective learning; attachments** and **exposure visits**. Subject areas will vary according to the needs of the institutes but will include institutional analysis; planning, monitoring & evaluation (M&E); performance assessment; research prioritisation and management; partnership arrangements; financial management; and communication and knowledge management. The short courses may be taken at appropriate training institutions. They will also be provided through targeted sub-regional group training that will involve satellite institutions which, in addition to the topic in hand, will also be exposed to the comprehensive SCARDA
approach to institutional strengthening as a catalyst to out and up-scaling.

2. **Technical areas** will be addressed through MSc degrees, short courses, fellowships and a mentoring programme. **Professional development skills** will be upgraded through **short courses** and group training on priority issues such as packaging research outputs for dissemination; proposal writing; scientific writing for various audiences; facilitation skills for technical networking; and IPR management. The majority of these activities will be conducted in Africa.

3. ‘**Tracer**’ studies to identify key skills gaps in graduates from agricultural faculties who are employed in a range of public and private organizations. This will be done through the use of questionnaires and structured and unstructured interviews.

4. SCARDA has developed strategies for **learning-oriented M&E and Communication** and more detailed plans will developed in the early stages of implementation. **Learning platforms** will be established to document and share experiences and good practice and these will be coordinated through a **Learning Alliance** approach. Specific activities will include the establishment of communities of practice and electronic platforms (websites and email discussion groups); the use of analysis workshops; and the publishing of programme bulletins.

The key outcomes from the proposed two and half year implementation phase of SCARDA will relate to changes in institutional and individual strategies and capacities. Consequently, the **M&E strategy** addresses the aspects of organizational and individual performance targeted through the capacity strengthening inputs provided. The work programmes in each of the sub-regions will include a clear rationale for proposing particular organisational changes and enhanced capacities including the collaborative capacities of key partners in the value chains. This will involve the identification of clear **impact pathways**, or **outcome maps**, which will be tracked through the monitoring process. The process will be clearly documented so that the means through which performance improvements are achieved are captured for further analysis and sharing. This will be done through integration with the specific plans which will be developed under the Programme’s **Communication Strategy**. The overall aim of SCARDA’s Communication Strategy is “To contribute to the achievement of the SCARDA programme goal and purpose by fostering information exchange and learning among all SCARDA stakeholders”. The delivery of this strategy will be coordinated by a **Communication Team**, building on a team of communication specialists from the main programme stakeholders, which was established during the inception phase.

SCARDA has developed a **Gender and Diversity Strategy** which reflects FARA’s policy of mainstreaming gender and diversity in its development programmes. SCARDA will seek to integrate the concerns of women and disadvantaged groups into the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of agricultural research policies and programmes. At the same time, the Programme will promote the necessary changes in staffing, procedures, and culture of agricultural research and development organisations. SCARDA will pay particular attention to ensure the participation of women and youth in its capacity strengthening activities and both men and women scientists will be trained in gender analysis. The Gender and Diversity Strategy takes account of the need to address the needs of those affected by HIV/AIDS.

The SCARDA programme has been designed to **complement** and add value to other existing and planned activities of FARA and the SROs. Thus the Programme will contribute to FARA’s Networking Support Function for Capacity Strengthening which has been established under its 2007–2016 Strategic Plan. It will do this by
linking with FARA’s initiatives on Building Africa’s Scientific and Institutional Capacity in Agriculture and Natural Resources (BASIC) and Regional Agricultural Information and Learning Systems (RAILS). SCARDA will also link with complementary capacity development activities being developed by the SROs; for example, the initiative of the Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa (ASARECA) on mainstreaming the integrated agricultural research for development approach in the sub-region. The Programme will establish linkages with other relevant initiatives, such as the DFID-funded Research Into Use programme. This will be done through linking learning platforms and, in the case of Rwanda where both initiatives will work with target institutions, by developing complementary activities. The Implementation Phase will commence with a workshop for the key collaborators in the FARA, SROs, Lead, Focal and Satellite Institutions to agree the way ahead and initial the necessary agreements.

SCARDA will **minimise transaction costs** by working within existing structures of FARA and the SROs. The Programme will capture efficiencies by working with established networks of capacity strengthening providers such as the African Network for Agriculture, Agro-forestry and Natural Resources Education (ANAFE) and the Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM). These networks have established procedures for identifying and utilising the most appropriate institutions. Moreover, through participation in the Programme the capacity of these networks to deliver quality services will be enhanced. This will be facilitated through links with international organizations, notably the Natural Resources Institute of the University of Greenwich which will be the partner of choice.

SCARDA will contribute directly to the core agenda of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) which identifies policy and institutional weaknesses as key constraints to African Agricultural Renewal. CAADP calls for greater national investment in human and social capital and FARA will use learning from SCARDA in its **advocacy role** to encourage African governments to commit increased resources to capacity strengthening. This will help to create a more positive enabling environment; for example, through the provision of adequate incentives to ensure the retention of trained scientists. FARA will also seek to promote **direct investment** into SCARDA from national governments and from other development partners. In order to do this it will draw on evidence of successful capacity strengthening approaches from the Programme that will be identified through the lesson learning and experience sharing process. This evidence will be based on clear and measurable operational and financial benefits accruing to the Focal Institutions from SCARDA interventions. It will also derive from examples of uptake of SCARDA’s capacity strengthening approach by other institutions. The Programme structure, which recognises the important role played by Satellite Institutions, has been designed to facilitate this and initiate out-scaling within the 30-month initial period of implementation so that the benefits will sustained and also up-scaled.
Programme description
1. Programme description

1.1. Background

In 2005, FARA commissioned an assessment of National Agricultural Research Systems (NARS) in sub-Saharan Africa to identify major areas of weakness and recommend strategies for their strengthening. The study identified human and institutional capacity for designing, implementing and managing scientific research as the most important of these weaknesses. The effect of the capacity deficiencies has been to limit the relevance and responsiveness of NARS in the agricultural development of Africa. This conclusion is consistent with the findings of other recent reports, including the Commission for Africa\(^1\), the Inter-Academy Council\(^2\) and the United Nations Task Force on Hunger\(^3\). These reports all highlighted the urgent need to strengthen Africa’s human and institutional capacity for change and innovation, especially in agriculture. The FARA study, which was completed in 2006, recommended new approaches and innovative initiatives to address these critical capacity deficiencies.

In order to respond to the needs identified in its 2006 report, FARA worked with partner organizations to prepare a proposal for a programme for Strengthening Capacity in Agricultural Research and Development in Africa (SCARDA). The proposed programme aligns with the objectives of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) of the African Union’s New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD). Specifically, it addresses CAADP’s aim of strengthening capacity ‘not only in the amount and quality of technical resources but also in research programme planning, systems management and governance’.

The FARA-led proposal was submitted to the UK Department for International Development (DFID) in October 2006. DFID approved the proposal, subject to the acceptance of a detailed Implementation Plan which was to be submitted at the end of an Inception phase. This document presents details of a 30-month Implementation Plan, based on the programme outlined in the original proposal. The document also draws on the outcomes of activities conducted during the Inception Phase to set out the rationale for the approach which has been developed for the programme of capacity strengthening in sub-Saharan Africa.

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2. IAC, 2004. Realizing the Promise and Potential of African Agriculture, the Inter Academy Council, c/o Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, P.O. Box 19121, NL-1000 GC Amsterdam, The Netherlands.
1.2. Inception Phase

Following an Inaugural Planning Workshop for SCARDA held in Accra on 20–21 February 2007, scoping studies were conducted in the three sub-regions of sub-Saharan Africa. The scoping studies analysed the priority capacity needs of the NARS in selected countries and identified options for capacity strengthening inputs. The findings were then reviewed and validated in sub-regional stakeholder workshops. A synthesis of the findings from the sub-regional scoping studies was conducted through a meeting of a core Working Group which prepared an Outline programme-wide Implementation Plan. This plan was reviewed and approved at a Regional Inception Phase Review Workshop which was held in Accra on 27–29 August.

During the Regional Inception Phase Review Workshop, participants endorsed the principle of working with ‘Focal Institutions’ and their core partners in selected countries. An initial set of Focal Institutions was identified according to criteria established in the scoping study workshops, based primarily on their strategic significance within the NARS in their respective countries; the magnitude and nature of their capacity needs; and the potential for generating rapid impact. It was decided to focus on national agricultural research institutes (NARIs) and universities, as these institutions are at the centre of agricultural research and development systems. As noted in the recent World Development Report (2007), universities provide the next generation of scientists but are ‘under-utilised for publicly-supported science’, and this has especially serious implications in agriculture-based countries. The SCARDA strategy also involves strengthening linkages between NARIs and universities and engaging with their core partners to ensure that capacity strengthening inputs address the wider needs of national agricultural innovation systems.

After the Regional Inception Phase Review Workshop, visits were made to eight of the Focal Institutions in order to confirm their commitment to full participation in SCARDA and to develop outline activity plans. Interaction with the three other Focal Institutions, which had already been visited during the earlier scoping studies and for which much of the information needed to develop activity plans was already available, took place via telephone and email. A list of the Focal Institutions, and the rationale for their participation, is provided in Section 3.3.2.

This Inception Report, and the Implementation Plan which is incorporated within it, is based on the outcomes of the activities summarized above. The Implementation Plan constitutes Output 1 of the Programme, as specified in the October 2006 proposal: “A detailed capacity strengthening programme and structures for its implementation in place”. Additional outputs from the Inception Phase were (a) Electronic databases incorporating data on a wide range of research and development institutions, including key capacity needs and (b) a set of resource documents including synthesis reports of scoping studies conducted in the sub-regions; Proceedings of stakeholder workshops; reports of the preliminary institutional analysis of the Focal Institutions; and five Briefing Papers on priority issues for the Programme.

A more detailed account of the outcomes and activities of the Inception Phase is provided in Annex 1. The main lessons learned were as follows:

- Deficiencies in agricultural research management and scientific quality in sub-Saharan Africa identified in the NARS Assessment (2006) and other recent studies were confirmed and priority capacity needs in each of the sub-regions were identified.
- There is a strong demand for capacity strengthening inputs which follow the approach proposed through the SCARDA programme.

4. SCARDA Inception Report Volume 2 Preliminary Institutional Analyses of Focal Institutions
• Key underlying needs are generic and there are opportunities for shared learning which clearly justify the added value of a continental capacity strengthening programme.

• One of the key identified deficiencies is the capacity to form strong multi-institutional partnerships between NARIs, universities, extension agencies, farmers’ organizations, private enterprise and other groups that are essential in order to bring about the required change.

• Confirmation was provided that previous capacity development initiatives did not achieve the desired impact because they were fragmented and only addressed single issues.

• Successful models from elsewhere have shown that a comprehensive approach targeting key institutions and their development partners can be sustainable and provides a platform for out- and up-scaling.

• Experiential learning approaches are needed in order to ensure that newly acquired skills are applied suitably and benefit the institution as well as the individual.

• Interventions such as mentoring require a continuing commitment over a substantial time period to be effective.

• There is adequate capacity within Africa and among international organizations working in partnership with African organizations to deliver quality capacity strengthening services.

• The timely sharing of information and experiences among the core partners during the Inception Phase enhanced the efficiency of the scoping studies and reinforced the Programme’s regional approach.

A fundamental principle of the design of SCARDA is that the capacity strengthening activities maximise the opportunity for value-adding through the inclusion of satellite institutions and the exposure of capacity strengthening providers to the real problems and potentials of agricultural research institutions. This includes the adoption of innovation systems approaches and of the holistic approach to strengthening capacity for agricultural innovation involving multiple partners. Gender issues are an integral part of SCARDA’s approach requiring affirmative action to improve opportunities for women’s careers in the NARS and to promote gender equity amongst research partners and beneficiaries.
2

Implementation
2. Implementation

The overall purpose of the Programme 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 will be achieved through an innovative approach that addresses the whole integrated capacity strengthening needs of the Focal Institutions and demonstrates this to wider ranges of Satellite Institutions through engaging in joint training activities. A review of institutional capacity strengthening experiences in Africa and elsewhere reveals that in order to bring about lasting change, experiential learning is essential and short-term and piece-meal interventions have limited value (Horton et al. 2003). This study also showed that the concept of working with core focal institutions, as platforms for subsequent scaling up of the capacity strengthening approaches, has been successfully applied in Latin America. The regionality of the SCARDA approach will be demonstrated in both service provision and through the sharing of lessons learned using regional learning platforms. SCARDA is purposefully designed from the outset to ensure continued out and up-scaling through the way that the capacity strengthening is conducted as well as through the M&E and Communications Strategies.

2.1 Management Arrangements

The 30-month Implementation Phase of SCARDA will be funded by the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID). Funding will be provided to the FARA Secretariat which will be accountable to DFID for management of resources in accordance with the DFID granting agreement. FARA will have responsibility for coordinating programme implementation. In order to meet this responsibility, FARA will appoint a permanent programme coordinator and a programme officer for the duration of the project and provide them with the necessary resources to fulfil their roles. Terms of Reference for the programme coordinator are shown in Annex 5. The Implementation Phase will commence with a workshop for the key collaborators in the FARA, SROs, Lead, Focal and Satellite Institutions to agree the way ahead and initial the necessary agreements.

The Coordination Office in the FARA Secretariat will have particular responsibility for capturing, distilling and disseminating the lessons from the implementation of SCARDA and related programmes across the continent to reduce duplication of mistakes and accelerate the uptake of best practices. The value of this was very evident in the conduct of the scoping studies when none of the studies would have been as thorough or as quick without the opportunity to learn from counterparts in other sub regions.
To that end, the FARA Secretariat will be responsible for managing the programme-wide monitoring and evaluation framework and communication and learning programme. FARA Secretariat will sub-contract the Natural Resources Institute (NRI) of the University of Greenwich to assist in this, building on the inputs made by NRI during the Inception Phase in developing strategies for M&E and Communication. SCARDA will utilize existing mechanisms and structures in order to minimize transaction costs and ensure sustainability. Accountability to the stakeholders, and congruence with FARA’s overall strategic objectives, will be assured by the Programme Committee of FARA’s Executive Board acting as SCARDA’s Steering Committee, which will be assisted by resource persons with relevant experience in building capacity in Africa. In addition to reporting to the Board, the progress of the programme will be assessed at dedicated side meetings and in plenary at FARA’s triennial General Assemblies. The next Assembly in 2010 will coincide with the conclusion of the 30-month Implementation Phase.

In accordance with the principles of subsidiarity, and in order to maximize the potential for internalising SCARDA outputs within the sub-regions, programme implementation will be managed by the SROs. Moreover, SCARDA programme activities have been designed to complement the SROs other capacity strengthening programmes and initiatives. The SROs will each make available the services of a full-time professional SCARDA focal person who will be responsible to the individual SRO management structure for overall programme performance. These focal persons will also ensure that SCARDA activities contribute effectively to the wider SRO capacity strengthening programmes. Terms of Reference for SRO focal persons are shown in Annex 5. The conduct of the programme in the SRO sub-regions will be overseen by the existing SRO governance and management structures that are applied to their other capacity strengthening initiatives. The Boards of the SROs will assure the interests of the stakeholders they represent.

Service providers to the Focal and Satellite Institutions will be contracted through the SROs after accreditation, based on clear criteria. They will be accountable to the SRO Focal Person. In view of their limited capacity for programme implementation the SROs have appointed Lead Service Providers to assist in managing the capacity strengthening activities that will deliver the plans developed through institutional analyses. This includes, inter-alia, assist in identifying the most appropriate capacity service providers for accreditation by the SRO, scheduling activities with the participating organisations and individuals and quality assurance. The Natural Resources Institute is the international service provider of choice and will work with the Lead Service Providers to assure the quality of capacity strengthening inputs and to promote best practices across the whole Programme from wherever they emerge.

The Lead Service Providers will also have responsibility for the tracer studies, monitoring the delivery of services and recommending remedial actions when these become necessary to maintain the quality and timeliness of the services provided. Their appointment was based on the application of strict criteria including; geographical coverage within the sub-region; a proven track record in the management of capacity strengthening programmes; the ability to provide quality assurance and monitoring and evaluation inputs; a commitment to the comprehensive approach of SCARDA and a willingness to share experiences with other stakeholders. Terms of Reference for the Lead Service Providers are shown in Annex 5. The Lead Service Providers are as follows:

5. In the case of SADC-FANR, initial support to the Executive Secretary will be provided by NRI until the programme coordinator is in post.
ASARECA sub-region:
Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM)
African Network for Agriculture, Agro-forestry and Natural Resources Education (ANAFE)
CORAF/WECARD sub-region:
Centre Regional de Formation et d’Application en Agrométéorologie et Hydrologie Opérationnelle (AGRHYMET)
African Network for Agriculture, Agro-forestry and Natural Resources Education (ANAFE)
SADC sub-region:
African Network for Agriculture, Agro-forestry and Natural Resources Education (ANAFE)

The established linkages through AGRHYMET being a member of ANAFE and the existing agreement between RUFORUM and ANAFE will facilitate joint learning, sharing of experiences and expertise. It will reduce transaction costs, ensure consistency of implementation and enhance the scope for partnership building and inter-regional knowledge sharing. Each of these organizations has a partnership agreement with the respective SROs and will have a key role to play in their wider capacity strengthening programmes. Consequently, participation in SCARDA will enhance the ability of these organizations to contribute effectively to the SRO capacity strengthening programmes in the future. Capability statements for each of these organizations are shown in Annex 5.

The above relationships are shown in Figure 1 below.

2.2 Governance
As noted above, overall responsibility for the Programme will be vested with FARA’s Executive Director reporting to the FARA’s Executive Board. Ultimate accountability is to the Forum’s constituents and stakeholders. Apart from making the reports and assessments widely available in print and electronic media the outcome of the Programme will be reported to the FARA General
Assembly. Regional programme direction will be provided by the Programme Committee of FARA’s Board. SCARDA direction at the SRO level will be similarly integrated into their ongoing capacity strengthening structures.

2.3 Work Programme

2.3.1 Approach
Design and delivery of capacity strengthening interventions will be undertaken in a systematic fashion, as shown in Figure 2, below:

2.3.2 Selection of Focal Institutions
Following the confirmation of the Focal Institutions during the Regional Inception Phase Review Workshop, it was important that these institutions understood and agreed to the commitment they are making in participating in SCARDA. In particular, that they are open to a process of institutional change and are willing to share experiences and approaches. Similarly, it was necessary to establish whether they have the absorptive capacity to embark on the SCARDA process without compromising their existing operations. This includes the provision of staff time and the hosting of short courses, group training and other events that will involve the Satellite Institutions. These issues were addressed during the short visits to the Focal Institutions and Letters of Commitment have already been signed by Directors of six of the institutions. Others have confirmed their intention to sign and transmit the letters to FARA.
The Focal Institutions are:

• Institut d’Economie Rurale (IER), Mali
• Council for Scientific and Industrial Research — Crops Research Institute (CSIR-CRI), Ghana
• National Agricultural Research Institute (NARI), The Gambia
• Centre de Recherches Agronomiques de Loudima (CRAL), Congo-Brazzaville
• University of Zambia — School of Agricultural Sciences
• Natural Resources Development College (NRDC), Zambia
• National University of Lesotho (NUL)
• Department of Agricultural Research (DAR), Botswana
• Botswana College of Agriculture (BCA)
• Institut des Sciences Agronomiques du Rwanda (ISAR)
• Institut des Sciences Agronomiques du Burundi (ISABU)

The ASARECA scoping study also recommended the inclusion of a Focal Institution in Sudan. It was not possible to schedule a visit to Sudan during the Inception phase, but it is envisaged that this will be done early in the Implementation phase. The selection of ISAR and ISABU as Focal Institutions reflects the key role played by these institutions in agricultural research for development in countries where capacity needs are very great. The SCARDA activity plans for these two institutions have been developed jointly with the National University of Rwanda and the University of Burundi, respectively, and these universities will participate actively in the Programme. In Rwanda, the planned activities target priorities identified under the Support Project for the Strategic Transformation of Agriculture (PAPSTA) of the Government of Rwanda. Synergies will be gained from linkages with the DFID-funded Research into Use Programme and the Dutch-funded NUFFIC programme on developing capacity in agroforestry research.

In the CORAF/WECARD sub-region, the primary focus is on national agricultural research institutes. The Focal Institutions are located in each of the main agro-ecological zones in order to facilitate the involvement of Satellite Institutions and maximize the potential for scaling out the outputs from the technical activities. In Ghana, CSIR is the pivotal agricultural research and development institution and has the potential to help less well-resourced NARS to strengthen their capacity. Through SCARDA, CSIR will assist NARI in The Gambia to strengthen its capacity in key areas, for example through the delivery of courses on agricultural research management. In Mali, IER is the principal agricultural research organisation and a central player in the National Committee of Agricultural Research. Other key members of the National Committee are the Central Veterinary Laboratory and the University of Bamako. The activity plan for Mali involves the active participation of these two institutions and facilitates wider stakeholder involvement through Regional Learning Platforms (Collège d’Utilisateurs).

The Centre de Recherches Agronomiques de Loudima (CRAL) is the primary agricultural research organisation in the Republic of Congo. At present, the NARS is highly fragmented with research activities undertaken at a large number of organisations. CRAL is playing a leading role in the move to concentrate the research efforts into a central agricultural research institute and SCARDA can contribute by strengthening capacity in priority areas.

Focal Institutions in the SADC sub-region are agricultural teaching, training and research institutions in countries in which there is good potential to develop and strengthen the NARS. These institutions are located in countries which represent three distinct agro-ecological zones. In Botswana, the College of Agriculture and the Department of Agricultural Research are located on the same campus, are close to the SADC-FANR offices, and are linked to ANAFE through existing activities. The excellent facilities in the College of Agriculture are ideal for hosting
regional training courses and provision has been made for this in the Activity Plan. In Zambia, the Natural Resources Development College has a strong development mandate and, with the University of Zambia (School of Agriculture), is responding to the changes in market demand for its graduates. NRDC activities are poverty-focused and its strategic objectives are well-aligned with those of the government’s 5th National Development Plan. The School of Agriculture in the University of Zambia is currently developing a new strategic plan and reviewing its curricula making this an opportune time for engagement with SCARDA.

In Lesotho, the Faculty of Agriculture in the National University of Lesotho is the predominant institution engaged in agricultural teaching and research and is well linked with other actors in the emerging NARS. Linkages with the Lesotho Agricultural College and the Department of Agricultural Research are becoming stronger and are expected to be further consolidated through the proposed Support Unit for Teaching, Research and Agricultural Development. SCARDA can make an important contribution through supporting these processes which will involve changes in the coordination and management of programmes and projects.

2.3.3 Institutional Analysis

The capacity strengthening programme for each Focal Institution will be developed through an institutional analysis. The first stage of this analysis was conducted during the initial visits to the Focal Institutions. During these visits, the consultants facilitated a rapid appraisal of the key capacity needs with senior management and staff and, in most cases, with representatives of the main stakeholders. The process involved SWOT analysis and other participatory tools and the emerging priorities were mapped against national research and development priorities.

Linkages with other existing or planned capacity strengthening initiatives were identified and opportunities for complementary activities explored. The output of these rapid appraisals was an outline activity plan which placed special emphasis on activities that will be started during the early stages of Programme implementation.

2.3.4 SCARDA Activity Plan

The activity plan is presented within the framework of the four Programme outputs which have been identified:

1. Agricultural research management systems and managerial competencies to conduct high quality research strengthened in African NARS

2. The capacity of African NARS to undertake quality agricultural research for development sustainably strengthened

3. Tertiary agricultural teaching and training institutions empowered to match the capacity building they offer to changing market demands.

4. SCARDA approach for capacity strengthening is documented, validated with and owned by key stakeholders.

Outputs 1 and 4 contribute to Component 1: Strengthening competencies and capacity in agricultural research management.

Outputs 2, 3 and 4 contribute to Component 2: Strengthening capacity for professional development in agricultural research and development.

These relationships are shown diagrammatically in Figure 3 below. Fuller details of the outputs appear in the logframe in Section 3.

Output 3 is a new Output developed from a revised activity which reflects a strong need identified during the stakeholder consultations. Output 4 is cross-cutting and has been developed in order to ensure that lessons and experiences are shared among stakeholders and provides the basis for up- and out-scaling of the SCARDA

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6. SCARDA Inception Report Volume 2 Preliminary Institutional Analyses of Focal Institutions
capacity strengthening approach. The activities associated with the four outputs are as follows:

**Output 1** Agricultural research management systems and competencies to conduct high quality research strengthened in African NARS.

*Participatory assessment of management capacity strengthening needs in Focal Institutions*

One of the first implementation activities will be more detailed analyses of the agricultural research management and technical capacities of the Focal Institutions, in the context of their current and expected roles. This will be done by a specialist team using a participatory approach and working with management and technical staff as well as representatives of core partners.

The output of the analysis will be a revised plan which will specify in greater detail the activities, the services to be delivered, the mechanisms for delivery and the timing. The Plan will also set targets for changes in operational performance by the Focal Institution and these will be built into the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan.

**Development of management capacity strengthening programme**

The institutional analysis process is a crucial capacity strengthening input and its success is key to the sustainability of the Programme. Through participation in this process, Focal Institutions will be better able to identify their capacity needs and to develop, implement, review and revise a capacity strengthening plan. Amongst the indicators of success will be the continued implementation by the Focal Institutions of strategic succession planning, annual capacity strengthening plans including internalisation of gender and equity issues and the allocation of core resources to support them.

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7. Output 4 in the original proposal was “Adoption of the innovation systems approach to underpin ARD”. This is formulated as an outcome and is outside the scope of the Programme to deliver. However, innovations systems thinking is embedded in the SCARDA approach. See the SCARDA Briefing Paper on Agricultural Innovation Systems (Pound & Essegbey, 2007)
Thus the analyses are much more than just needs assessments. They will inform action, followed by review and reflection which will lead to modified action on a recurrent basis.

The scoping studies and the rapid appraisals of the Focal Institutions confirmed the need, and the demand, for integrating Innovation Systems approaches into the ways that research is prioritised, planned, implemented and monitored. This reflects the prominence given in national agricultural development strategies to demand-led, decentralised and market-oriented systems and the need for client-oriented research and development approaches to contribute to successful development. For example, the Master Plan for Rural Development in Mali is based on the principles of decentralization, participation and the involvement of different stakeholder groups such as producer organizations. Similar strategies are in place, or are being developed, in most of the other countries where the Focal Institutions are located.

**Implementation of management capacity strengthening training (group training, application plans & follow-up) in Focal and Satellite Institutions**

Based on the findings from the institutional analyses, a series of managements capacity strengthening programmes will be developed and delivered to focal and satellite institutions. To help meet this need, there will be a core course in the agricultural research management component which will enhance the capacity of the Focal and Satellite Institutions to incorporate innovation systems approaches into their programmes. Additional inputs in specific areas of agricultural research management, such as financial management, will vary according to the specific priorities of the Focal Institutions but will also take into account the requirements of working in multi-stakeholder environments. Topics for these specific courses have been identified in most of the Focal Institutions and will be refined during the detailed analysis. The development of resource material for the core course in agricultural research management will begin at an early stage of programme implementation and will be carried out by the Natural Resources Institute in partnership with staff from CSIR, IER, ISAR and BCA. Training will be given to selected staff from these Focal Institutions and they will then deliver the course to participants from within their respective sub-regions. The courses will be delivered during the first year of the programme and will be followed by experiential learning during the second year. Post-training support will be provided which will culminate in the sharing of lessons and experiences through facilitated workshops and electronic interaction at the end of Year 2 and the beginning of Year 3.

**Strengthening/development of key management systems and processes in Focal Institutions**

The Focal Institutions will need continuing support during the Implementation phase to facilitate these activities which will be provided through the assignment to each Focal Institution of a mentor who will be a member of the specialist team. The mentor will help to guide the Focal Institution throughout the 30-month period of programme implementation.

In addition, the scoping studies and the visits to the Focal Institutions highlighted the need for mentoring of younger staff. Suitable mentors will be identified by the Lead Service Providers and mentoring will have the double purpose of reinforcing the benefit of the training and assisting the host institutions to make best use of their new skills and competencies.

**Output 2** The capacity of African NARS to undertake quality agricultural research for development sustainably strengthened.

**Participatory and strategic assessment of professional and technical capacity strengthening needs in Focal Institutions**

The institutional analyses undertaken in the inception phase and completed as part of Output 1 will identify the professional and technical
skill areas that require strengthening in the focal institutions. Methods for delivering capacity strengthening will also be discussed and identified with the stakeholders.

**Development and implementation of professional and technical capacity strengthening programme in Focal and Satellite Institutions**

The outcomes from the institutional analyses will be the development of a programme of regional professional capacity building and the various methods of delivery. In the preliminary institutional analyses, MSc studentships have been identified in subject areas that are priorities for the relevant countries and where the Focal Institution has demonstrated that there is a clear opportunity for the application of the new skills. For example, in Botswana the government is supporting the development of an export horticulture industry and there is a need for expertise in areas such as the production of covered crops. In response to this need, the Focal Institutions in Botswana will identify two persons for MSc training in horticulture. In Rwanda and Burundi, where current staffing levels in ISAR and ISABU are sub-optimal, MSc training will be conducted by research in order to ensure that critical short-term capacity is not compromised. This will allow students to do their research in-country so that they continue to contribute to existing programmes. In most cases, the MSc studentships will begin in September 2008 at the start of the academic year.

The topics for MSc studentships and short courses will be related to the specific requirements of the Focal Institutions. However, the common demand for the acquisition of new skills in certain key areas has enabled some subject areas to be prioritised at a sub-regional or programme-wide level. Biotechnology and biosafety, crop protection and the communication and packaging of research outputs for end users are programme-wide priorities. Use will be made of regional Centres of Excellence, such as NEPAD’s Biosciences East and Central Africa (BecA) and associated Biotechnology and biosafety organizations to provide specialist training and facilitate linkages with appropriate networks. For crop protection, links will be established with the CGIAR Systemwide Programme on Integrated Pest Management for policy and technical guidance and with CAB International for inputs on plant disease diagnosis.

At the sub-regional level, horticulture is a priority for Focal Institutions in SADC; livestock breeding and nutrition for ASARECA; participatory research methods and participatory varietal selection for CORAF/WECARD.

Mentoring will also be provided to young researchers to support their progress in their areas of disciplinary expertise. For some Focal Institutions, where low numbers of staff impose constraints on their effective operation, mentors will also play an important role in contributing to current research and teaching activities through attachments of several months duration.

The demand for training of technicians has been strongly articulated in most of the Focal Institutions. In some, for example ISAR, the training of technicians was identified as a key short-term constraint to effective research and it has been prioritised as one of the first capacity needs to be addressed. There are certain generic areas for technician training, for example equipment maintenance and analytical methods, which will allow the development of common course materials that can be used in each Focal Institution.

Wherever possible, use will be made of **online approaches** to complement face-to-face capacity strengthening activities. This will widen access to resource materials, enable them to updated more easily and facilitate more regular interaction between trainers and students. The Lead Service providers will take the lead in making these systems available to teachers and learners.

**Implementation of professional and technical capacity strengthening plans (short courses) in Focal and Satellite Institutions**
Professional skills development will be delivered primarily through short courses. Topics which have been prioritised at most Focal Institutions include Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) management; information and communication technologies; proposal writing; negotiation and other ‘soft’ and ‘systems’ skills. The aim of these courses is to upgrade the skills of agricultural research and development workers in areas which are undergoing rapid change. These skills are becoming essential to enable researchers to function effectively in highly complex environments. The ability to critically analyse, and develop appropriate solutions, for new challenges posed by factors such as climate variability and changing market conditions requires skills that are not traditionally taught in agricultural education institutions. Similarly, the ability to communicate effectively with diverse end users is needed in order to ensure the effective uptake of new technologies and methodologies. These skills will be introduced through short courses and will be consolidated through mentoring and communities of practice.

As with selected subjects under quality of science, there is considerable scope for developing common resource materials which can be used in most of the Focal and Satellite Institutions. In some cases, for example IPR management, course delivery will be done more efficiently through sub-regional courses.

Output 3  Tertiary agricultural teaching and training institutions empowered to match the capacity building they offer to changing market demands.

Review of findings, gaps and methodology lessons from previous studies of demand for and application of agricultural graduate training

The scoping studies and stakeholder workshops in the inception phase drew attention to the need to strengthen the capacity of the agricultural training institutions to produce graduates with the type of skills needed by the wide ranges of institutions involved in agricultural innovation. The need to enhance the capacity to build capacity will be further explored by the use of tracer studies.

Development and implementation of a “tracer study” of future demand from employers of graduates involved in agricultural innovation

The key gaps in competence of agricultural graduates will be identified by means of tracer studies involving interviews with graduates from regional universities employed in public, private and NGO institutions. The tracer studies will be conducted by ANAFE, AGHRYMET and RUFOREUM and will begin during the first year of implementation. Questionnaires and interviews will be employed to gather information that will be collated and analysed for universities to use in improving their agricultural and natural resources curricula, course contents and pedagogic approaches.

Study results shared and implications discussed with key stakeholders at appropriate fora

SCARDA’s continental approach will ensure that lessons and best practice from the different sub-regions will be widely shared and that mutual benefits will be captured from this cross-regional learning. The outcomes of the study will be utilised by the universities and colleges in revising their curricula and by FARA’s BASIC initiative and other relevant programmes.

Output 4. SCARDA approach for capacity strengthening is documented, validated with, and owned by key stakeholders

Collaborative development of detailed Communication, M&E and reporting systems for SCARDA at FARA and SRO levels

SCARDA will develop a strategy for information collection and lesson learning at the FARA and SRO levels. This will be supported by an M&E
system for SCARDA at FARA and SRO levels. In addition, FARA and the SROs will establish knowledge sharing platforms which may take various forms including “communities of practice”/learning groups, lesson documentation and analysis workshops, electronic platforms (websites and email discussion groups), a Programme bulletin, and articles in SRO/FARA newsletters.

SCARDA aims to address complex human and institutional capacity problems that have been persistent even where capacity strengthening has been offered. Changing this will require innovative solutions. Finding such solutions requires diverse stakeholders to engage and learn together with the ultimate aim of developing the collective commitment and capacity to turn ideas and plans into action. Finding innovative solutions will be facilitated by multi-stakeholder processes and action learning/learning by doing.

Development of interactive experience and knowledge sharing mechanisms for SCARDA (e.g., learning groups/“communities of practice”).

SCARDA aims to advance the development of multi-stakeholder learning platforms at organisational, national, sub-regional and regional levels. This may be considered a learning alliance, which is a series of linked platforms at different levels which will bring together a range of stakeholders interested in innovation and the use of new knowledge in areas of common interest. The aim is to enable innovation to take place within a framework of organisational or national, sub-regional and regional conditions and norms. Working with existing networks and policy institutions will ensure that what is produced is relevant and appropriate. This is essential to ensuring scaling up, which successful innovation systems have demonstrated is vital to initiate from the outset, not as an after thought.

The following considerations will guide the development of the Learning Alliance:

a) It will be designed to help FARA and the SROs realise the SCARDA (and ultimately wider) goals, objectives and priorities and the roles of individuals in FARA and the SROs and other key stakeholders in the Alliance will be consolidated at an early stage

b) It will advance joint interests and responsibilities of stakeholders at different levels that will underpin, frame and sustain the learning alliance.

c) It will contribute towards the following:

- **Coordination**: ensuring horizontal relationships between SROs and target organizations and public, voluntary & private stakeholders at the local level;

- **Inclusive strategic management approaches**: vertical linkages (e.g. participatory planning exercises);


d) Long term sustainability will be assured by working within existing partnerships and learning and communication systems such as RAILS.

e) SCARDA’s aims and activities will be shared amongst various audiences initially by FARA with support from NRI but with a view to them being taken on and embedded in the SROs own procedures.

f) Use of ICTs (e.g. web-based material) to promote SCARDA will be underpinned by training and linkages to FARA and SRO agricultural information and learning systems.

g) Participatory monitoring and learning processes will provide information for management decision-making, reinforcing partnerships and enhancing learning and management skills as well as for documenting the pitfalls and best practices that will be identified by SCARDA.

The learning alliance approach will be taken forward by a Learning Alliance Facilitation Team comprised of representatives of FARA,
ASARECA, CORAF/WECARD, SADC-FANR and NRI. The initial task of the team will be to:

a) **Identify champions in key organizations at sub-national and national levels.**

b) **Develop approaches and tools for engagement and learning.** Aspects will include:
   - Communication (e.g. newsletter; use of mobile phones)
   - Technology (e.g. Web-based sharing)
   - Forums—meetings, workshops (e.g., review workshop)
   - Participatory Monitoring & Evaluation
   - Ways of knowing we are learning

c) **Develop the concept and guidelines for learning and sharing groups**, as a follow-up activity to group training of managers and researchers courses. These groups will be led by committed and energetic professionals who have participated in group training. Where feasible, this will be connected to existing learning and sharing initiatives.

d) **Identify sub-themes for the Learning Alliance** based on a synthesis of the various institutional analyses.

### 2.3.5 Programme implementation pathways

The Implementation Phase of 30 months is not long so care has been taken to be able to build rapidly on the Inception Phase and by judicious allocation of tasks to have several steps such as selection of Focal Institutions, appointment of Lead Service Providers and design of the M&E and Communications systems well advanced in the Inception Phase and to continue concurrently, as shown in Figure 4.

The sequence of implementation events is shown in **Table 1**.

---

**Figure 4. SCARDA workplan: critical path diagram**
### Table 1. Implementation schedule

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<th>Apr 08</th>
<th>Jul 08</th>
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<th>Jan 09</th>
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| **Milestones**                    |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Institutional analysis team, methodology & plan agreed |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Institutional diagnostic analyses completed |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Group training courses in res. management delivered |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Post-graduate candidates and training plans agreed |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| SRO plans for technical & professional training agreed |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Technical & professional group training delivered |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Mentoring for Tech. & prof. activities initiated |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Results of tracer studies documented and discussed |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| SCARDA staff at FARA and SROs recruited and in post |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| M&E and reporting plans developed and agreed |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Communication plans developed and agreed |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Documentation framework, methodology and lesson learning plan developed |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Electronic platform established |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Review events of emerging lessons completed |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Learning platforms defined and initiated |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
2.4 Monitoring and evaluation

The particular challenges in monitoring and evaluating a programme of capacity strengthening include:

1. The time scale within which capacity strengthening activities can translate into positive outcomes for agricultural research and development.
2. Attributing outcomes to programme activities and processes, since capacity strengthening takes place within a wider context of knowledge exchange and capacity development.
3. Monitoring of complex qualitative processes to enable learning about what strategies and approaches are effective in capacity strengthening.
4. The scope and the organisational/individual levels within which effectiveness starts to materialise as a result of the strengthening capacity.

These challenges will be addressed in SCARDA through an integrated M&E approach that is informed by the Programme’s theory of change and embedded within its main interventions. The working hypothesis behind SCARDA is that the development and application of comprehensive packages of capacity strengthening measures targeting organisations, rather than the traditional piecemeal approach, will more effectively and more sustainably improve the efficacy of ARD institutions. A central premise underpinning SCARDA’s approach, shared with innovation systems theory, is that interventions are more effective when planned and implemented through an informed analysis of individual organisations which interface to deliver outputs and services for development.

The key outcomes from the proposed two and half year implementation phase of SCARDA will relate to changes in organisational and individual strategies and capacities. Consequently, the M&E framework addresses the aspects of organisational and individual performance targeted through the capacity building inputs provided. The design of the work programmes in each of the sub-regions will require a defendable and explicit rationale for proposing particular organisational changes and enhanced capacities. This will involve the identification of clear impact pathways, or outcome maps, which can be tracked.

The main functions of M&E within the SCARDA programme are:

a) To track the delivery progress within the Programme for management accountability, so that (where necessary) appropriate corrective adjustments can be put in place, during the three-year implementation phase.

b) To track and evaluate the quality and effectiveness of capacity strengthening interventions, particularly in relation to their intended contribution towards individual and organisational performance. This implies recording and analysis of performance and change in the primary individuals and organizations participating in SCARDA.

c) Related to b) above, to ensure that key elements of process are clearly documented so that the means through which performance improvements are achieved are captured for further analysis and sharing. This will be through integration with the communication strategy (see 2.5 below).

d) To identify needs for capacity strengthening in M&E, as much of the M&E will be embedded within programme activities and undertaken by SCARDA participating institutions.

The refinement of plans for M&E will be undertaken during the first stages of implementation as follows:

- Detailed plans for monitoring and evaluation will be developed at FARA and SRO level as the first stage of more detailed implementation planning.
• At the FARA and SRO levels plans will be structured to concur with the FARA and SRO level logical frameworks, with a focus on accountability and tracking of progress against inputs, activity milestones and output indicators.

• At SRO level logical frameworks will be used as guiding frameworks for M&E, which need to be continuously reviewed for their functionality in tracking progress of the delivery of outputs and outcomes, which is likely to require sharpening of activity milestones and output indicators.

• At FARA level, the generic log-frame will also be reviewed in a similar way at the output to purpose level, including the further sharpening of purpose level indicators and ongoing reflection on the validity of the stated assumptions.

• The level of detail in data collection and frequency of monitoring SCARDA output indicators will depend on:
  – SRO capacity for undertaking M&E.
  – The degree of “fit” between the indicators within the log-frame and the SRO’s indicators for monitoring its result areas (e.g. capacity strengthening).
  – Other ongoing M&E activities covering the same indicators.

• Likewise at FARA level the detail in data collection and frequency of monitoring purpose level indicators will depend on FARA’s capacity and the degree of “fit” between the indicators within the log-frame and the FARA’s framework for monitoring capacity strengthening results.

• At the level of service providers and target organisations, plans for monitoring and learning will be developed in parallel with the institutional analysis and the development of implementation plans and learning platforms.

• Other beneficiaries (e.g. focal individuals in other participating organisations) will be supported in self-monitoring and reporting.

• At each level reporting formats with guidelines will be developed to capture lessons and good practice to inform the scaling up of an integrated approach to capacity strengthening.

2.5 Communication and Learning

As a regional programme working in many countries and with numerous stakeholders, SCARDA will need to have an effective and efficient communications system. This will ensure the exchange of information among key players on a timely basis, and facilitate learning both within the programme and by its key stakeholders, and also by sharing lessons and experiences with secondary stakeholders and policy makers. During the inception phase SCARDA’s core partners, with the support of NRI consultants, developed a communications strategy whose overall aim is:

*To contribute to the achievement of the SCARDA programme goal and purpose by fostering information exchange and learning among all SCARDA stakeholders.*

The strategy has a number of objectives, namely:

1. Foster commitment to and ownership of SCARDA among key partners during and beyond the programme period by providing mechanisms through which they can contribute to decision-making.

2. Build trust and a shared understanding among SCARDA stakeholders, through enabling transparency in SCARDA processes and decision-making.

3. Facilitate efficient functioning of and widespread participation in SCARDA activities by making relevant information accessible to all partners.
4. Enable the widespread learning and sharing of programme lessons among programme partners (especially target organisations), policy makers and relevant organisations outside of Africa.

5. Raise awareness about SCARDA's activities, key stakeholders and achievements among: (a) policy-makers with a view to improved policy support that will achieve SCARDA’s aims; and (b) current and potential donors, with a view to raising additional resources.

6. Foster a learning environment that enables diverse stakeholders to interact effectively to bring about innovations.

These objectives draw on, and are consistent with, those of current or emerging communication strategies of FARA and the SROs. They reflect the fundamental principle that SCARDA will link with and strengthen existing institutions rather than attempt to establish parallel structures.

Clear roles and responsibilities for communications have been identified and agreed by the key stakeholders and these will be further refined during the early stages of programme implementation. FARA will be responsible for developing programme-wide internet-based communication structures and mechanisms that support these objectives, including the SCARDA website and groupware, which will enable a variety of SCARDA stakeholder groups to communicate with each other electronically. FARA will also be responsible for publishing material about SCARDA’s activities and achievements in a variety of formats, and for distributing these to regional and international policy-makers and international development partners. The SROs will have complementary responsibilities in each of the three sub-regions, and will also develop effective communication linkages with their service providers and beneficiary institutions. Detailed communication plans will be developed by FARA and the SROs during the first six months of the implementation phase. Learning processes will be fostered and encouraged at various levels from local to regional; for example, through learning alliances and communities of practice.

2.6 Programme budget

A summary budget is presented in Table 2. The total budget is £7.8 million over 30 months. This breaks down to £ 960,000 or 12% for FARA’s coordination and programme wide activities, £ 1.8 million or 23 % for ASARECA and activities in its member countries, £ 2.3 million or 30% for CORAF/WECARD and activities in its member countries, £ 1.7 or 22% for SADC-FANR and activities in its member countries and £989,000 for NRI to provide support programme wide activities as well as capacity building activities.

Tables 4, 5 and 6 in Annex 1 provide details of the cost of the activities that the Focal Institutions identified during the rapid preliminary institutional analyses that were conducted as part of the scoping studies. More information on these activities is provided in SCARDA Inception Report Volume 2: Preliminary Institutional Analyses of Focal Institutions.

2.7 Risks

The major risks to the Programme have as far as possible been internalised in the planning processes and development of the logframe. A principal strength is the strong and growing demand and keen interest in capacity strengthening in Africa which was reconfirmed throughout the scoping studies. All the proposed activities are technically and socially feasible and the suggested partners have adequate capacities to carry them out. The management of the Programme will however be demanding and complex which will require investment in time and resources to establish pragmatic and efficient management capacities and procedures at all levels.

Mitigation strategies, summarised in the logframe in Section 3 have been developed for the
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<th>Yr 3 £</th>
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<tr>
<td>SADC</td>
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<td>15,220</td>
<td>7,610</td>
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<td>CORAF/WECARD</td>
<td>15,220</td>
<td>15,220</td>
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<td>SADC</td>
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<td>175,610</td>
<td>87,805</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
risks which have been identified by programme stakeholders. The possible lack of sufficient commitment by target institutions will be addressed by a range of measures designed to ensure buy-in and build a sense of ownership. The risk of certain groups, especially women, being excluded from participation will be addressed by the application of appropriate selection criteria and in the design and scheduling of activities. It will be important to ensure that the service providers will be willing collaborators who are ready to share materials and experiences. This will be assessed through their track record of collaborative activity. They will also be brought fully into programme planning and lesson learning/sharing processes.

2.8 Cross-cutting issues

2.8.1 Impact on Poverty

As a scientific collaboration and capacity building programme, the main objective is to enhance the capacity of African Agricultural Innovation Systems to contribute to improved livelihoods, the alleviation of poverty and sustainable management of natural resources. This will be achieved through enhancing the participatory arrangements and collaborative capacity of relevant actors such as Farmers’ Associations and NGOs in pro-poor agricultural innovation involving the Focal Institution. Focal Institutions will put in place specific measures to mainstream gender, HIV/AIDS, pro-poor and other social inclusion issues at both internal policy and implementation levels. Progress in increasing the relevance and efficacy of agricultural research outputs will be measured by recording changes in patterns of stakeholder participation in research programmes and by client satisfaction surveys. These measures have been reflected in the purpose-level indicators in the Programme logframe.

2.8.2 Strengthened innovation capacity

SCARDA will develop national and regional human and institutional capacity for agricultural innovation, thus directly contributing to CAADP. The capacity for multidisciplinary and multi-

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### Programme coordination

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FARA</th>
<th>ASARECA</th>
<th>CORAF/WECARD</th>
<th>SADC</th>
<th>NRI</th>
<th><strong>Sub total</strong></th>
<th><strong>Capital costs</strong></th>
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### SUMMARY BY INSTITUTION

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<td>23.37%</td>
<td>29.80%</td>
<td>22.01%</td>
<td>12.60%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
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</table>
institutional partnerships for agricultural research and development and capacity strengthening will be developed.

2.8.3 Gender and Diversity

The central role played by women in agricultural production in Africa is well known. This Programme will use a holistic approach to address gender and diversity issues in research prioritisation and implementation. Special attention will be made to ensure higher participation of women in training and R&D activities. Deliberate effort will also be made to train both men and women scientists in gender analysis and to inculcate institutional changes that will ensure that women have equitable career opportunities. In addition, the capacity of participating institutions to mainstream gender into their R4D activities will be strengthened. Further details of SCARDA’s Gender and Diversity strategy, which also addresses related issues such as HIV and AIDS are provided in Annex 2 and in a SCARDA Briefing Paper on Gender and Diversity.

2.8.4 Environmental sustainability

African farming systems are characterised by declining and degrading natural resources from which to feed growing populations. In addition, new challenges are posed by climate change which is leading to increasingly frequent and severe adverse weather conditions. In particular, water shortages will be a major constraint to crop and livestock production and will affect Africa more seriously than other continents. Conservation and sustainable use of water catchments and biodiversity will become increasingly critical. Greater attention will need to be given to sustainable production in forestry, fisheries and also livestock, which utilise the greatest proportion of Africa’s land area. New varieties of African crops are needed to meet changing market demand, variable weather patterns, disease and pest challenges and African crop breeders will have to take greater responsibility for maintenance of genetic superiority of adopted varieties. The prevalence and incidences of zoonotic and animal-borne diseases such as trypanosomiasis (sleeping sickness), Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) and Rift Valley Fever will increase and reach new areas as an outcome of the changing environments.

Agricultural graduates will need a broader range of skills in order to enable them to work in multidisciplinary and multi-institutional teams with farmers to develop appropriate solutions to new problems. Researchers will need to have access to the latest technical information and they will also have to be able to analyse complex problems and identify suitable recommendations. They will need to be able to interact effectively with different stakeholders and this will require good communication and facilitation skills. SCARDA will equip agricultural research and development staff with these skills and will identify critical areas of expertise in which current graduates are deficient. The Programme has prioritised certain key issues such as biodiversity and zoonotic diseases and has identified a range of options to address climate change issues. These are described in a SCARDA Briefing Paper on Climate Change and Agriculture (see the Document List in Annex 1).

2.9 Strategy for ensuring sustainability

SCARDA has been developed to complement and contribute to current and planned capacity strengthening initiatives of FARA and the SROs. The Programme contributes to FARA’s Networking Support Function for Capacity Strengthening which has been established under its 2007-2016 Strategic Plan. SCARDA complements the proposed programme for Building Africa’s Scientific and Institutional Capacity (BASIC), which is aimed at strengthening tertiary agricultural training and which has been developed by several of SCARDA’s key stakeholders (FARA, the SROs, ANAFE and RUFORUM). The BASIC
initiative will build capacity to build capacity and thus help to ensure the sustainability of SCARDA’s outputs. SCARDA and BASIC will be interlinked with the Regional Agricultural Information and Learning System (RAILS) since each addresses different opportunities and constraints in developing and disseminating the new knowledge required for agricultural innovation.

SCARDA will complement new capacity strengthening initiatives being developed by ASARECA, CORAF-WECARD and SADC-FANR. The purpose of ASARECA’s planned capacity strengthening programme is ‘To strengthen multi-stakeholder learning for innovation using the Integrated Agricultural Research for Development principles’. The IAR4D programme will work with task forces associated with regional research projects supported through its competitive grants scheme. SCARDA will add value to this by helping to mainstream multi-stakeholder approaches within Focal Institutions, especially in Rwanda and Burundi. In the SADC sub-region, SCARDA will complement capacity strengthening activities in the ICART and MAPP projects. The Programme will also add value to CORAF-WECARD’s proposed capacity strengthening activities.

FARA will design and implement activities under its Networking Supporting Function for Advocacy and Resource Mobilisation to positively influence the advancement of enabling environments; for example, by encouraging national governments to provide adequate incentives to ensure the retention of trained scientists. FARA will also seek to promote direct investment into SCARDA from national governments and from other development partners. This will be advanced in compliance with the proposed Joint Financing Agreement negotiated between the FARA Secretariat and FARA’s Development Partners.

In order to leverage additional resources SCARDA will draw on evidence of successful capacity strengthening approaches from the Programme that will be identified through the lesson learning and experience sharing process. This evidence will be based on clear and measurable financial and operational benefits accruing to the Focal and Satellite Institutions from SCARDA interventions. It will also derive from examples of uptake of SCARDA’s capacity strengthening approach by other institutions. The Programme structure, which recognises the important role played by Satellite Institutions, has been designed to facilitate this out-scaling even within the 30-month initial period of implementation. The impact of involvement in SCARDA of the capacity service providers in improving their own teaching, training and research activities will be an important contribution to sustaining the capacity of national agricultural research system.
3

Programme logical framework

- Strengthening networks of actors
  - Ensure inclusivity
- Capacity to implement demand-led research
  - Innovative ways of doing things
  - Considering the whole platform of innovations and not only NARS
  - Build capacity of demand side

- Capacity for information access and management
  - Information packaging and dissemination

- Prioritise small number of e.g. linkages rather than one point in a chain
  - Strengthening linkages with technical experts and policy makers
## 3. Programme logical framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Narrative summary</th>
<th>Indicators of achievement</th>
<th>Means of verification</th>
<th>Risks and assumptions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>GOAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| Poverty is sustainably reduced in sub-Saharan Africa. | These will be derived from relevant higher level indicators (e.g. MD Goal 1 for poverty and hunger and Goal 7 for environmental sustainability) | – Government statistics  
– FAO, World Bank, ADB and Economic Commission for Africa statistics and reports  
– ECOWAS, ECCAS, SADC, COMESA, IGAD and other regional organization reports  
– UN COM-TRADE statistics and reports | – National and international context enables benefits (at this level)  
– Political stability adequate  
– National and international stakeholders and partners cooperate within current and future frameworks to enable benefits |
| **PURPOSE**       |                           |                      |                      |
| 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. | • 70% of key stakeholders of Focal Institutions express satisfaction and noticeable improvement in the delivery and relevance of research services by 2010.  
• 25% increase in value of competitive and other funding secured by Focal Institutions by 2010.  
• 30% increased collaborative participation of relevant stakeholder partners in pro-poor agricultural research initiatives by 2010.  
• 100% of Focal Institutions evidence specific measures to mainstream gender, HIV/AIDS, pro-poor and other social inclusion issues at both internal policy and implementation levels. | • Programme evaluation reports (including stakeholder surveys).  
• Annual reports of SROs, target institutions, and capacity strengthening providers. | • Levels of National investment in African Agricultural Research are sustained along with commitments to increase these.  
• Steps to prevent and mitigate the specific effects of HIV-AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis on human capacity continue and improve.  
• Regional mechanisms for sharing relevant knowledge and products are sustained and continue to improve. |
### Outputs

#### Output 1: Agricultural research management systems and managerial competencies to conduct high quality research strengthened in African NARS.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators of achievement</th>
<th>Means of verification</th>
<th>Risks and assumptions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>By March 2008 each SRO has an agricultural research management capacity strengthening plan. By June 2008 participating Focal Institutions have an IF of 50′ in developing action plans for strengthening agricultural research management in response to a participatory institutional analysis agreed with the relevant SRO. By September 2008, providers of capacity strengthening services have agreed details of CS interventions with Focal Institutions and SROs. By June 2009, 100% of Focal Institutions have implemented the capacity strengthening action plans for agricultural research management. By January 2010, participating Focal Institutions have an IF of 90 in at least three of the key agricultural research management areas identified in their action plan.</td>
<td>• Focal Institutions’ CS plans • CS Service provider progress reports • CS planning workshop reports • Focal Institutions’ annual reports • SRO quarterly and annual reports • FARA quarterly and annual reports</td>
<td>• Senior managers in target institutions actively support an internal change management process. • Providers of capacity strengthening services agree to operate in a collaborative mode sharing training materials and experiences to generate regional public goods. • IT infrastructure, and communications in participating organisations continue to function and improve.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Output 2: The capacity of African NARS to undertake quality agricultural research for development sustainably strengthened

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators of achievement</th>
<th>Means of verification</th>
<th>Risks and assumptions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>By January 2008, each SRO has a list of “preferred providers” for technical and professional capacity strengthening agreed with FARA. By June 2008 participating Focal Institutions have an IF of 75 in developed action plans for strengthening priority professional and technical competencies in response to an institutional analysis. By June 2009, Focal Institutions have an IF of 90 in implementing their action plans for strengthening priority professional and technical competencies. By January 2010, participating Focal Institutions have an IF of 50 in demonstrated application of gained competencies to their priorities identified in the action plan.</td>
<td>• NARS annual reports • SRO annual reports • Operating Unit annual reports • FARA annual reports • Service provider reports</td>
<td>• Providers of capacity strengthening services agree to operate in a collaborative mode sharing training materials and experiences to generate regional public goods. • IT infrastructure, and communications in participating institutions continue to function and improve. • Participating institutions continue to have conditions required for application of CS activities agreed in their CS plans.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9. IF = Implementation (or Impact) Factor derived from a multiple of % of Focal Institutions and the % to which they have implemented the factor under study divided by 100, i.e., total adoption would be indicated by an IF of 100 (100*100)/100. If half the institutions adopt to an average of 75% the IF would be 37.5 i.e., (50*75)/100

10. This could be most effectively achieved through a facilitated workshop process, after Focal Institutions and services providers have been identified using agreed criteria and agreements signed between them and the respective SROs and/or FARA.

11. This would cultivated through a two way dialogue which, if well conducted enabling mutual trust to develop, would result in the relevant managers/decision makers signing an agreement of cooperation.

12. This would be underpinned by agreements between the CS service providers and SROs and/or FARA which include the parameters for defining “ownership” of the training products and “good practice lessons” developed.
### Outputs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outputs</th>
<th>Indicators of achievement</th>
<th>Means of verification</th>
<th>Risks and assumptions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Output 3:</strong> Tertiary agricultural teaching and training institutions empowered to match the capacity building they offer to changing market demands.</td>
<td>Findings of recent relevant studies and remaining gaps identified and proposed methodology for study developed by Feb 2008. Outstanding gaps in competence of agricultural graduates in respect to the employment market identified by June 2008. Analysis of future demand shared with key stakeholders and way forward agreed by Sept 2008.</td>
<td>• Review of existing studies, • SCARDA &quot;Tracer study&quot; report/s • Workshop presentation/s &amp; related reports</td>
<td>• Involvement of decision-makers in the target institutions in study design and agreement to act on findings is secured. • Other training organizations will accept relevance of findings for their curriculum review process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Output 4:</strong> SCARDA approach for capacity strengthening is documented, validated with, and owned by key stakeholders.</td>
<td>SCARDA coordinators (regional and sub-regional) recruited and in office by January 2008. Strategy and detailed plan for documentation and lesson learning agreed at FARA and SRO levels by March 2008. M&amp;E and reporting system for SCARDA at FARA and SRO levels is operational by June 2008. Knowledge sharing platforms at FARA and SRO levels established and operational by June 2008. First review and analysis of learning at SRO and FARA levels undertaken by January 2009. Second review of learning undertaken and strategy for scaling up developed by October 2009. Lessons and best practices documented appropriately and shared with key stakeholders by January 2010.</td>
<td>• FARA quarterly and annual reports • SRO quarterly and annual reports • Service provider reports • Learning workshop reports • Website and e-groups usage reports, • Strategy document on up-scaling, • Case studies and “policy briefs”.</td>
<td>• Existing electronic information sharing platforms and support programmes in FARA and SROs are maintained and continue to improve. • Target institutions have basic access to internet services. • Continuity of involvement by key managers and professionals in the target and service providing institutions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activities</td>
<td>Milestones</td>
<td>Risk mitigation strategies</td>
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<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
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</table>
| Output 1: Agricultural research management systems and competencies to conduct high quality research strengthened in African NARS.  
- Formation of team/s and finalisation of methodology for institutional analysis.  
- Participatory assessment of management capacity strengthening needs in Focal Institutions in relation to management of change and innovation.  
- Development of management capacity strengthening programme and agreements with Focal Institutions.  
- Implementation of management capacity strengthening training (group training, application plans & follow-up) in Focal and Satellite Institutions.  
- Strengthening and development of key management systems and processes in Focal Institutions (mentoring, advisory and facilitation support of planned changes, sharing good practices). | Institutional analysis team, methodology and programme agreed by December 2007.  
Institutional diagnostic analyses undertaken in all selected Institutions by mid 2008 (applies also to output 2).  
Group training courses covering priority management areas developed and delivered in all sub-regions by December 2008. | Risk 1: Drop-out and/or passive resistance/token participation by Focal Institutions.  
Mitigation strategies:  
a. Rigorous application of agreed criteria in selection of Focal Institutions (FIs).  
b. Clear and timely communication of SCARDA objectives and approach to FIs.  
c. Participatory and transparent institutional analysis process.  
d. Letters of agreement signed by key decision makers responsible for FIs.  
e. Clear plan at FIs level for CS development and agreed jointly with CS service providers.  
f. Siting group training in FIs where possible.  
g. Establishment of learning groups with codes of conduct. |
| Output 2: The capacity of African NARS to undertake quality agricultural research for development sustainability strengthened.  
- Participatory and strategic assessment of professional and technical capacity strengthening needs in Focal Institutions (in relation to priority research and innovation opportunities).  
- Development of professional and technical capacity strengthening programme and agreements with Focal Institutions & service providers.  
- Implementation of professional and technical (postgraduate attachments, mentoring) capacity strengthening plans in Focal and Satellite Institutions.  
- Implementation of professional and technical capacity strengthening plans (short courses) in Focal and Satellite Institutions  | Post-graduate candidates with training application plans identified by April 2008 and placed by Sept 2008.  
SRO detailed plans for technical and professional training in priority areas by June 2008.  
Technical and professional group training courses developed and delivered in all sub-regions by December 2008.  
Technical and professional mentoring and follow up activities developed and initiated in all SROs by December 2008. | Risk 2. Marginalisation of women. Younger, older researchers in CS activities  
Mitigation strategies:  
a. Agree socially inclusive criteria for selection of participating individuals,  
b. 1c, 1d and 1e above. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Milestones</th>
<th>Risk mitigation strategies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Output 3: Tertiary agricultural education and training institutions empowered to match capacity building offer to changing market demand</strong></td>
<td>Results of tracer study delivered and discussed with key stakeholders by July 2008.</td>
<td>Risk 3. CS service providers are reluctant to collaborate with each other in development and delivery of training materials and sharing of experiences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Review of findings, gaps and methodology lessons from previous studies of demand for and application of agricultural graduate training.</td>
<td>SCARDA staff at FARA and SRO level recruited and in post by January 2008.</td>
<td>Mitigation strategies:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Development and implementation of a “tracer study” of future demand from employers of graduates involved in agricultural innovation.</td>
<td>SCARDA M&amp;E and reporting plans at SRO and FARA level developed and agreed by March 2008.</td>
<td>3a. Discuss collaboration and IPR aspects in initial dialogue and include clauses in contracts with service providers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Study results shared and implications discussed with key stakeholders at appropriate fora.</td>
<td>SCARDA communication plans at SRO and FARA level developed and agreed by March 2008.</td>
<td>3b. Evidence record of the above during selection,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Output 4: SCARDA approach for capacity strengthening is documented, validated with, and owned by key stakeholders.</strong></td>
<td>Documentation framework, methodology and lesson learning plan developed by March 2008.</td>
<td>3c. Joint planning of CS inputs with all main service providers present.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Selection and recruitment of SCARDA coordinators at FARA and SRO level and procurement of related equipment.</td>
<td>Electronic platform (SCARDA website and group-mail) established by April 2008.</td>
<td>3d. Include service providers in lesson workshop/s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Collaborative development of detailed M&amp;E and reporting plan and system for SCARDA at FARA and SRO levels (including strategies for monitoring mainstreaming of cross-cutting issues – gender, HIV/AIDS, age etc).</td>
<td>Process documentation guidance and emerging lessons review events held by August 2008.</td>
<td>3e. Establish learning group/s for CS trainers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Collaborative development of detailed plan and systems for communication – including documentation and lesson learning and sharing at FARA and SRO levels by March 2008.</td>
<td>Learning groups “Communities of practice” defined and initiated by October 2008.</td>
<td>Risk 4. Sharing and learning will be limited by cultural factors and lack of trust.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Development of interactive experience and knowledge sharing mechanisms for SCARDA (e.g. learning groups/ “communities of practice”).</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mitigation strategies:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Milestones</th>
<th>Risk mitigation strategies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Face to face experience sharing and lesson development events to define good practice in institutional capacity strengthening.</td>
<td>First lesson learning workshops held in all SROs by January 2009.</td>
<td>Risk 3. CS service providers are reluctant to collaborate with each other in development and delivery of training materials and sharing of experiences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Development of a scaling up strategy for the SCARDA approach.</td>
<td>Strategy for up-scaling SCARDA developed and agreed by March 2009.</td>
<td>Mitigation strategies:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Documentation and strategic sharing of key lessons with key stakeholders.</td>
<td>Synthesis lesson learning workshops held in at regional level by October 2009.</td>
<td>3a. Discuss collaboration and IPR aspects in initial dialogue and include clauses in contracts with service providers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Main lessons packaged and delivered to key target audiences by January 2010.</td>
<td>3b. Evidence record of the above during selection,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3c. Joint planning of CS inputs with all main service providers present.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3d. Include service providers in lesson workshop/s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3e. Establish learning group/s for CS trainers.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Annexes 4
Annex 1. SCARDA Inception Phase

Summary

This Annex summarises the key findings of the six-month Inception Phase of the SCARDA programme. The main outcome of the Inception Phase was the achievement of Output 1 of the Programme: “A detailed capacity strengthening programme and structures for its implementation in place”. This Implementation Plan, which is based on a 30-month implementation period with a start date of 1 January 2008, is described in this Inception Report. Additional outputs from the Inception Phase were (a) Electronic databases incorporating data on a wide range of research and development institutions, including key capacity needs and (b) a set of resource documents including synthesis reports of scoping studies conducted in the sub-regions; Proceedings of stakeholder workshops; Preliminary Institutional Analyses of Focal Institutions provided in Volume 2 of this report and five Briefing Papers on priority issues for the Programme.

The main lessons learned from the Inception Phase were as follows:

- Deficiencies in agricultural research management and scientific quality in sub-Saharan Africa identified in the NARS Assessment (2006) and other recent studies were confirmed and priority capacity needs in each of the sub-regions were identified.

- Key underlying needs are generic and there are opportunities for shared learning which clearly justify the added value of a continental capacity strengthening programme.

- One of the key identified deficiencies is the capacity to form strong multi-institutional partnerships between NARIs, universities, extension agencies, farmers’ organizations and other groups that are essential in order to bring about the required change.

- Confirmation was provided that previous capacity development initiatives did not achieve the desired impact because they were fragmented and only addressed single issues.

- Successful models from elsewhere have shown that a comprehensive approach targeting key institutions and their development partners can be sustainable and provides a platform for up- and out-scaling.

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13. These capacity needs are presented in the Proceedings of the Regional Inception Phase Review Workshop, Accra, Ghana, 27-29 August 2007 and summarized in Section 4 of this Inception Report.
• **Experiential learning** approaches are needed in order to ensure that newly acquired skills are applied suitably and benefit the institution as well as the individual.

• Interventions such as mentoring require a **continuing commitment** over a substantial time period to be effective.

• There is adequate capacity within Africa and among **international organizations** working in partnership with African organizations to deliver quality capacity strengthening services.

• The **timely sharing of information** and experiences among the core partners during the Inception Phase enhanced the efficiency of the scoping studies and reinforced the Programme’s regional approach.

**Background**

The SCARDA proposal was approved by DFID in February 2007, subject to the development of a detailed Plan for an initial three-year implementation phase. The Implementation Plan is the first output of the SCARDA programme and was defined as “A detailed capacity strengthening programme and structures for its implementation in place”. This output was scheduled for completion at the end of a six-month Inception Phase funded by DFID. In order to deliver the output, the proposal made provision for a “needs analysis and for measures to establish structures and procedures for programme implementation”. This Annex summarises the findings of the needs analysis, whilst the structures and procedures for programme implementation are set out in Section 2 of the Report.

**Outputs achieved**

The following outputs were achieved during the Inception Phase of the programme:

*Implementation Plan.* A detailed Implementation Plan was developed by SCARDA stakeholders and is described in this Inception Report. The Plan is based on a 30-month initial implementation period, with a start date of 1 January 2008.

*Electronic Databases in MicroSoft Access.* These databases contain data from responses to stakeholder questionnaires developed by the consultants for the CORAF/WECARD and SADC sub-regions. The data include information on staffing levels, age and gender profiles, research priorities, partnership arrangements, and key capacity needs of selected research and development organizations. The information may be retrieved using a search function and displayed in a variety of formats, including tables and graphs. Options are being explored to place the databases on the SRO websites and to allow organizations to update their own data via a password-protected gateway.

*Briefing Papers.* A set of five Briefing Papers was prepared on priority issues identified during the scoping studies. Early drafts of the papers were developed as resource documents for the CORAF-WECARD stakeholder workshop. The final versions incorporate feedback from stakeholders and will be made available as hard copies and electronically on the CORAF-WECARD and FARA websites.

**Activities conducted**

An **Inaugural Planning Workshop** was held in Accra on 20–21 February 2007. The purpose of the Workshop was to:

• Sensitize participants on the SCARDA programme
• Establish the Programme’s governance procedures
• Develop a common understanding of the proposed inception phase activities and plan the consultation processes.

The Workshop objectives were successfully accomplished and an Action Plan was drawn up for the inception phase. The discussions and outcomes of the Workshop were documented and a Proceedings was subsequently circulated to
participants. The participants were drawn from the main stakeholders of SCARDA and comprised representatives of FARA, ASARECA, CORAF-WECARD, SADC-FANR, COMESA, IGAD, ANAFE, RUFORUM, ISNAR, University of Ghana, and NRI-UoG. Members of this group agreed to act as ‘Champions’ of the Programme by participating in the consultation process and by promoting SCARDA in appropriate fora.

**Scoping studies** were conducted in each of the three sub-regions in sub-Saharan Africa to identify priority capacity strengthening needs in agricultural research and development institutions. Consultants were appointed to develop the methodology for the scoping studies and to undertake stakeholder consultations in selected countries in the sub-regions. A generic Terms of Reference was developed for the Consultants and these were modified to meet the specific needs of each sub-region. In ASARECA and CORAF-WECARD two consultants from the sub-regions were hired to conduct the studies. In SADC, national consultants were appointed to identify capacity needs in member countries. Their findings were then synthesised by an NRI staff member who has substantial experience of the sub-region and who contributed to the development of SADC MAPP.

The methodologies developed for the scoping studies are described in the synthesis reports submitted by the SRO consultants. In each sub-region, the approach involved:

- An analysis of relevant documentation on national agricultural and capacity strengthening strategies; agricultural research structures and priority programmes; and other capacity strengthening initiatives to which SCARDA might link.
- Meetings with agricultural research and development stakeholders in selected countries in the sub-regions.
- A Stakeholder Workshop to validate the findings of the consultants.
- The preparation of a draft Implementation Plan for the sub-region to be incorporated into a programme-wide Plan for sub-Saharan Africa.

The main variations among sub-regions to the generic approach which was adopted were:

- In CORAF-WECARD, the consultants visited each of the member countries whereas representative countries were visited in the other two sub-regions.
- A questionnaire was developed and used by the CORAF-WECARD consultants. This was subsequently modified and used by the SADC consultants. Data from the respondents were entered on electronic databases.
- In each sub-region the perspectives of a wide range of stakeholders were sought. However, in CORAF-WECARD and SADC the primary focus was on National Agricultural Research Institutes and Universities.
- In ASARECA, which started its scoping study first a second stakeholder workshop was held to develop the main elements of the Implementation Plan.

A synthesis of the findings from the sub-regional scoping studies was conducted through a meeting of a core Working Group which prepared an Outline programme-wide Implementation Plan. This plan was reviewed and validated at a Regional Inception Phase Review Workshop which was held in Accra on 27–29 August. Activity plans for the Focal Institutions were prepared during visits conducted during November. These are presented in a separate document.

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Lessons learned

The scoping studies enriched the main findings of the Assessment of NARS commissioned by FARA in 2005. Senior managers of institutions consulted during the scoping studies recognised that there are key areas of weakness in the management and delivery of agricultural research for development. The validation process showed that there are differences between countries and sub-regions with regard to specific capacity deficiencies and in the most appropriate ways to address them. Nevertheless, the findings of the scoping studies demonstrated that there are key underlying issues which are generic and the opportunities for shared learning clearly justify the added value of a continental capacity strengthening programme. This was already demonstrated in the benefits derived by sharing learning between the sub-regional scoping study teams.

The scoping studies revealed a strong demand for strengthening capacity to effect radical changes in the way in which research priorities are identified and subsequently translated into programmes capable of generating outputs which meet the needs of end users. Amongst the key identified deficiencies is the capacity to form strong multi-institutional partnerships between NARIs, universities, extension agencies, farmers’ organizations and other groups that are essential in order to bring about the required change. There was broad endorsement for strengthening capacity for implementing Innovation Systems concepts, as outlined in the SCARDA proposal submitted to DFID in October 2006.

A key issue was how to make best use of the available resources in order to maximise the beneficial impact of capacity strengthening interventions to be supported by SCARDA. The consensus reached by stakeholders in all three sub-regions was that targeting NARIs, universities and agricultural training colleges as Focal Institutions had the greatest probability of bringing about positive and sustainable change. However, it was also clearly understood that programme activities should be designed to assist these institutions to make a more effective contribution to national innovation systems by reaching out to and including other actors in the value chains.

A review of institutional capacity strengthening experiences in Africa and elsewhere reveals that in order to bring about lasting change, experiential learning is essential and short-term and piece-meal interventions have limited value (Horton et al. 2003). This study also showed that the concept of working with core target institutions, as platforms for subsequent scaling up of the capacity strengthening approaches, has been successfully applied in Latin America.

Experiences shared by stakeholders in the SCARDA scoping studies highlighted the need to identify appropriate staff members to engage in the capacity strengthening activities. This should be based on advanced identification by senior management of how the new skills acquired by staff members will be applied to ensure lasting improvements in the performance of their institutions.

During the period covered by the inception phase, FARA and the SROs were engaged in developing revised strategic and operational plans. In each case, the new strategies are informed by Innovation Systems and IAR4D thinking and SCARDA’s approach is consistent with the new paradigm. FARA and the SROs are developing new capacity strengthening functions and programmes and SCARDA has been designed to mesh with and contribute to these emerging programmes. In the case of ASARECA, the SCARDA programme development team was able to interact with the team developing ASARECA’s new IAR4D capacity strengthening activities through meetings, participation in stakeholder workshops and involvement in an electronic discussion forum.

Following the inaugural planning workshop of SCARDA, effective communication was
maintained between the core partners to ensure that information was shared in a timely manner. This was appreciated as means of generating efficiencies in the planning and methodology development for the scoping studies. Because they started later than the other two SROs, SADC-FANR was a particular beneficiary and took good advantage of the accumulating knowledge and experiences to accelerate their own scoping study. This commitment to share experiences is recognized as an important asset to be reinforced in the regional approach adopted in the Implementation Phase. Great care was taken to ensure that key documents such as workshop reports were finalised and circulated rapidly. These will be valuable resources for future evaluation of SCARDA’s implementation.

A Communication Team was established and interaction was mainly though electronic means. The members of this team will form the core of a Communication Team which will be established at the beginning of the Implementation period. Experience during the inception phase showed that it was essential to identify and assign staff with clear roles and responsibilities for communication issues. This will be done at the start of the Implementation period prior developing Communication Plans at the regional and sub-regional levels.

Promotion of SCARDA

A booklet on SCARDA, with text in both English and French, was prepared by FARA and circulated widely to stakeholders in agricultural research for development in Africa. The Programme was promoted at the RUFORUM General Assembly which was held in April 2007 in Mangochi, Malawi. A presentation on SCARDA was given by the SCARDA Interim Programme Officer and two members of the NRI support team included aspects of the Programme in their presentations on Innovation Systems and Climate Change, respectively. A special session on SCARDA was included in the Conference programme and this provided an opportunity to begin the planning process for the stakeholder consultations in the SADC sub-region.

The SCARDA programme was given a high profile during the FARA General Assembly held in Johannesburg on 10–17 June 2007. A side event on Capacity Strengthening was organised jointly by FARA and CTA and SCARDA’s Interim Coordinator gave a presentation on the Programme. SCARDA also featured prominently in the address given by FARA’s Executive Secretary. One of the keynote speakers, Professor Anthony Youdeowei, was a SCARDA consultant for CORAF-WECARD and he presented some of the ideas and approaches that had emerged from the consultation process. SCARDA featured prominently in a presentation made by the Interim Coordinator to the NEPAD CAADP Partnership Platform in Addis Ababa on 25 September 2007.

The Programme was publicised on the FARA website (http://www.fara-africa.org/networking-support-projects/scardabasic/) and an intranet site was established to facilitate communication among the core partners. A ‘Highlight’ on SCARDA was shown on NRI’s website (http://www.nri.org/news/newslatest.htm#scarda), with links to the websites of FARA and the SROs.

Documents

Booklet

SCARDA Brief. Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa.

Workshop Proceedings


Scoping Study Reports


SCARDA Inception Report Volume 2 Preliminary Institutional Analyses of Focal Institutions

Reports on the Focal Institutions

Briefing Papers


Miscellaneous

Monthly progress reports

Table 3 provides information on the activities carried out during the Inception Phase. Tables 4, 5 and 6 provide detailed budgets for the capacity strengthening activities to be conducted for and with the Focal Institutions by the Service Providers.
Table 3. Activity schedule for SCARDA Inception Phase

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Month¹</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Establishing the SCARDA Coordination Unit at FARA:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Appointment of Interim Coordinator</td>
<td>X²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Terms of reference drawn up for key positions in the Coordination unit.</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Appointment of Interim Deputy Coordinator</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• SCARDA offices at the FARA secretariat established and equipped</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. Partnership building:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Inaugural planning workshop to build consensus and ownership</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Identify governance procedures</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. Appointment of SRO Focal Points:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Appointment of SRO focal points and agreement on their role and operational modalities</td>
<td>X X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4. Identification of capacity strengthening needs and development of a detailed SCARDA strategy:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Detailed scoping of capacity needs and supply at country level and current strategies in place to address those needs</td>
<td>X X X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Outline plans, strategies and programme design developed through a participatory process.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5. Preparation of detailed work plans and budgets</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Monitoring and evaluation framework</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Communication strategy and system</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Detailed work plans and budgets</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Implementation partners confirmed and roles and responsibilities during the implementation phase agreed</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Memoranda of understanding signed on approval of the inception report</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>6. Inception phase review workshop:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>7. Preparation of inception phase report and review of inception phase</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Month 1 ran from mid-Feb to mid-March, month 2 from mid-March to mid-April etc.
2. Grey shading denotes planned month for activity; X denotes month in which activity carried out. Blue shading denotes approved one-month extension of Inception Phase.
### Table 4. ASARECA FOCAL INSTITUTIONS BUDGETS

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<td>Water management</td>
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<td>Agricultural extension</td>
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<td>Equipment maintenance</td>
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<td>45,000</td>
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<td>CRI - Ghana</td>
<td>NARI - Gambia</td>
<td>Congo</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Yr 1</td>
<td>Yr 2</td>
<td>Yr 3</td>
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<td>£</td>
<td>£</td>
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**Total:** 236,500
Annex 2. Strategy for Gender and Diversity

SCARDA has a firm commitment to addressing gender inequalities in the capacity strengthening objectives and activities. The SCARDA proposal, October 2006, stated that:

‘The Programme will seek to ensure that women have equal opportunities to participate in, and benefit from, the activities that are conducted. One of the Programme’s guiding principles is to give priority to strengthening the capacities of women scientists. To this end, it will proactively encourage women to participate in its capacity development activities. Further, in its design the Programme will aim to ensure that there are no negative impacts on women or on any other vulnerable groups.’

This is consistent with the gender mainstreaming approach of FARA which promotes.

‘.. policies and actions that facilitate equitable access to productive resources by both men and women, ensuring that women’s needs are addressed in the development and dissemination of agricultural technologies and policies; that women are enabled to fully participate in and benefit from agricultural innovation processes; that women farmers and scientists receive the training they need to be fully competitive in their work; and that capacity building for both women and men feature gender issues prominently’.

The strategy for the SCARDA programme to meet this commitment will address the two important dimensions of gender and diversity;

1) Research management, gender and social difference

A gender and difference perspective must also be embedded in research management, to provide the appropriate environment to nurture the right kind of research practice. The values and principles of gender equity must be integrated into organisational principles, structure and culture in order to influence staffing and representation in decision making bodies.

2) Gender and difference responsive, participatory agricultural planning, research and development.

A gender and diversity perspective is important if developments in agricultural research are to be translated into productivity gains for women and the disadvantaged, including those affected by HIV and AIDS. This involves strengthening capacity among SCARDA participating institutions for planning processes that identify and respond to the different constraints, needs and priorities of different groups
of farmers, whether these differences are based on gender, socio-economic situation, age, ethnicity, religion, etc. This includes developing mechanisms for men and women farmers from different socio-economic, age, and ethnic groups to take an active part in planning agricultural development activities and participating in the research process and sharing results.

Gender mainstreaming strategies

The need to look at both research practice and organisational culture simultaneously, requires a strategy to ‘mainstream’ gender and diversity – i.e. integrating the concerns of women and disadvantaged groups into the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of agricultural research policies and programmes, and to bring about changes in staffing, procedures, and culture of agricultural research and development organisations.

Steps to achieve this include:

- **Securing commitment from senior management in participating institutions.** Experience indicates that progress is strongest where there is the will to ensure that analysis is followed by real action. The attitude of candidate organizations to gender will therefore be an important criterion for the selection of participating organizations. It is however, recognised that addressing gender and diversity inequalities is a complex, long-term project.

- **Gender and diversity analysis** (gender audit) within institutions in the SCARDA programme, covering staff composition, roles, recruitment policies, training, promotion and career development opportunities. This will be conducted as part of the institutional analysis in the first stages of implementation. Largely through participatory self assessment, it will identify gaps in gender equality; raising awareness of the gaps and options to address these. It will contribute to the design of training and capacity strengthening in gender and diversity issues and associated M&E.

- **Analysis of consultation processes** which underpin setting of the research agenda and prioritisation, from the perspective of gender and diversity inclusiveness. This will lead to inclusion of gender analysis in these processes, examining the roles and interrelationships of both men and women, those excluded and those whose voices are usually heard. The aim is for gender analysis to be an integral part of research planning and implementation and this will require skills in participatory stakeholder processes which include women and disadvantaged groups.

Options for mainstreaming gender and diversity:

Following the gender analysis a number of options will be considered:

a) Relating to institutions and management

- **Appoint gender focal staff** as catalysts for action, to have designated responsibility and a strategic role in mobilising and targeting resources, identifying entry points, providing training and mentoring, developing alliances, etc.

- **Promote gender equality through organizational capacity building and change strategies,** e.g., develop gender policies and plans; pay attention to gender in job descriptions, interviews and appraisals.

- **Build senior management support** — through specific training in gender policy development.

- **Encourage organisational learning on gender and diversity issues.**

- **Training in use of gender sensitive monitoring tools and approaches which involve multiple actors.**

- **Targeted training opportunities** — e.g., the introduction of a special Fellowship
scheme for women (possibly linked to other initiatives such as the Gender & Diversity programme of the CGIAR).

b) Relating to participatory agricultural planning and research.

- **Learn from lessons from experience elsewhere** on institutionalising participation in research and ensuring that participatory research and innovation is properly sensitive to gender and differentiation and exclusion along other lines (age, ethnicity, religion etc).

- **Develop skills in participatory processes** and participatory research which include women and disadvantaged groups.

- **Ensure women’s participation at the community level** by working with representative women’s organisations and providing support/guidance to extension staff.

- Developing **gender and diversity related indicators** for M&E and reporting: Routine monitoring should collect sex-disaggregated data and gender analytical information at the client or beneficiary and organisational levels.

- **Gender, diversity and policy processes** — from analysis of the strategic constraints to broader gender and diversity related access to land, resource entitlements and inputs, develop policy recommendations for relevant service provision bodies.

Addressing accountability, learning and quality assurance.

1. Introduction

The purpose of the DFID-funded Programme for Strengthening Capacity for Agricultural Research and Development in Africa (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’. SCARDA is led by the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) and will be implemented in the three sub-regions in sub-Saharan Africa (east and central Africa, southern Africa and West Africa). The sub-regional organisations (SROs) will play key roles in the governance and operational oversight of the programme within their respective geographical domains.

During the programme’s six-month inception phase, scoping studies have been conducted in each of the three sub regions to identify the capacity strengthening needs and to develop strategies for addressing them. The studies were discussed in three Stakeholder Consultation Meetings and used to develop a detailed implementation plan which was discussed and agreed at a Regional Stakeholder Inception Workshop. A monitoring and evaluation strategy was designed as part of this process.

2. M&E challenges in capacity strengthening programmes

There are particular challenges in monitoring and evaluating a programme of capacity strengthening which include:-

1. The time scale within which capacity strengthening activities can translate into positive outcomes for agricultural research and development.

2. Attributing outcomes to programme activities and processes, since capacity strengthening takes place within a wider context of knowledge exchange and capacity development.

3. Monitoring of complex qualitative processes to enable learning about what strategies and approaches are effective in capacity strengthening.

4. The scope and the organisational/individual levels within which effectiveness starts to materialise as a result of the strengthen capacity.
3. M&E in relation to SCARDA’s theory of intervention

The working hypothesis behind SCARDA is that the development and application of appropriate packages of capacity strengthening measures targeting organisations, rather than the traditional piecemeal approach, will more effectively and more sustainably improve the efficacy of ARD institutions. Programme interventions may be targeted at individual organisations such as national agricultural research institutes, universities and agricultural extension organisations. Support may also be provided for networks and other institutions. Since a key objective is to strengthen national agricultural innovation systems, attention will be given to strengthening linkages between organisations and different functional elements of the innovation system. A central premise underpinning SCARDA’s approach, shared with innovation systems theory, is that interventions are more effective when planned and implemented through an informed analysis of individual organisations, and networks of organisations, as systems, the component parts of which interface to deliver outputs and services for development.

SCARDA will engage with capacity strengthening organisations in order to facilitate and enhance the provision of their services. The Programme will also work with organisations and institutions which can benefit most from capacity strengthening activities and generate wider impact in national innovation systems. In each case, the key outcomes from the proposed two and half year implementation phase of SCARDA will relate to changes in organisational and individual strategies and capacities. Consequently, the M&E framework for the Programme should address the aspects of organizational and individual performance targeted through the capacity building inputs provided and enable these to be effectively assessed and measured. For this reason, the design of the work programmes in each of the sub-regions will require a defendable and explicit rationale for proposing particular organisational changes and enhanced capacities. This will involve the identification of clear impact pathways or outcome map that can be tracked.

The main functions of M&E within the SCARDA programme are:

a) To track the delivery progress of results (outputs and outcomes) within the programme for management accountability, so that (where necessary) appropriate corrective adjustments can be put in place, during the three-year implementation phase.

b) To track and evaluate the quality and effectiveness of capacity strengthening interventions, particularly in relation to their intended contribution towards individual and organisational performance. This implies recording and analysis of performance and change in the primary individuals and organizations participating in SCARDA.

c) Related to b above, to ensure that key elements of process are clearly documented so that the means through which performance improvements are achieved are captured for further reflection, analysis and sharing.

d) To identify needs for capacity strengthening in M&E, as much of the M&E will be embedded within programme activities and undertaken by SCARDA participating institutions.

A robust and coherent monitoring and evaluation framework and procedures are required for SCARDA to fulfil these functions. This has been developed as part of the SCARDA planning process.

The M&E framework focuses on developing “leading” indicators of change and performance by the participating organisations and individuals. Because sustained changes in organisations and individuals involve organisational learning, the M&E framework for SCARDA has a strong emphasis on analysing, sharing lessons and communicating lessons learnt. Learning and
lesson sharing can take place within organizations; between organisations in a national innovation arena; and between organisations in different countries and sub-regions. Thus, the M&E tools must be flexible enough to capture and document these diverse processes and results (outputs and outcomes) and wherever possible provide credible evidence of linkages to the programme inputs. The framework aims to address this challenge by through “process documentation” by key actors within the programme.

The key results (outputs and outcomes) from the proposed two and a half year implementation phase of SCARDA will relate to changes in organisational strategies, systems, processes and capacities. The adoption of improved capacity strengthening strategies and the achievement of agreed goals for enhancing organisational performance will be the fundamental measures of the success of the programme. SCARDA has a commitment to an innovation systems approach in capacity strengthening. This implies that participation in M&E includes the range of actors within the innovation system who are included in the programme while also involving inputs from key stakeholders who are not direct participants but are well positioned to assess changes in the target organisations.

Within the context of organisational change within national agricultural innovation, two focal areas of M&E in the programme will be:

1. Capacity strengthening activities with selected target organisations, including their immediate contacts and networks. This will involve assessment of quality, relevance, efficiency, effective learning and of positive results (outputs and outcomes) in terms of approaches to work, i.e., behavioural changes, procedures and systems for working.

2. Benefits to supplying institutions including better capacity for building capacity. Inter-institutional linkages, cross country support and networking.

4. M&E in the inception phase

The main task in the inception phase was to establish the overall purpose and scope of the M&E framework. This involved a process of tracking and interacting with the ongoing development of SCARDA’s implementation plan which built on outputs from the sub-regional country scoping studies, stakeholder workshops, the regional pre-workshop meeting and workshop as well as discussions with those responsible for or involved in M&E.

In order to identify key performance areas and information needs, a range of strategic documents were consulted including SCARDA and related project documents (e.g. Strategic and medium term plans for FARA, CORAF and ASARECA, the ASARECA strategy for M&E, the ASARECA project on IAR4D capacity strengthening and scoping visit reports for ASARECA CORAF and SADC).

M&E related documents from the sub regional networks, from FARA and other FARA programmes were also consulted and discussions held with programme managers at key levels to establish expectations of M&E. Frameworks and provision for M&E within FARA and its programmes were reviewed. In particular, discussions were held with SCARDA contact persons and managers from ASARECA and CORAF. In SADC discussions were held with the M&E specialist based in the EU funded ICART project which has a capacity strengthening component.

A rapid assessment of M&E capacity was made during visits to the SROs and FARA, through meetings held with M&E contact persons. There is significant variation in the levels of capacity and in the levels of development of existing M&E strategies plans.

During the 3 sub-regional stakeholders’ workshops, participants were facilitated in exercises which helped stakeholders reach consensus on the focal areas for capacity strengthening and to explore the types of results that might be achieved through
capacity strengthening, together with indicators (of process and results) and activities for these. The ASARECA second stakeholder workshop in Nairobi further developed their plan and indicators. For SADC, data in questionnaires completed by research and training institutions visited by consultants were entered and a preliminary analysis undertaken for countries visited. Among other things, this analysis evidenced the importance of disaggregating data on organisational human capacity by gender and age.

During the prioritisation of interventions in workshops, it was recognised that research management skills and systems, and soft skills for researchers and managers are a common thread in all SROs. There was also recognition that for impact to be achieved from research, capacity development is required for other key stakeholders within an innovation system, but that SCARDA did not have the needed resources to seriously address this area. In ASARECA, strengthening of capacity strengthening organisations was also emphasised. Moreover, in ASARECA and CORAF, specific needs in countries emerging from conflict were acknowledged as being very important, informing the selection of target organisations. These areas require linking within a logical chain to the anticipated outcomes and impacts of the programme and its wider developmental goal. This can be best achieved by mapping the SCARDA outputs and intermediate outcomes against the relevant result areas of the SROs and FARA (see Section 4.2). A further task is to link the implementation of the SCARDA M&E effort to the M&E frameworks, available capacity and other capacity strengthening initiatives being undertaken at FARA and SRO levels.

4.1 Linkages between SCARDA M&E, and M&E Frameworks in SROs and FARA

The overall programme framework developed for SCARDA is consistent with the M&E systems utilised by FARA and the SROs and with DFID’s guidance on good M&E practice. It was developed and designed in a way that enables the M&E frameworks developed by each SRO for SCARDA to nest within it, with a view to harmonising effort, minimising unnecessary duplication, and avoiding the imposition of a burdensome and overly centralised reporting and monitoring system. SCARDA activities will contribute to relevant programmes and projects of the SROs. SRO representatives participated in a working group that developed a revised generic logical framework during the week preceding the regional inception workshop in Accra. The regional inception workshop involved further group work which examined the proposed outputs in the project proposal and revised these in the light of the design of the implementation approach and plan. The group also addressed the link between SCARDA’s four new outputs and intermediate outcomes contributing at purpose level in the generic log-frame. As the M&E systems of the two of the SROs are currently in the process of further development as part of moving from a networking to a programme approach, there is a further opportunity to contribute to the further harmonisation of M&E systems which will help to facilitate the sharing of learning outcomes across the sub-regions.

4.1.1 Integration with M&E in SROs

CORAF/WECARD

The 10 year strategic plan indicates that M&E is applied to all CORAF/WECARD activities and synchronises as far as possible with those of FARA through the use of the similar approaches and methodologies. The aim is to ensure that the focus is on the functioning of the sub-regional agricultural research system as whole. The CORAF/WECARD programme and project monitoring and evaluation activities are intended to operate within an overall framework to track progress towards result delivery, as defined by the key performance, outcome-based indicators in the Logframe Design Summary. The M&E framework provides guidelines and procedures for the collection and analysis
of data and information on the indicators, the outcome of which will be used to support effective decision making and execution of programmes. The M&E units located at the different levels of the CORAF/WECARD member NARS will track both implementation and results throughout the programme and project cycle. Results monitoring will use tools such as Outcome Mapping and Participatory Impact Assessment. CORAF/WECARD also emphasises the important role of beneficiaries in taking an active part in identification, planning, implementation and M&E. The SCARDA programme fits within In CORAF/WECARD, result area 3 (sub-regional research system strengthened and coordinated — including “skills and competences to operate within the “business unusual” paradigm) and programme area 8, “capacity strengthening and coordination”. SCARDA is seen as the first of a number of capacity strengthening initiatives; a vehicle to pilot new ideas for capacity strengthening.

The results from the CORAF/WECARD scoping study and workshop identified M&E and impact assessment as one of the priority areas for capacity strengthening, necessary for improved research management.

ASARECA

ASARECA is institutionalising a result based M&E system to enable delivery on its purpose of enhancing sustainable productivity, value added and competitiveness of the regional agricultural research system. ASARECA has a detailed M&E strategy, a logical framework and key performance indicators and a reporting framework in place. M&E operates at different levels. The logframe is used as generic basis for nesting ASARECA projects and programmes within it. The overall framework is used by the M&E unit in the ASARECA secretariat to assess the outcomes and impacts of ASARECA’s interventions. SCARDA is seen as fitting into the result area 4—“Capacity for implementing agricultural research in the IAR4D paradigm strengthened”. ASARECA’s (EU funded) IAR4D capacity strengthening project’s inception phase ran concurrently with SCARDA’s inception phase in the sub-region, enabling cross-fertilisation of ideas during the scoping exercises and the first stakeholder workshop. This project is complementary to SCARDA in that its focus is on strengthening capacity of a wider range of actors within the innovation system, including extension, NGOs, farmer organisations and private sector actors. ASARECA also has a strong interest in complementary M&E and impact assessment methodologies, such as ex-ante impact assessment approach to planning for outcomes, and outcome mapping. It is anticipated that further exchange of ideas between the two projects will continue during the refinement and implementation of the SCARDA M&E framework in ASARECA. As Rwanda has been selected by the DFID Research Into |Use programme as a target country, also with a focus on building innovation platforms down to farmer level, in this particular case there is also opportunities for collaboration on the monitoring of SCARDA project outcomes as they relate to the actors intermediary between national research and training organisations and farmers.

SADC

SADC sub-region by the Food & Natural Resources Division [SADC-FANR] differs in that since the winding up of SACCAR there is no organisation comparable in function to CORAF and ASARECA. While a commitment from SADC to establishing a new sub-regional organisation was obtained at the 4th FARA general assembly held in June 2007, it is unlikely that this will be operational within the life-time of SCARDA.

This has implications for the capacity and focus of M&E of SCARDA in SADC. In particular the responsibility for M&E will rest largely on the person appointed to serve as SADC-SCARDA Coordinator. It is envisaged that generic terms of reference for SRO coordinators will be reviewed and expanded jointly with
SADC-FANR and key stakeholders at the start of the implementation phase. This will enable their particularly responsibilities relating to monitoring, evaluation, data management and technical reporting on SCARDA activities to be elaborated. If additional support for M&E is required then mechanisms for securing this discussed at this point.

More broadly, SCARDA M&E in the SADC sub-region will be designed within the framework of existing strategies for research and training in FANR. Specifically if will be informed (but not limited) by M&E mechanisms used for current capacity strengthening initiatives including those used for regional short courses being provided by the following; The Promotion of Regional Integration (livestock sector) [PRINT] Regional Training Programme; Land & Water Management Programme [LWMP]; The Implementation and Coordination of Agricultural Research & Training [ICART]; SADC Multi-country Agricultural Productivity Programme [SADC-MAPP] (with a capacity strengthening component expected to begin during 2008). Of these initiatives, ICART has a dedicated M&E officer in post who is developing a framework for M&E which will cover its capacity strengthening activities. The scope of M&E, particularly with regard to quality assurance, will also be informed by the SACCAR experience of monitoring regional training programmes (Masters and short courses) through centres of comparative advantage and partnerships with northern training institutions.

4.1.2 Consistency with M&E systems of FARA and FARA programmes

It is important that the M&E system of SCARDA is compatible with the overall M&E strategy within FARA and its other programmes. FARA is the Lead Institution for pillar 4 under CAADP and hence is concerned with assessing progress towards the achievement of CAADP Pillar IV objectives. It aims at strengthened and harmonised M&E at country, sub regional and continental levels. M&E of FARA activities is intended to synchronise as far as possible with those of the SROs through the use of the same approaches and methodologies.

The FARA strategic plan 2007–2016 identifies 5 interlinked result areas which are delivered through its corresponding Networking Support Functions.

SCARDA relates closely to result area 4 and networking support function 4 which aims to ensure that Africa has the human and institutional capacity, public and private, to achieve improved broad-based agricultural productivity, competitiveness and markets which will contribute to achieving the African Vision of 6% percent annual growth in agricultural production. In addition, SCARDA, particularly through output 4 on lesson learning and sharing, will contribute to FARA’s Networking Support Function 1, Advocacy and Resource Mobilisation.

FARA intends to appoint a senior person in charge of M&E with a higher level coordination role of M&E and impact assessment across programmes. The FARA and SRO Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) units will have an overall framework to track progress towards result delivery and outcomes, as defined by the key performance indicators. With the exception of the Sub Sahara Africa Challenge Programme (SSA CP), M&E development in other FARA programmes is at an early stage as they are not yet in their full implementation phase. M&E of SCARDA at FARA level will be informed by, and share its experience with, ongoing M&E efforts in the other programmes that FARA is managing. Those that have greatest relevance to SCARDA M&E are briefly described below.

The purpose of the SSA CP is to address the most significant constraints to reviving agriculture in Africa using a new paradigm, Integrated Agricultural Research for Development (IAR4D). In the inception phase of SSA CP, efforts were
made in preliminary training for the selected teams, on M&E and impact assessment including emphasis on M&E plans, impact pathways and outcome mapping. The need for mentoring in M&E is clearly recognised. The programme did not develop a consolidated M&E system because of uncertainties following the Science Council commissioned external review and the recommendation that the programmes focus on ‘proof of concept’ of IAR4D. A revised medium term plan has been submitted and specific methods and protocols will be developed. Some similar challenges face SSA CP and SCARDA — both are looking for indicators of institutional learning and change within a relatively short period of 3 years, despite the recognition that institutional change is a longer term process. Both have to find creative ways of capturing the early signs of positive change in behaviour and ways of working which can be plausibly linked with longer term positive outcomes for rural people. There is potential for linkages in terms of the methodology used for defining institutional baselines—some preliminary work was done on institutional assessment in 2006 for organisations involved in SSA-CP task forces.

The programme, ‘Building Africa’s Scientific and Institutional Capacities’ (BASIC), is focused on tertiary education in Agriculture and Natural Resources. It is intended to strengthen the capacity of universities to deliver high quality and contextually appropriate teaching in agriculture and natural resource management to enable agricultural graduates to meet current development challenges. BASIC is similar to SCARDA in that its focus on capacity strengthening and hence their M&E systems will have some similarities. Both are aligned with FARA result area 4.

RAILS (Regional Agricultural Information and Learning Systems)’s purpose is to enhance access, retrieval and use of agricultural information and technologies through learning by African ARD stakeholders. RAILS nests within FARA’s strategic result area 2 of network and support access to technology and knowledge. The RAILS programme is just starting up activities on the ground. It operates as a networking programme involving universities, research organisations and NGOs. It envisages 2 types of M&E—internal and external and it is planning to develop terms of reference, indicators and milestones.

DONATA (Dissemination Of New Agricultural Technologies in Africa)’s purpose is to capture the lessons and develop effective trans-boundary partnerships for dissemination of high-potential technologies. Like RAILS, DONATA is still in its first year and also falls under results area 2. While its focus is on dissemination, DONATA has a training component and an emphasis on capturing lessons, implying some similarity M&E approaches and tools to those proposed for SCARDA.

4.2 Development of a log-frame for SCARDA that is results oriented

At the pre-workshop meeting in Accra which was held to prepare a draft implementation plan, the outputs from the workshops were reviewed and assumptions around delivery of impact discussed. These were formulated into a draft SCARDA programme level logframe which was discussed at the regional stakeholder workshop to enable harmonisation of outputs, indicators and working assumptions about how intermediate outcomes and impact will be delivered.

During the regional inception workshop in Accra outcome expectations for SCARDA, were mapped against the four revised outputs of the implementation plan (see Table 7 below) and provisional SCARDA Outputs were mapped to FARA’s Medium Term Plan Activities and Result Indicators (see Table 8 below).

These will be further refined as part of the FARA level M&E framework and system development, to be undertaken following the development of SRO level capacity strengthening action plans.
Table 7. SCARDA Outcomes: Suggestions from Working Groups in the Regional Inception Workshop

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Output 1 – Strengthened research management</th>
<th>Outcome indicators:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Outcome statements:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Improved financial management,</td>
<td>• Funds received on time. More positive auditor’s reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Strategic planning improved,</td>
<td>• Improved quality and timeliness of reports,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Platform for consultation and partnership enlarged,</td>
<td>• Number of partners and outputs from consultations,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Performance assessment systems developed/improved.</td>
<td>• Performance assessment manual developed and applied.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Demand driven research increased,</td>
<td>• More funding from private sector,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Human resource management improved.</td>
<td>• Inter-disciplinary teams established and functional,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Staff retention improved.</td>
<td>• New/improved strategies for staff retention in place.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Output 2 – Strengthened scientific and professional capacity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stated Outcomes in the short-run;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Soft skills developed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• System skills in place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Reward system installed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Culture of information sharing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stated Outcomes in the long-run;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Research projects or proposals generated according to innovation system approach from both core funding of participating institutions and in competitive grant regimes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Running projects under innovation system approach.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Number of generated technologies according to innovation system approach</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Output 3 – Capacity to build capacity</th>
<th>Stated Unfolding of Outcomes:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stated Unfolding of Outcomes:</td>
<td>• A felt need for curricula reform dominates among agricultural training institutions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Curricula reform process initiated in targeted institutions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Design and engagement of the BASIC is refocused and articulated to meet the demand for innovation system approach.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• A dynamic university training program (degrees and short courses) for innovation system in targeted institutions is developed, implemented and regularly reviewed to meet demand and challenges.</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Output 4 – Lesson learning and strategic sharing</th>
<th>Proposed indicators:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Outcome statements:</td>
<td>• Increased interest in development partners buying/adopting the approach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Awareness and appreciation of SCARDA intervention approach expressed</td>
<td>• Attracting additional resources into initiatives through successful research proposals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Efficient delivery of research of research and development services resulting from multiple competencies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ability of institutions to lead and manage change processes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Increased participation of women in research and agricultural research and development initiatives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Enhance institutional memory as a basis for increased performance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Enhanced use of learning platforms in the NARS, e.g., e-documentation, e-discussion</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
Table 8. Provisional Mapping SCARDA Outputs to FARA’s Medium Term Plan Activities and Result Indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCARDA Outputs (italics indicate outputs for implementation phase)</th>
<th>Linked FARA Activities. Networking Support Function 4: Capacity Strengthening</th>
<th>Linked FARA Result Indicators Networking Support Functions 4 and 1 (Advocacy)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Inception Phase</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>1.2 and 1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Scientific and Professional Development</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Capacity to strengthen capacity</td>
<td>4.5, 4.6</td>
<td>4.5, 4.6, 1.2 and 1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Management, Lesson learning and strategic sharing</td>
<td>4.4, 4.2,</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

(which would include SRO level log-frames) based on the outcomes from the institutional assessments.

At this stage a provisional mapping of SCARDA outputs against FARA’s Medium Term and Operational Plan (MTOP) activities and result indicators suggests that output 4 (largely generated through process documentation, analysis and sharing of the implementation of outputs 1 and 2) will address activities under FARA networking support function 4 and also indicators for support function 1. Output 3 addresses other activities under Networking support function 4, as does output 2 and the completion of the inception phase. Output 2 (strengthened research management) relates to indicators for change management and innovation systems under Networking support function 1.

5.0 Further development of M&E implementation framework and activities

5.1 Development of the M&E system.

The task of M&E is twofold; to track the implementation of the programme, its delivery and efficiency and secondly to track outcomes and learning from the capacity strengthening activities. Once participating institutions and detailed programmes have been designed through the consultation process following the institutional assessment, the M&E tasks will include.

- Developing indicators, targets, and information system to track implementation (inputs, activities, outputs).
- Participatory definition of indicators for capacity strengthening outcomes. Indicators and performance levels will be developed which reflect realistic targets within the programme time frame.
- Further elaboration of risks and assumptions
- Specification of data requirements, the sources of information and data.
- Establishing responsibilities for M&E and data collection—who participates in data collection and process monitoring events.
- Developing reporting formats and information systems for collecting, storing and sharing data.
- Harmonisation with other M&E frameworks and data collection tools.

5.2 Key Design Principles

Following the principles below, a more detailed framework and system for the monitoring and evaluation of SCARDA will be developed as a priority at the start of the implementation phase.

Participatory/Ownership – built with those responsible for recording and using information so they have an interest in, and commitment to, analysing and acting on that information.
Clear delineation of purposes (accountability and learning)—for all activities related to monitoring and evaluation.

Clear link to Management of SCARDA implementation—the monitoring results will be used to guide decision making at various levels of project implementation.

Clear link to learning and change—through well designed process documentation and reflective processes and events involving the participating organisations.

Clear and realistic plans—developed at each level to ensure that M&E roles, responsibilities, time-frames and methods are understood by relevant parties.

Capacity sensitive—the monitoring and evaluation task should be within the capacity/capability of the responsible organisations and individuals. Where necessary additional capacity strengthening in M&E will be provided.

Focused and user-friendly—the content of what it needed should be clearly defined and the methods used to gather and analyse data as user-friendly as possible.

The main elements of an M&E framework for SCARDA are:

• Monitoring change within participating organizations and individuals, including changes in the nature and intensity of linkages with other organizations assessed to be key to effective innovation.

• Measuring the uptake and adaptation of improved operational practices addressed in capacity building activities under SCARDA (including organizational/managerial/technical and social).

• Tracking progress of the overall programme to ensure that milestones, indicators and outputs are achieved.

• Mechanisms for internal and external review of progress and adjustment of milestones and indicators in response to ongoing developments and learning within the programme,

• Facilitating and capturing learning (within and between country and sub-regional organizations, and between sub-regions). This will include an evaluation of the effectiveness of different types of intervention and their usefulness.

5.3 Proposed Methodology

Reflecting the changing demands placed on M&E systems, traditional academic approaches to impact assessment are increasingly being complemented by alternative methods and processes of monitoring, learning and communication. M&E within SCARDA will explore the appropriateness of different methods and tools for M&E. Of particular importance are methods for monitoring processes of change and capacity strengthening, capturing changes in the behaviour, mindset, abilities and attitudes of stakeholders and organisations over the course of the project. The choice and combination of M&E tools will depend on (a) how project outputs are further developed and (b) the assessment of capacities and interests of participating institutions and their willingness to take on and agree to the considerable demands of particular M&E methodologies. With these provisos, elements of the following approaches may be considered:

The balanced scorecard approach is a useful framework for assessing organizational capacity and trends. It identifies the key performance areas, objectives and anticipated outcomes of participating organizations. Outcomes are defined as specific changes in behaviours, relationships, actions or activities of people, groups and organizations with whom the programme works directly.

Outcome mapping starts with a vision of change and engages participants actively in defining and then tracking the changes in relationships and behaviour needed to bring about that change. It complements the logframe by focusing on
processes and relationships with ‘boundary partners’, recognising that learning does not take place in isolation and that the application of learning depends on other partners.

It is anticipated that use will also be made of case studies and structured comparisons to examine programme outcomes within and between countries and sub-regions.

*Baseline institutional analysis.* The detailed institutional analysis of selected target organisations in the first stage of implementation will identify priority areas for capacity strengthening. These priorities will be developed as specific objectives within the programme. Methods will include self-assessment and where possible, existing data sources and cost-effective methods used to capture additional data required in relation to baseline design and progress monitoring against identified indicators.

*M&E capacity assessment and plan for capacity development in M&E*  
Levels of existing capacity in M&E will be assessed as part of the institutional assessment, and plans made for strengthening capacity of participating institutions to develop appropriate M&E structures and systems and to monitor, evaluate and assess the impact of their programmes.

5.4. Proposed Functions and Responsibilities relating to M&E

The proposed functions and responsibilities relating to M&E at the different levels of the project are summarised in the Table 9.

5.5 Further Development and Application of M&E Plans

The refinement of plans for M&E will be undertaken during the first stages of implementation as follows:

- Detailed plans for monitoring and evaluation will be developed at FARA and SRO level as the first stage of more detailed implementation planning.
- At the FARA and SRO levels plans will be structured by the generic and SRO level logical frameworks, with a focus on accountability and tracking of progress against inputs, activity milestones and output indicators.
- At SRO level logical frameworks will be used as guiding frameworks for M&E, which need to be continuously reviewed for their functionality in tracking progress in the delivery of outputs, which is likely to require sharpening of activity milestones and output indicators.
- At FARA level, the generic log-frame will also be reviewed in a similar way at the output to purpose level, including the further sharpening of purpose level indicators and ongoing reflection on the validity of the stated assumptions.
- The level of detail in data collection and frequency of monitoring SCARDA output indicators will depend on:
  - SRO capacity for undertaking M&E.
  - The degree of “fit” between the indicators within the log-frame and the SRO’s indicators for monitoring its result areas (e.g. capacity strengthening).
  - Other ongoing M&E activities covering same indicators.
- Likewise at FARA level the detail in data collection and frequency of monitoring purpose level indicators will depend on FARA’s capacity and the degree of “fit” between the indicators within the log-frame and the FARA’s framework for monitoring capacity strengthening results.
- At the level of service providers and target organisations, plans for monitoring and learning will be developed in parallel with the institutional analysis and the development of implementation plans and learning platforms.
• Other beneficiaries (e.g., focal individuals in other participating organisations) will be supported in self-monitoring and reporting.

5.6 Reporting formats for SCARDA

The design of reporting formats will be informed by a review of existing documents at FARA and sub-regional level and those of other similar initiatives. The formats will in most cases be accompanied by guidelines to ensure clarity and consistency of reporting. The reporting formats will combine elements relating to accountability, with elements of process documentation that will contribute to lesson learning. With respect to the latter aspect, the M&E strategy will link with the communication strategy and planning process, particularly that relating to internal communication.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Responsible organisation &amp; accountability</th>
<th>M&amp;e functions/tasks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Development Partner | DFID – Accountable to UK treasury | Mid-term review (after 15 months)  
Outcome evaluation (at 30 months) |
| Regional project management | FARA Secretariat – Accountable to DFID and FARA Council | Reporting on overarching milestones (6 monthly)  
Annual report or Output to purpose review (9 monthly)  
Mid-term review support (after 15 months)  
Outcome evaluation support (at 30 months) |
| Sub-regional Implementation oversight & coordination | SROs – Accountable to FARA and SRO Council | Reporting on SRO milestones (3-6 monthly)  
Output to purpose review SRO log-frames (Annual reports)  
Mid-term review support (after 15 months)  
Outcome evaluation support (at 30 months) |
| Service provision | As selected Accountable to SRO (self-accountable for own learning) | Process documentation on CS activities,  
Monitoring of application of CS,  
Customer satisfaction,  
Facilitation and support of M&E and learning in target organisations |
| Primary Target organisations | As selected Self-accountable for learning but report to SROs and Service Providers. | Process documentation by trainees of application of CS inputs (self-monitoring by individuals),  
Performance monitoring and reporting on priority systemic areas (internal performance monitoring by organisation, e.g., with scorecards),  
Participating in electronic learning platforms and lesson-review workshops |
| Secondary Target organisations and individuals | Selected for group training Self-accountable, expected to contribute to learning platforms | Self-monitoring by focal individuals,  
Participating in electronic learning platforms and lesson-review workshops, |

In a multi-stakeholder programme like SCARDA the importance of effective communication, within the programme and with key external audiences, for successful delivery of the outputs cannot be overstated. It was decided, therefore to develop a SCARDA communications strategy during the inception phase. A meeting held at FARA on March 29th 2007 produced the discussion document ‘Elements of a communications strategy for SCARDA’, which proposed an initial framework for the development of communications strategy. The Natural Resources Institute was then requested by FARA to assist FARA and the SROs in taking forward the development of a SCARDA communications strategy through:

1) Clarifying the objectives of the communication strategy.
2) Developing a strategy framework that is aligned with the objectives and that takes account of the needs of different stakeholders.
3) Ensuring that the strategy framework is consistent with other SCARDA components (e.g. Monitoring & Evaluation learning process) and other relevant communication initiatives (e.g., of FARA and SROs).

The full report of the consultants (Conroy et al., 2007) also contains reviews of initiatives from which lessons have been drawn on good practice which informed the design of the communications strategy.

This document has been developed on the basis of:

1) Two key documents, i.e. the SCARDA proposal and the NARS assessment (March 2006).
2) Interactions between the communications consultants and (a) key FARA communications personnel, senior management and (b) representatives of each of the three SROs, through meetings and establishment of a working group and electronic discussions among its members.
3) Discussions at the regional stakeholder workshop in Accra.
4) Selected literature reviews of what works in term of Agricultural Research & Development and communication.

The Communications Strategy is intended to guide all of the main SCARDA stakeholders in preparing the SCARDA Communication Plan that will contain the specific tactics (details of activities, responsibilities, budgets etc). Since the regional workshop FARA has begun developing this, and during the first six months of the Implementation Phase this process will be completed, with each core partner (FARA, & the SROs)
contributing to it. This process, and subsequent implementation of the Communication Plan, will be overseen by a communications team\textsuperscript{15} whose membership will be broadly similar to the working group that was established during the inception phase.

1. Objectives of the SCARDA communication strategy

The overall objective of the SCARDA communications strategy is:

To contribute to the achievement of the SCARDA project goal and purpose by fostering information exchange and learning among all SCARDA stakeholders.

More specifically to:

1. Foster commitment to and ownership of SCARDA among key partners during and beyond the project period by providing mechanisms through which they can contribute to decision-making.

2. Build trust and a shared understanding among SCARDA stakeholders, through enabling transparency in SCARDA processes and decision-making.

3. Facilitate efficient functioning of and widespread participation in SCARDA activities by making relevant information accessible to all partners.

4. Enable the widespread learning and sharing of project lessons among project partners (esp. Target organisations), the policy community and relevant organisations outside of Africa.

5. Raise awareness about SCARDA’s activities, key stakeholders and achievements among: (a) policy-makers with a view to improved policy support that will achieve SCARDA’s aims; and (b) current and potential donors, with a view to raising additional resources.

6. Foster a learning environment that enables diverse stakeholders to interact effectively to bring about innovations.

These above objectives are linked, and are to varying extents inter-dependent. For example, trust (1) and commitment/ownership (2) is necessary for efficient functioning and participation in SCARDA (3) which enables learning and sharing (4) which, with policy support (5) creates a wider learning environment for innovation (6). Figure 5 groups the objectives into 3 clusters along a spectrum from internally oriented to externally oriented, the middle group being both internally and externally oriented.

From the above objectives associated outcomes and (intermediate and final) indicators can be developed. For example,

1) SCARDA partners know how to, and do, contribute to decision making.

2) SCARDA stakeholders understand and trust SCARDA processes and decision making.

3) All partners are able to access and know how to use information, and actively participate in SCARDA activities.

The development of the outcomes and indicators should be carried out by SCARDA stakeholders during the development of detailed communication plans.

2. SCARDA Communication strategy values/principles

A project or organisation needs to act on the basis of values or principles that are consistent with its objectives, and these need to underpin the way in which its communications strategy is implemented: this is why organisations develop mission statements. Suggested draft principles for the SCARDA communication strategy are given in Table 10, the first six of which were adopted by ASARECA in its Communications and Knowledge Management Strategy.

\textsuperscript{15} Members are expected to include: the SCARDA Coordinator and Programme Officer, communication staff from FARA and the SROs, and the two NRI communications consultants.
Each of these principles/values will now be elaborated on.

1. **People first.** The most valuable resource in ARD in SSA is people. SCARDA will enhance their roles in research, development, management, and administration.

2. **Transparency.** This value is closely related to draft SCARDA objective 2, i.e. ‘Build trust and a shared understanding among SCARDA stakeholders, through enabling transparency in SCARDA processes and decision-making’.

3. **Multi-directional communication.** The principle/value underlies draft objectives 1, 4 and 7—objective 1 assumes participatory decision-making processes, while 4 and 7 are concerned with mutual learning through interactions between multiple and diverse stakeholders.

4. **Knowledge shared.** “Everyone knows something, but nobody knows everything”. It is important to recognise that one person’s knowledge is only useful if it can be communicated to others.

5. **Communication targeted on needs.** This principle recognizes that effective communication requires a good understanding of the information needs of different stakeholders, precise definition of the stakeholder/target...
audience and their characteristics, as well as the change (in knowledge, attitudes or practice) one is aiming to bring about through communication.

6. **IT as Means.** It is important to remember that information technology is a “means” and not an “end” in itself. IT infrastructure should contribute to meeting the needs of the people whom the organisation serves.

7. **Ease of access and participation.** In order for principles/values 1 and 2 to be applied effectively, and the associated objectives achieved, communication mechanisms and systems need to be designed in a way that will make it easy for all relevant stakeholders to access information they need and to be involved in decision-making or learning processes.

8. **Context-specificity.** Communication plans need to be tailored to the context of each key SCARDA Stakeholder, i.e. the three SROs and FARA. Thus, while SCARDA will have an over-arching communication strategy, each key stakeholder will have its own communications plan.

9. **Timeliness.** In today’s fast-moving world it is more important than ever that information (e.g. about SCARDA training courses or workshops) is communicated to target audiences in a timely manner, giving them adequate time to act on it. Allowance needs to be made for temporary communication problems (e.g. internet connectivity) that may delay users’ access to information.

**Potential barriers to principles 2, 3 and 4.** Few people would openly disagree with principle 2, 3 and 4, and yet the extent to which they are applied in organisations can be quite limited. Some people in powerful positions still act on the old adage ‘Knowledge is power’ by withholding information from all but a select few, and only making it available on a ‘need to know’ basis: some of them may feel threatened by the idea of sharing information widely. This kind of attitude is still widespread in Africa and many other parts of the world. Thus, in such a situation there may be some resistance to facilitating multi-directional communication, and participatory decision-making processes.

It is important, therefore, that all SCARDA core partners, including staff at the lower levels as well as senior managers, look within their organisations and openly discuss the extent to which their organisations agree with these principles. If they do agree with them, then it is also important to review the extent to which the principles are effectively applied by their organisations and the implications for SCARDA implementation.

### 3. Who are the stakeholders in the SCARDA communication strategy?

The matrix in Table 11 can be used to identify the key SCARDA stakeholders and their roles in the project at the sub-regional and regional levels. Some examples of stakeholders and roles have been added based on initial consultations with FARA, ASARECA and CORAF. It is envisaged that this matrix will be used and filled in by each of the four core partners during the preparation of the communication plan. Given the very large number of stakeholders at different scales (from local, national, sub-regional, regional and global), SCARDA management will need to prioritize which stakeholders and what type of communication issues are to be addressed over what time scale if the Communications Strategy objectives are to be achieved.

### 4. Guidelines for Implementation of communication strategy

**a) Building on and support existing initiatives.** FARA and the SROs have a number of existing initiatives and strategies to which SCARDA is relevant and related. SCARDA should link with and complement these initiatives, and not duplicate them. They include (see Box 1):
### Table 11. Draft matrix for mapping SCARDA Stakeholders and their Roles in the Project

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholders (communications &quot;audiences&quot;)</th>
<th>Project Roles</th>
<th>ASARECA sub-region</th>
<th>CORAF/WECARD sub-region</th>
<th>SADC sub-region</th>
<th>Africa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Current &amp; potential SCARDA donors/investors</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Current</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>DFID</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Potential</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Policy &amp; institutional decision makers and other stakeholders needed to foster an enabling environment</td>
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<tr>
<td>• National level policy makers? (Ministries of Education, Sci &amp; Tech, Agriculture, etc.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Regional Economic Communities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>AU, AU-NEPAD</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Farmers organizations</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• NGOs</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Private sector companies</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Others?</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. SCARDA core partners</td>
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<tr>
<td>• FARA</td>
<td>Coordination, Monitoring</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>SCARDA team</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• SROs (SCARDA focal points)</td>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td>ASARECA</td>
<td>CORAF</td>
<td>SADC/</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• DFID</td>
<td>Evaluation/ Impact assessment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>FANR</td>
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<tr>
<td>• NRI</td>
<td>Others?</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Other providers of SCARDA deliverables</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Key implementing organisations</td>
<td>Screening service providers, quality control, managing communities of practice, coordinating</td>
<td>RUFORUM ANAFE</td>
<td>AGRHYMET? CAMES?</td>
<td>ANAFE?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Advanced research and training institutions (incl. northern institutions), IARCs</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Other universities in Africa &amp; abroad</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Other service providers (e.g., NGOs, private companies)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Regional education networks</td>
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<td>e.g. ARPPIS</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Retired scientists</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>potential mentors</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Target clients of SCARDA</td>
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<tr>
<td>• NARIs</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Public extension organizations</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• NGOs</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Farmer organisations</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Universities</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Others?</td>
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</table>
**BOX 1. Related existing initiatives**

**Regional Agricultural Information and Learning Systems (RAILS)** is one of FARA’s regional programmes which addresses Africa’s weakness and lack of capacity to global agricultural information and knowledge exchange. RAILS is aimed at providing African ARD stakeholders equitable access and capacity to contribute to global information and knowledge. RAILS is guided by its taskforce composed of the subregional organizations i.e. ASARECA, CORAF, SADC-FANR and North Africa. An implementation workshop took place on 17-19 January 2007 at the FARA secretariat in Accra, Ghana. The workshop developed an implementation framework and work program for RAILS, which will be implemented by the SROs and NARS together with international service providers under the coordination of FARA. The target participants include SRO and NARS ICT/KM project leaders and managers, and international service providers. RAILS is supported by the African development bank (AfDB) and GFAR.

**ASARECA Communications and Knowledge Management Strategic Plan October 2006.** The strategy envisions the achievement of five overall CKM results:

1. Informed planning, monitoring, and evaluation of research programmes and projects.
2. Information and communication policies and practices for the efficient administration of human, financial, and physical resources.
3. Agricultural information and knowledge easily accessible to agricultural research for development (IAR4D) stakeholders in Eastern and Central Africa.
4. Research outputs communicated among targeted AR4D stakeholders.
5. ASARECA highly visible, with stakeholders valuing its roles and achievements.

**RAIN, the Regional Agricultural Information Network,** is the ASARECA equivalent of RAILS. It involves a network of agricultural information organizations and professionals operating in 10 countries in eastern and central Africa (ECA)—Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Rwanda, Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda. RAIN’s vision is to be dynamic and proactive. All RAIN activities grow from a belief that high-quality agricultural information is a prerequisite for economic growth. RAIN’s mission is to promote the provision and sustainable management of client-oriented agricultural information throughout the ECA region. Its particular emphasis is on strengthening regional capacities to access, generate, exchange, package, disseminate, and utilize this information to further economic growth. RAIN has a number of core values that guide it: Value addition, Partnerships, Professionalism, Accountability, Flexibility, Team spirit, Gender equity, Governance.

**IAR4D programme (Validated during the ASARECA Entebbe Workshop, April 17th – 18th 2007)**

This programme has several principles that are highly relevant to SCARDA - Innovation System perspective (underlying paradigm); Multi-stakeholder partnerships; Interdisciplinary R4D teams; Integration of levels and sectors; Interactive learning process; Value chain and livelihoods systems; Systemic change in knowledge management.

- FARA – RAILS;
- ASARECA—Communications and Knowledge Management strategic plan, RAIN, capacity strengthening programme for IAR4D
- CORAF/WECARD—Knowledge management programme strategy
- SADC/ FANR – ICART, MAPP

**b) Use approaches and tools which are appropriate and cost-effective.** Section 3 of the report of the SCARDA communication consultants (Conroy et al., 2007) draws out lessons of what works for different types of communication.

**c) Monitoring and evaluation.** The communication strategy will need to be monitored and evaluated in order to improve its efficiency and effectiveness. The Communications Strategy will also need to be aligned with the overall project M&E system. This

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16. ASARECA Communications and Knowledge Management strategic plan October 2006.
is particularly with respect to learning processes. The Most Significant Change (MSC)\textsuperscript{18} approach is one way of combining M&E, communication and learning and is a possible option to use.

d) **Content development** The content of the detailed communication plan should aim to bring about the outcomes associated with each Communications Strategy objective described earlier.

e) **Management, responsibilities and resources.** Ensure the managerial and implementation responsibilities for the communication strategy and plans are clear, and appropriate resources have been allocated. In this respect preparation of an internal SCARDA communication flow diagram (similar to Figure 3, but \textit{intra}-organisational) would be useful.

f) **Subsidiarity** The principle of subsidiarity should be applied, whereby FARA devolves appropriate authority re the communication strategy and activities to those best placed to exercise it (notably the SROs); and allows FARA, with its comparative advantage, to focus on functions that transcend sub-regional decision domains so that SROs and NARS benefit from decisions and actions at the continental level.

5. **Communication plans and activities**

The SCARDA communications strategy and overall communications plan can be common to all four key stakeholders (FARA and the 3 SROs). Early in the implementation phase each SRO and FARA needs to develop its own \textit{detailed communication plan} for implementing that strategy. This is because each key stakeholder and each sub-region has its own set of needs, challenges and ‘conditioning circumstances’, and hence the overall SCARDA plans will differ to some extent by sub region – and the communication activities for each sub region should reflect these differences.

A thorough assessment of the SCARDA-related information needs of key stakeholders in each sub region is needed as a pre-requisite to developing the \textit{detailed} communication plans. Implementers of the Communications Strategy (primarily the SROs and FARA) should be clear what needs, and associated changes, each of their various communications activities is intended to address.

a) **Timeline**

SCARDA will be implemented over 30 months. Plans need to be formulated for the 30 month period and reviewed annually.

b) **Management**

Responsibility for the implementation of the communication strategy will lie with SCARDA management. This will include: SCARDA coordinators/ focal points at FARA, ASARECA, CORAF/WECARD and SADC-FANR. The SCARDA management team will work with and draw on the services of relevant expertise within (eg Information and Communication Units) and outside their organizations.

c) **Appropriate choice of communication media**

A regular flow of information is critical for implementation and coordination of activities. There is a wide range of media options, and it is important that SCARDA is careful in choosing those that are most appropriate for each of the different types of stakeholders. Table 12 lists some of the principal media that SCARDA could use, and some key factors that need to be taken into account.

While the internet has provided a radical and efficient communication alternative for many, the consultants’ reports/scoping studies have shown

\textsuperscript{18} Davies, R. & J. Dart (2005) \textit{The Most Significant Change Technique: a guide to its use.} Available online: www.mande.co.uk/docs/MSCGuide.htm
Table 12. Criteria for assessing and comparing media

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media</th>
<th>Potential for feedback &amp; interaction</th>
<th>Speed of communication</th>
<th>Extent of access to and use of medium by target stakeholders</th>
<th>Cost-effectiveness</th>
<th>Degree of skill/literacy</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Print</td>
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<td>Booklets</td>
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<td>Newsletters</td>
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<td>Journals</td>
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<td>Electronic</td>
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<td>Websites</td>
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<td>Email</td>
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<td>E-conferences</td>
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<td>E-groups</td>
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<td>Mobile phones</td>
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<tr>
<td>Landline phones</td>
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<td>Meetings</td>
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<td>Workshops</td>
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<td>Visual media</td>
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<td>TV</td>
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<td>Video</td>
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</table>

Annex 4. Communication strategy

that others are bogged down by poor, slow connections. On the other hand, mobile phone ownership has been growing rapidly, making it one of the most widely used of the electronic media. Though modern ICT greatly facilitates communication electronically, face-to-face meetings remain critical to build strong partnerships.

There should be regular though not necessarily frequent meetings. It is not always possible to substitute one medium for another —nevertheless, in some agricultural research and development programmes use of mobiles has to some extent replaced the need for frequent face-to-face meetings.
Annex 5. Terms of Reference

SCARDA Programme Coordinator

SCARDA will have a Programme Coordinator who will manage the Coordination Unit at the FARA Secretariat in Accra. The Programme Coordinator will be appointed by FARA and will report to the FARA Executive Director or if so decided to the Deputy Executive Director when s/he has been appointed. The Programme Coordinator has day-to-day responsibility for the SCARDA Implementation Plan which incorporates the agreed programme activities.

The main functions of the Programme Coordinator are as follows:

• Running the SCARDA Coordination Unit in the FARA Secretariat in Accra and supervising the work of the Programme Officer.

• Coordinating the programme-wide activities including Monitoring & Evaluation, Communication and the organisation of continental-level workshops.

• Ensuring that Programme activities are implemented in a way that maximises the effectiveness of SCARDA’s contribution to the results of FARA’s Networking Support Function on Capacity Strengthening and to other relevant FARA activities.

• Holding regular on-line meetings with SRO SCARDA Focal Persons to assess programme progress, share experiences, identify constraints and opportunities and agree appropriate action.

• Ensuring that FARA’s processes and conditions and commitments to UK-DFID are met in contracting service providers and purchasing capital items to contribute to programme-wide activities and ensuring that services are delivered in accordance with the contract provisions and procurement procedures.

• Submitting invoices to the FARA Executive Director to authorise the release of funds in a timely manner to service providers following satisfactory completion of the agreed activities.

• Reviewing quarterly and annual progress reports submitted by the SRO coordinators and the Natural Resources Institute (NRI) coordinator, providing feedback on the technical issues addressed.

• Consolidating the quarterly and monthly progress reports and from the SROs and NRI and preparing consolidated progress reports for submission to UK-DFID (and other stakeholders).
• Coordinating the planning and review processes to ensure the continuing relevance and effectiveness of programme activities.

• Liaising with the FARA Finance Officer to ensure that financial reporting is in accordance with the agreed requirements and that funds are transferred to the SROs in a timely manner.

• Working with the Communication team to identify success stories and other relevant lessons which can be promoted more widely in order to enhance the impact of the Programme.

• Promoting programme activities through participation in appropriate Conferences and Workshops.

• Fostering strong relations with national and regional authorities and Development Partners and other stakeholders to leverage additional resources for the Programme.

• Liaising with the FARA Executive Director to identify issues that can be addressed through FARA’s advocacy role and which need to be discussed with key stakeholders in order to ensure the success and sustainability of the Programme.

• Engaging with the managers of other capacity strengthening initiatives in sub-Saharan Africa to identify areas of complementarity and opportunities for synergy.

• Building inter-regional partnerships among SCARDA stakeholders to maximise the scope for scaling-out the Programme approach.

Sub-Regional Organisation
Focal Person

Each of the three participating sub-regional organisations (ASARECA, CORAF/WECARD and SADC-FANR) will appoint a full-time Focal Person for the SCARDA programme. The SRO SCARDA Focal Persons will be accountable to their respective line managers within the SROs. They will have specific reporting responsibilities to the SCARDA Programme Coordinator at the Coordination Unit in the FARA Secretariat.

The SRO Focal Persons have day-to-day responsibility for Programme implementation in their respective sub-regions. Recognising the complexity and amount of work involved in matching providers to those to receive the capacity strengthening inputs including scheduling and quality assurance many of the implementation functions will be delegated to Lead Service Providers. The SRO Focal Persons will work closely with dedicated staff in the Lead Service Providers to ensure effective and timely completion of capacity strengthening inputs.

The main functions of the SRO Focal Persons are:

• Oversight of the institutional analysis at the Focal Institutions, including the selection of the institutional analysis teams; the identification of the service providers; the development and review of action plans; and liaison with the mentor assigned to work with the Focal Institution on institutional change.

• Preparation of quarterly and annual progress reports and timely submission to the FARA SCARDA Programme Coordinator.

• Participation in the SCARDA Communications Team and implementation of the communication plan in the sub-region.

• Contribution to the development of the Monitoring & Evaluation plan and assumption of responsibility for implementing the M&E plan in the sub-region.

• Ensuring that SCARDA programme inputs contribute effectively to the wider capacity strengthening programme of the SRO.

• Maintaining a register of accredited service providers which meet the agreed criteria.

• Ensuring congruence with other capacity strengthening programmes through measures such as linking databases of service providers and developing joint learning platforms as mechanisms for knowledge sharing.
• Participation in the regional and sub-regional learning platforms.
• Building partnerships between participating institutions and other stakeholders in order to promote the SCARDA approach more widely.

**Lead Service Providers**

Lead Service Providers will be appointed by the Sub-Regional Organizations to assist with programme implementation. Lead Service Providers will be directly accountable to the SRO and will report to the SRO SCARDA Focal Person in accordance with the provisions specified in the contract. Dedicated staff in the Lead Service Providers will support the SRO SCARDA Focal Person by utilising their experience in the management and provision of capacity strengthening inputs in agricultural research and development.

The Lead Service Providers will be responsible for ensuring that the capacity strengthening services required by the Focal and Satellite organisations will be provided by organisations that are appropriate in capacity, institutional culture and cost effectiveness. They will also implement the tracer studies in the SRO sub-regions. The appointment of Lead Service Providers will be based on strict criteria including: geographical coverage within the sub-region; a proven track record in the management of capacity strengthening programmes; the ability to provide quality assurance and monitoring and evaluation inputs; a commitment to the comprehensive approach of SCARDA and a willingness to share experiences with other stakeholders.

The main functions of the Lead Service Providers are:

• To understand the needs, capacities, cultures and costs of the organisations to be provided with capacity strengthening and those to provide capacity strengthening so as to be able to propose to the SROs providers that will be most likely to achieve the desired results most cost-effectively and sustainably.
• Proposing service providers for accreditation that have the required expertise in the relevant thematic and disciplinary areas.
• Liaising with the SRO Focal Person to match service providers to specific capacity strengthening activities.
• Providing quality assurance of training courses, mentoring inputs, post-graduate supervision and other relevant capacity strengthening activities.
• Ensuring that inputs from other Service Providers have been delivered on time and within the allocated budget.
• Monitoring how the Focal and Satellite Institutions have applied the skills imparted through the capacity-strengthening activities.
• Undertaking tracer studies to identify capacity needs in undergraduate programmes as articulated by employers of agricultural graduates.

**Natural Resources Institute**

**Background**

The Natural Resources Institute (NRI) is a specialized Institute of the University of Greenwich in the United Kingdom and provides high quality research, consultancy, policy and education services in agriculture and related sectors. NRI works with its long-established international networks and partners in the developing world, especially in Africa and Asia, to strengthen human and institutional capacity. The Institute has a particularly close relationship with the sub-regional organizations (SROs) and many of the national agricultural research systems in sub-Saharan Africa. In carrying out its work, NRI utilises its substantial expertise and proven track record in implementing output-

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19. NRI is registered by the British Standards Institute to ISO 9001
orientated work programmes designed to help eliminate poverty and achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

NRI, through the University of Greenwich, currently offers MSc/PGDip Programmes in Food Safety and World Trade and Natural Resources. A wide range of short courses is also offered, ranging from biotechnology to participatory research methods, and these are increasingly delivered overseas. NRI currently has some 40 PhD students mainly nationals from developing countries. The Institute is now also developing novel cost-effective means to deliver its programmes to meet the needs of African scientists and professionals. Flexible mechanisms are being developed and applied which allow staff in full-time employment to undertake continuing professional development. The use of a modular approach allows students to accumulate credits which lead to accredited professional qualifications.

Key areas of human and institutional capacity strengthening expertise of NRI include:

- Carrying out Institutional Analysis for research and development institutions to identify capacity strengthening needs and to develop and assess capacity strengthening programmes.
- Developing and implementing performance management systems that involve participatory planning, monitoring and evaluation systems geared to achieving clear results and the delivery of services.
- Facilitating interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral coalitions of individuals, groups and institutions to design and undertake demand-led research.
- Supporting the development of learning platforms to identify and share good practice.
- Designing and supporting knowledge management and communication systems that meet the needs of managers, staff and external partners of agricultural research and development institutions.
- Assisting universities in developing countries to develop and deliver MSc and PhD programmes and to introduce and apply appropriate quality assurance procedures.
- Participating in the design and implementation of mentoring programmes for young scientists to help them develop their skills and perform more effectively.

**Inception phase of SCARDA**

NRI the preferred external provider is a core partner of the Forum for Agricultural Research (FARA) and the SROs in the Strengthening Capacity for Agricultural Research and Development in Africa (SCARDA) programme. NRI contributed to the development of the proposal which was submitted to the UK Department for International Development (DFID). In response to requests from the SROs for specific services, NRI was actively involved in the six-month inception phase of the programme through:

1. Participating in the Inaugural Planning Meeting held in Accra in February 2007 and the preparation of the workshop report.
2. Contributing to the development of methodologies used by the SROs in the scoping studies.
3. Providing advice and support to the SRO consultants during their country visits and assistance with the synthesis of country reports (SADC).
4. Assisting the planning and facilitation of each of the sub-regional stakeholder workshops and the regional inception period review workshop, and preparation of the workshop reports.
5. Coordinating the preparation of strategies for Monitoring & Evaluation, Communications and Gender and Inclusion.
6. Developing an electronic database to store and retrieve information on capacity needs of NARS institutions.

7. In collaboration with researchers from the region, preparing Discussion Papers on five key areas identified by FARA and the CORAF consultants.


Role of NRI in the Implementation phase

During the Inception phase of the SCARDA programme, the roles and responsibilities of the main stakeholders were identified and agreed and linkages between the core partners were consolidated and strengthened. As a result, a shared understanding and common vision of SCARDA has been developed among the core partners and levels of mutual confidence and trust are high. This will help to ensure that the innovative approaches to capacity strengthening agreed by the programme stakeholders are implemented effectively and that participating institutions do not revert to ‘business as usual’. At the same time, the programme needs to source inputs from other service providers with a track record of effectively addressing emerging capacity needs.

NRI will continue to contribute to the programme in areas of its core competence where a demand for its services has been requested and agreed by other core partners. The Institute will provide a focal point for region-wide services and learning working with FARA and the SROs and will identify contact persons for each of the main areas in which it will participate. These areas are:

Institutional Analysis

During the first six months of the programme, a more in depth institutional analysis will be carried out at each of the target institutions to refine and specify key capacity needs and determine those that can be addressed through SCARDA interventions (see Annex 6). In conjunction with the respective Lead Institutions, NRI will facilitate this process and will be responsible for:

1. Developing a generic methodology for Institutional Analysis that will be used in each of the sub-regions to ensure coherence of approach and facilitate the sharing of lessons learned.

2. In collaboration with FARA, the SRO Focal Persons and the Lead Institutions, identifying staff from NRI and institutions within the sub-regions with the relevant expertise to participate in the teams that will conduct the Institutional Analysis. These teams will be comprised of two to three persons with experience in change management, agricultural research management, and scientific and professional issues.

3. Through participation in the Institutional Analysis teams, developing workplans for each target institution in collaboration with management, staff and key external partners.

4. Facilitating meetings involving stakeholders at the Focal Institutions and institutions which will be accredited to supply capacity strengthening services. The outcome of the analysis will be a coherent programme of activities with agreed roles and responsibilities and clear lines of communication between all participating institutions.

5. Synthesising the outcomes of the Institutional Analysis in each of the Focal Institutions in order to identify opportunities for sharing good practice, exchanging teaching and learning materials, and providing a basis for subsequent up- and out-scaling.

6. Ensuring that the methodologies and techniques of institutional analysis are imparted to, and internalised by, the institution being analysed as the first institutional capacity strengthening
activity. This will be reinforced throughout the life of SCARDA by the participatory M&E and communications and learning activities and Programme assessments.

7. Reporting the findings of the Institutional Analysis to FARA and the SRO Focal Persons.

8. Assessing the effectiveness of the capacity strengthening services provided to the institutions by reviewing outcomes with management, staff and external partners. This activity will be integrated with the programme-wide M&E framework and will be coordinated by a member of the Institutional Analysis team. This team member will be a contact person for FARA and the SRO coordinator at the sub-regional level and will continue to provide support to the target institutions for the duration of the Implementation phase.

9. Assisting target institutions to prepare for mid-term and final evaluations through identifying and gathering evidence for the external assessors (see M&E function, bullet point 8).

**Monitoring & Evaluation**

NRI will facilitate the programme-wide Monitoring & Evaluation function for SCARDA and will provide a contact person for this input. The key roles and responsibilities of NRI will be to:

1. Liaise with the Programme Coordinator and the M&E officer in the FARA Deputy Director’s office to establish the M&E system, including the preparation of guidance documents and reporting formats. Design an electronic filing system for the efficient entering and retrieval of relevant information including baseline data and progress reports.

2. Assist with the integration of learning-oriented M&E procedures into the programme implementation at each operational level from regional to institutional.

3. Facilitating linkages between regional, sub-regional and organizational levels and encouraging coherence in methodology and approach.

4. Facilitating the review of learning at key stages of programme implementation through lesson learning workshops and meetings/interactions between members of learning platforms (in conjunction with the Communication function; see below).

5. Providing support to the programme internal reviews, mid-term review and final evaluation.

**Communication**

NRI will facilitate the programme-wide Communications function for SCARDA and will provide a contact person for this input. The key roles and responsibilities of NRI will be to:

1. Work with the Programme Coordinator and SRO coordinators to establish detailed Communication plans and systems at the regional and, in response to specific requests, sub-regional levels.

2. Support the development of learning platforms to facilitate communication and lesson learning between staff and other stakeholders within and between target institutions.

3. Facilitate face to face experience sharing and lesson development events to define good practice in organisational capacity strengthening. Ensure congruence with the review of learning carried out as part of the M&E function (bullet point 4)

4. Identify and document good practice in learning and lesson sharing through the supervision of a PhD or MSc studentship.

5. Contribute to an assessment of the effectiveness of communication approaches used in programme activities.

**Science Quality**

In response to demand articulated through the Institutional Analyses, NRI will offer MSc and short courses in priority topics. The specific courses provided will be determined in
consultation with the Programme Coordinator, SRO contact persons and management of target institutions and may be conducted in collaboration with African institutions; for example, through joint delivery of courses. Based on the list of priority needs identified during the sub-regional scoping studies, these are likely to include:

- Natural resources management (including environmental issues)
- Integrated crop/pest management
- Post-harvest issues, including marketing
- Food safety
- Biotechnology and biosafety
- Participatory research methods
- Agricultural information and communications management
- Packaging of research outputs for extension services and other end users
- Gender analysis

NRI will offer MSc programmes by research for students identified by their institutions for participation in SCARDA. This option will provide flexibility by enabling students to start the postgraduate course earlier than would otherwise be available. It will also ensure that the core activities of the target institutions are not disrupted by key staff being away for long periods. Opportunities will be sought for courses being conducted at African institutions in order to help strengthen capacity.

Based on demand from the target institutions, NRI will offer the services of experienced staff with skills in developing new MSc programmes and in applying quality assurance practices. Drawing on the direct experience of staff members, and knowledge of good practice developed elsewhere, NRI will identify and share models for mentoring young staff. NRI staff will also participate in ‘Communities of practice’ which will allow experiences of mentoring activities within the programme to be shared.

An indicative budget for NRI of £989,448 for the 30-month initial Implementation Phase is shown below. Stakeholders at the Regional Inception Phase Review Workshop appreciated NRI’s valuable contribution to the Inception Phase of ACARDA and welcomed NRI’s continued active participation in the Programme. Whilst they recognised that the current budget ceiling was £7.8m, they discussed and endorsed an option under which NRI might receive an extra £1.5m should additional resources become available. This would allow a wider range of joint teaching and training inputs to be provided by NRI and African partners. It would also enable more attention to be paid to addressing the specific needs of a wider range of agricultural research and development stakeholders.

**Lead Service Providers for SCARDA**

The three Lead Service Providers for SCARDA are:

**The AGRHYMET Regional Centre in Niamey, Niger**

The AGRHYMET Regional Centre (ARC) is a specialised institute of the Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS), which is an intergovernmental organization that has been created in September 1973 in the wake of a serious drought in the region. Its mandate is to “seek to assure food security and to combat the effects of drought and desertification for a new ecological balance in the Sahel”.

The nine CILSS member countries include Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Chad, The Gambia, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Senegal. In organisational terms, CILSS is composed of three centres of operations, i.e.:

- The Executive Secretariat (Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso); www.cilss.bf
- Institut du Sahel (specialised institute based in Bamako, Mali); www.insah.org
The mandate of AGRHYMET Regional Centre (ARC), include:

- Data collection, processing and information dissemination on food security, natural resource management, water control and management and desertification control across the Sahel.
- Development of decision support tools to meet the Sahelian population’s development needs.
- Technical capacity building through training and transfer of tools, methods and know-how adapted to the Sahelian countries in the fields.

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of climatology, agrometeorology, hydrology, crop protection, geomatics, and remote sensing.

The Centre has about 100 experts and officers (including one expert specialised in ICT), most of whom have a background in engineering, natural sciences, and information technology. It is based on a 71-hectare estate, which includes 2.5 hectares of irrigated fields. The Centre is well equipped with modern information and communication technology (e.g. high performing computers for the downloading and processing of climatic data).

AGRHYMET has a long list of technical partners, including FAO, WMO, WFP, FEWS-Net, the PIREM institutions (NBA, ACMAD, CRESA, EAMAC, CERMES, ICRISAT), Abdou Moumouni University of Niamey, RECTAS, CERE, CERAS, IRD, Polytechnic University of Bobo Dioulasso, CIRAD, Danish Institute for Agricultural Research, Royal Veterinary and Agricultural University of Denmark, University of Reading (UK), USGS, IBIMET, IAO, CTA, Environnement Canada, University of Liège, UQAM (Quebec University at Montréal).


In January 2007, the Centre has embarked on a 12-month Masters Degree Programme in Concerted Natural Resource Management (15 participants in total, including 4 women). New Masters courses are being prepared in the fields of ‘Sustainable protection of crops and the environment’ and ‘Integrated management of water resources’.

In the context of SCARDA, the strengths of the AGRHYMET Regional Centre can be summarised as follows:

**Strengths:**

- Well developed infrastructure for the organisation of different types of training courses (including in other countries).
- Strong capacity in its core disciplines, which are mainly related to agro-meteorology, crop protection, water management, food security, desertification control, and information and communication technology.
- Established procedures for internal and external auditing. Internal auditing is carried out by a team from CILSS HQ, whilst external auditing is undertaken by international firms following tendering.

- Hydrology,
- Agrometeorology,
- Crop Protection, and
- Instrumentation and Microcomputing.

Between 1975 and 2007, the AGRHYMET Regional Centre has trained 935 graduates in these disciplines, of whom 205 engineers and 730 higher technicians. In addition, over 5000 professionals have benefited from short-term training courses on topics such as sustainable agriculture, management of climatological databases, integrated pest management, natural resource management, and gender and development. Whilst the majority of graduates and course participants come from CILSS member countries, the Centre has also trained nationals of other countries in Central and West Africa.
• Familiar with sub-contracting of other organisations for specific project inputs.
• Strong network of partner organisations, including accreditation with CAMES (African and Malagasy Council for Higher Education).
• AGRHYMET tend to follow up on their graduates’ careers including identification of training needs in view of changing labour markets. This should make them well-placed to participate in ‘tracer-studies’.

AGHRHYMET recognises that it has some limitations as a Lead Service Provider for SCARDA. The organization operates mainly in CILSS countries and has is not able to cover the full range of disciplinary areas encompassed by the Programme. AGHRHYMET usually runs its courses in French and so these may not be easily accessible for participants from non-francophone countries. These constraints will be addressed through partnership with ANAFE, of which it is a member, and with other organisations such as the Institut du Sahel (www.insah.org), which has a stronger background in social sciences and more female staff.

**ANAFE: The African Network for Agriculture, Agroforestry and Natural Resources Education**

Launched in 1993 by 17 universities and 12 colleges from Eastern, Western and Southern Africa, the African Network for Agriculture, Agroforestry and Natural Resources Education (ANAFE) currently has 128 member institutions in 34 African countries. It was registered in 2007 as an international network with a focus on education. The work of ANAFE includes education policy analysis and advocacy, assessment of agricultural education capacity, curricular reviews, learning resources development, strengthening tools and methods for delivery of agricultural education, reinforcing integrated approached to learning, linking education to research and building a culture of sharing information and expertise among institutions.

In 1999 ANAFE adopted a regional structure, effectively decentralizing network decision-making, implementation, monitoring and control. This also enhanced grassroots ownership and management, sustainability, flexibility, and efficiency of the network. Thus the network has four regional networks (called RAFT: Regional Agriculture Forum for Training), one each in Eastern and Central Africa (RAFT-ECA), African Humid Tropics (RAFT-AHT), Southern Africa (RAFT-SA) and the Sahel (RAFT-Sahel). All member institutions in a region constitute the RAFT. There is provision for the formation of more RAFTs as the network expands in its geographic coverage, especially to address the needs of training institutions in countries emerging from civil conflicts (Central Africa) and Northern Africa.

ANAFE members in each region meet once every two years. They elect their Chair, Vice Chair and five RAFT Committee members. The RAFT Chair automatically becomes a member of the ANAFE Board. The regional meetings held every two years interpret ANAFE Board policies and decisions in the context of regional needs and priorities.

ANAFE activities are carried out on a cost-sharing basis between participating institutions (ANAFE members and others). Usually, activities are led by ANAFE member institutions, which contribute in cash or in kind towards the expenses. Other participants and donors may provide support also in kind or cash.

ANAFE exchanges experience with similar networks and initiatives in Africa (RUFORUM), as well as Asia and Latin America. Experiences are shared through joint meetings between educators in ANAFE, Southeast Asian Network for Agroforestry Education (SEANAFE), Asia Pacific Agroforestry Network (APAN) and representatives in Latin America. ANAFE plays
a role in the development of frameworks for education networks, for instance International Partnership on Forestry Education (IPFE) and Global Network on Agroforestry Education (GANAFE). Through the BASIC initiative, ANAFE has partners with European institutions such as ICRA (International Centre for Development Oriented Research in Agriculture), NATURA, and US networks, NASULGC, etc.

**ANAFE Secretariat**

To coordinate the network and provide a platform for interface, ANAFE has a secretariat, headed by an Executive Secretary. The secretariat is supported by an administrative assistant and senior research fellows, based in each of the RAFTs. These senior education fellows are normally staff members of universities or colleges teaching agriculture and natural resources. Their main function is to coordinate the activities of member institutions within their regions, and help them in developing projects and in fund raising. The Secretariat is also strongly supported by a patron, Professor August Temu, who has considerable experience in agricultural education and networking.

**What can ANAFE offer for the implementation of the SCARDA programme**

**A. A strong Secretariat, based in Nairobi, Kenya and four sub-regional networks that are strong platforms for SCARDA implementation**

1. The ANAFE Executive Secretary has two value adding advantages for SCARDA: She is an African woman university Lecturer, and she has been the interim Programme Officer of SCARDA during the whole Inception Phase. As such, she knows the SCARDA programme very well. During her stay in FARA, she interacted closely with all the actors involved in the Inception phase (SROs, Consultants, SCARDA/SROs’ focal points, NRI backstopping experts, etc.). She visited all the three Sub regions and was actively involved in all the SCARDA stakeholder workshops organized in the three sub regions. She was also the Chair of ANAFE’s Sahel chapter. Previously she did several consultancies for ANAFE on capacity building needs assessments in the Sahel member institutions.

2. Four Competent full time Senior Research Fellows coordinate the activities of the RAFT member institutions. They all are senior university lecturers in agriculture and natural resources. They also cover the training institutions in the beneficiary countries selected by the SROs. CORAF selected Mali and Gambia included in the RAFT-Sahel and Ghana and Central African countries included in the RAFT-AHT. ASARECA has decided to target Rwanda, Burundi and Sudan, all covered by the RAFT-ECA. SADC retained Botswana, Zambia, Malawi, Zimbabwe and Tanzania, all covered by the RAFT-SA. In each of the member institutions, there is a focal person who is linked to the Senior Research Fellow in the region. In summary, ANAFE provides a working infrastructure with competent persons and institutions (not to mention institutional links) to enable SCARDA to operate quickly and efficiently.

**B. A long-term collaboration with FARA (materialized by the signature of a FARA/ANAFE Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), and Compliance with its Framework for African Agriculture Productivity (FAAP) developed to implement the CAADP Pillar IV**

ANAFE’s joint initiative with FARA is an outstanding example at the continental level of how agricultural research and education can come together and act synergistically to make an impact on development. The joint conception of the BASIC (Building Africa’s Scientific and Institutional Capacity in agriculture and natural resources) initiative is a major achievement. Already many NARIs and universities are
applying the principles and approaches espoused in BASIC.

C. Tapping into the strong social capital built at colleges and universities

Within the 128 members there are at least 1200 agricultural educators whose knowledge and experience can be mobilized easily to participate in SCARDA activities and help produce outputs and impact.

D. Regular Communication with colleges and universities, including a six-monthly Newsletter, ‘Agricultural Education News’

Distributed to all member institutions and partners throughout the world, the Agricultural Education News is a powerful communication tools that briefs members and other stakeholders on current issues and also facilitates peer comparison of developments in capacity and programmes. SCARDA can use the same medium to promote its objectives, describe its activities and share progress.

E. An accessible website for posting training materials and other documents produced by ANAFE and its member institutions.

The ANAFE website www.anafeafica.org is a frequently visited centre for teaching tools methods and resources. This site can easily host SCARDA content or be linked to a SCARDA site.

D. ANAFE member institutions have the capacity to contribute to many of the activities planned in the SCARDA programme

SCARDA aims to:

- Strengthen competencies and capacity in agricultural research management; and
- Strengthen capacity for professional development in agricultural research and development

ANAFE has been principally involved in promoting collaboration in academic endeavours. However, in those processes it has acquired experience in matching capacity service providers to institutions and individuals and organising the programmes and the quality control measures. It is able to provide such services for capacity strengthening whether it is provided by a traditional capacity strengthening institution or by private enterprise, for example in respect of human resources and financial management.

RUFORUM The Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture

The RUFORUM (Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture) organisation is a joint initiative by universities in eastern and southern Africa to pool effort to integrate universities in the development process and practice and train quality human resource for Africa within Africa.

RUFORUM has a well established regional secretariat which provides services to the universities and other actors and is manned by senior internationally recruited staff including a regional coordinator, Finance and Administration Specialists, Grants and Programme Management Officer, Training and Quality Assurance Officer, Information and Communication Officer, and Senior Administrative assistant in charge of logistics. The RUFORUM has a well established and efficient financial system that allows for disbursement of funds and follow up accountability with partners across the globe, and is audited by an international firm, Deloite & Touche.

While RUFORUM operates principally in 12 universities, it has extensive linkages and partnership arrangements that allow it to operate throughout Africa, and is linked to several institutions outside Africa. In particular, RUFORUM has close working relations with NEPAD, FARA, and especially ASARECA and SADC/FANR. RUFORUM has extensive experience in facilitating staff and student exchanges, and partnerships, allowing it to bring in expertise outside the member universities. Currently RUFORUM is coordinating one of USAID’s Higher Education Partnership for
Africa’s Development, which twins African and USA universities. RUFORUM is a partner in DFID’s Research into Use programme and is hosting on its website (www.ruforum.org), a database for providers of capacity development services in Agriculture.

A core role of RUFORUM is to catalyse institutional changes, and has over the years been involved in curriculum reforms and university institutional development change processes, including building managerial capacity and competence of university and other senior management actors. As part of its global function, and as an effort to improve quality of research in Africa, RUFORUM is currently distributing world wide through CD and its website. Research Skill Guide for universities and other actors, including the Genstat Statistical package. RUFORUM is a recognised leader in capacity development and a voice for universities.
Annex 6. Institutional Analysis

Methodology for conducting an Institutional Analysis

1. Introduction

SCARDA has adopted an innovative and inclusive approach to identifying and addressing capacity issues that constrain partners in the National agricultural research systems from fulfilling their mandates.

Based on several of the methodologies used in the private sector (notably in re-engineering and change management processes), capacity strengthening activities for Agricultural Research and Development Institutions will be developed in a new and creative way. The overall process is summarised in the diagram at the bottom of this page.

Working with carefully selected Agricultural Research and Development Institutions of various types (referred to in this document as the Focal Institutions) in close conjunction with predominantly African providers of capacity building services, the SCARDA team will assist these Focal Institutions to:

- Critically analyse their particular situation.
- Develop a capacity strengthening plan in partnership with capacity builders.
- Implement the capacity strengthening plan.
- Evaluate the impact of this on their performance.

Capacity strengthening should be a recurrent function in any successful and dynamic organisation: it is therefore a key feature of the SCARDA approach that this continuous improvement culture is seen as an ongoing process, without a defined life-span. It is also part of organisational development and change—not just maintenance and replacement of capacity.

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It is therefore crucial that the results advise future action. The first critical stage in this process is ‘Institutional Analysis’, a process which comprises analysis of existing operations and development of a capacity strengthening plan. This analysis starts with first principles, examining the mandate of the Focal Institutions, and involves key stakeholders as well as staff.

The purpose of these steps is to empower the Focal Institution to develop, implement, monitor and evaluate its own capacity strengthening programme which will improve its performance in a pre-determined and measurable way.

This purpose will be met if:

- The capacity weaknesses (human resources, process and systems) that constrain the Institution’s ability to function are identified and quantified.
- A realistic, costed and time bound capacity strengthening plan is prepared and committed to by management.
- A system for monitoring the implementation and assessing the impact of the plan is designed and installed.
- The Institution’s management is empowered to actively manage this programme in partnership with their chosen service providers.
- The Institution’s policies, governance and commitment to change provide assurance that improved capacity will be provided within an environment in which it can function effectively and with sufficient professional and monetary incentives to remain with the Institution.

These terms of reference present the detailed approach and methodology for the work needed to make this happen.

2. Approach: the institutional analysis

The key to any institutional strengthening is the ability of the organisation to undergo change. Many models are used in the understanding of the change process (For example, Peter Senge methodology21, Kurt Levin freeze-thaw-freeze model22, and Gleitcher Formula), and their application to large organisations.

The Prosci ADKAR model23 summarises most key elements of the process:

- Awareness of why the change is needed
- Desire to support and participate in the change
- Knowledge of how to change
- Ability to implement new skills and behaviours
- Reinforcement to sustain the change

The Change process in the Focal Institutions needs to address all these point in a systematic and chronological manner: the first element quite clearly must be an analysis of the needed changes (and their prioritisation), and an expression of this need to the individual and groups concerned, either directly or indirectly.

Such an Institutional Analysis is an introspective process which identifies constraints and proposes actions while simultaneously assisting management and staff to take ownership and leadership of the change processes.

The approach to Institutional Analysis follows these core principles:

- **Mandate / mission definition**: Some of the Focal Institutions may not have updated their mandate since their foundation (or may even lack a clear mandate entirely). It is imperative

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22. Levin Kurt : “Field theory in Social Science” 1951
to get the entire management and staff to remember and eventually re-formulate their mandate and mission. This is a good way to start the analysis and initiate the change process on the basis of a consensual and collective foundation.

- **Ownership**: Institutional Analysis is not a process whereby external experts undertake a study in isolation and then develop recommendations that may or may not be adopted. It is a process whereby an external team works with the institution to assist them to identify ‘their constraints and to identify and implement a realistic plan which they commit to achieving. In order to ensure this, the following specific approaches will be adopted:
  - The analysis team will report directly to the Director (or equivalent) of the Focal Institution and will hold (at least) weekly update meetings with him/her and the management team. These meetings are referred to in the text as Key Meetings.
  - During these meetings, key findings and proposals for action will be agreed upon and signed off by the Institution’s management team.
  - The analysis team will request that the Institution appoints a senior member of their staff to work with the analysis team on a daily basis.
  - Where possible, one member of the analysis team will continue to be available to the Institution in the longer term to assist in the implementation process.

- **Change Management approach**: Private sector work has been using excellent tools, (based on re-engineering and TQM methodologies as well as from intensive research), to facilitate the Institution’s change process. For instance: training, coaching and internal communication are a “social lubricant” to enable attitudes to evolve.

- **Institutional Culture Engineering**: Whatever the constraints are found to be, they are usually embedded in the Institution’s management history and culture (ivory tower syndrome, not-invented-here syndrome, incapacity for teamwork or idea-sharing, indifference to budget considerations, etc.). Any institutional change is first and foremost a change of attitude: the analysis will confront these issues.

- **Focus**: SCARDA is about strengthening capacity for agricultural research and development. The purpose of the analysis is to identify solvable capacity constraints — not to develop plans for restructuring of agricultural research systems! The analysis team will therefore focus specifically on:
  - How institutional management and research skills contribute to or constrain the research for agricultural development carried out by the institution.
  - Whether the individual skills, (i.e., competence, motivation, discipline, hard & soft systems and personal capacity & attitude) of every category of the Institution’s staff contribute to or constrain their ability to undertake effective research for the benefit of local agriculture.

- **Results**: SCARDA is about improving capacity for agricultural research and innovation through capacity strengthening. More specifically it is about improving the “soft/non-physical” environment in which scientists and technicians work (research management) and improving the skills of those scientists and technicians to undertake effective research (scientific skills). This will result in measurable change. It is a core task of the analysis team to assist the institute to set targets for change and to provide the Institution with the means to measure that change. In this way, the capacity strengthening programme will be focused and results-driven.
3. Methodology

The Institutional Analysis will be undertaken over three phases:

- Investigation
- Design
- Support to implementation.

This is shown in the critical pathway below:
3.1 Investigation

The following will be achieved:

The institution will clearly understand how its institutional and individual capacity constrain or enable it to fulfil its mandate. It is clear that SCARDA has been designed to address capacity weaknesses in Agricultural Research Systems. That obviously does not mean that there are no strengths. It is important to recognise strengths as it is always easier to build on strengths than it is to rectify weaknesses.

The Institution will be able to measure its research and innovation efficiency and productivity. It will also be able to evaluate its loss of effectiveness (the cost) through deficient or non-optimum institutional/individual capacity. In turn, this will allow the Institution to put a value (the benefit) on a successful capacity strengthening programme and enable them to undertake their own cost-benefit analysis.

The Institution will recognise and accept that its capacity needs can be addressed in a positive way. This acceptance will mark the transition in to the next phase.

The methodology for this is shown in the figure below:
The next phase will commence with a formal meeting between the analysis team and the senior management team of the Institution.

This will be the first of a series of key meetings. The first key meeting will have three main objectives: to introduce the analysis team, to allow the management team to present their institute and its objectives and to agree on the first week’s work programme, in particular the support needed from the Institution’s management team.

It is recommended that the team are presented to the Institution’s staff by the Director in an all staff meeting where he/she endorses the analysis and clearly supports and commits to the objectives of the capacity strengthening programme. This has a very strong motivational impact.

Work in the first week will mainly focus on collection of key data, including information from all stakeholders of the Focal Institution. The team will examine the institutional and operational context, through reviewing operational procedures and reports, holding interviews with key staff and clients and through observing how the institute undertakes daily work as well as its more strategic activities.

Key stakeholders, such as extension agents, farmers and end users of research will also be interviewed. This will ensure that the analysis takes account of the Focal Institution’s role in the national innovation system and is inclusive.

Key findings and observations will be reviewed and agreed with the Institution Management Team at the Second Key Meeting.

The analysis team will then seek input from the institute staff in general. This will be done through two main avenues:

- Workload and resources will be examined through collective work. There will be an experiential learning and capacity building element in this activity which will also mark the start of the capacity building process
- ‘Self evaluation’, whereby staff complete a questionnaire (or through “guided interviews”) which examines their understanding of and attitude to their skills and their work environment, both human and technical.

Following this, the analysis team will undertake a detailed analysis of the strengths, and weaknesses (internal) of existing management systems and an evaluation of existing skills to use and manage those systems. In particular, the team will identify specific areas where capacity constraints have a measurable negative impact on research performance.

For example, it may be that a cumbersome budgeting procedure and/or poor understanding of budgeting leads to inadequately resourced research projects.

The team will also identify existing skills gaps, i.e. areas where the institution is not able to fulfil its existing mandate because of lack of technical ability. For instance, the institution may have an active commodity programme with strong technical expertise on the production side. However, the effectiveness of the programme is constrained by the absence of a team member with appropriate post-harvest skills.

Lack of technical skills may not always be the critical constraint and an ability to understand the wider context is crucial. The ox-drawn broad-bed maker was developed in Ethiopia to improve drainage and extend the growing season. It worked very well in trials but was not adopted due to failures in the input and output markets. Seed and fertilisers were not available when needed and the increased harvest led to a collapse in grain prices because there were no buyers.

Finally, the team will examine the external threats and opportunities affecting the Institute and will
assess the degree to which their institutional and individual capacities enable them to take advantage of opportunities and manage threats.

For example there is considerable opportunity to develop innovative and client-focused research portfolios through competitive funding. However, the Focal Institution needs both individual and institutional capacity, for example in the case of proposal development and resource mobilisation.

Likewise, the ever-present threat of reduced core funding can be managed through pro-active planning and budgeting added to improved capacity to clearly demonstrate the value of publicly funded research for development. Here, the fact that the analysis reaches out to the stakeholders will reinforce the “change” process, both internally and externally.

This analysis will be presented to the management team in a **third key meeting**. Particular attention will be paid to the need to get the management team’s sincere agreement with observations and conclusions. During this meeting the work programme for the final week of analysis will be agreed upon.

The final week of the analysis phase will be spent in validating the findings and preparing the analysis report.

Validation of findings is critical to the sustainability of the capacity building programme. To this end, the analysis will be presented to the Institution’s staff and discussed through the medium of training workshops. The objective is two-fold:

• To encourage the staff to validate the findings —agreement that the assessment is accurate and fair and reflects the situation.
• To understand and believe that something can be done about it. Ability is a mix of skills and attitude. Formal training may address skills. Ensuring that the Institute can apply those skills requires the right attitude!

The team will develop an evaluation methodology and tools which will be based on measurable indicators of changes attributable to capacity strengthening. These measurable indicators, specific to each Focal Institution, will be called Key Capacity Indicators (KCIs). This framework will form the base-line from which progress of the capacity building programme will be measured.

The final analysis report will be presented to the management team in the **fourth key meeting**. It will present in broad terms what the constraints in capacity are costing the institute, how they can be addressed, and what benefit the institute can expect. The team will also present the objectives and work plan for the next phase of the Institutional Analysis.

Proceeding from investigation to design should happen in a seamless manner. However, it may also be in the interests of the Institution to review and digest the report’s findings, over a period of a few weeks. Either option is valid.

In any event, the transition from investigation to design must be marked by written approval and support from the Institution.

### 3.2 Design

The following will be achieved:

• The Institution, working with the analysis team will prepare and agree a fully budgeted and time-bound capacity strengthening plan.
• Potential service providers will have been identified and contacted and will have contributed in detail to the plan.
• Clear targets will have been agreed and committed to.
• The capacity strengthening plan and budget will have been agreed by the appropriate SRO.
The methodology for this is shown in the figure below:

This phase will begin with the detailed design of a capacity strengthening plan, elaborated in collaboration with selected service providers, which will address:

i) Management capacity needs, as identified. A very broad spectrum of general or specific issues may be focused on, such as (inter alia):
   - HRD, management skills, leadership, job descriptions, delegation
   - Horizontal and vertical communication & information flows, MIS
   - Time management, problem-solving, negotiation skills, productivity
   - Skills in finance and budget control, marketing and market analysis
   - ITC, Internet usage, website management, international PR, fund-raising
   - Intellectual property law, patenting
   - Other areas as identified.
ii) Technical capacity needs, as identified, including *(inter alia)*:

- Any scientific expertise constraining effective research serving poor agricultural populations
- Scientific protocol design, hypothesis-testing methods, experimental methodology
- Field trial management
- Statistical analysis, computer modelling
- Lab management, lab certification
- Other areas as identified.

iii) Requirements for continuing professional development, including *(inter alia)*:

- Packaging of research outputs for extension services and other end users
- Gender analysis.

In each instance, the plan will present strategies for meeting capacity needs. These may include:

a) Mentoring & coaching
b) On and off site short courses
c) Residential and on-site post-graduate courses
d) Internet-based courses
e) Secondment and attachments
f) Other appropriate capacity-strengthening strategies

The complete plan will be presented to the Institution’s management team in a **fifth Key Meeting**.

Subject to their approval, the plan will then be presented to the Focal Institution’s staff and all comments and criticism will be invited. The plan will be adjusted as required.

At the same time, over a period of a week, the analysis team will finalise identification and commissioning of the best service providers to address the needed inputs.

It must be stressed that the service providers (whether universities, private suppliers, NGOs, Government institutions or any other competent provider), will be involved in the identification, definition and quantification of the inputs. They will also be consulted in the latter stages of the analysis, where appropriate.

For these external suppliers, the entire process is also a fundamental element of capacity building and networking, leading to increased ability to collaborate and establish “learning networks”. For instance if the management capacity service providers are to be drawn from private enterprise they will be on a very steep learning curve in respect of understanding how a public research institutions is funded, staffed and motivated. The providers of MSc training, indeed all training providers, will need to understand for what purpose and for what working environment their trainees are being prepared for.

A final and fully costed plan will then be presented to the Management team in a **sixth key meeting** for approval.

Subject to approval this will then be submitted to the appropriate SRO for endorsement. It will then be implemented.

### 3.3 Support to Implementation

Plans should be dynamic. Indeed, a plan could be defined as a framework for managing change!
It is therefore proposed that one member of the analysis team continues to engage with the Institute to assist in managing and mentoring the implementation process. Specifically, the analyst will:

- Review progress on a monthly basis and assist the Institution Management Team to identify and address problems as they occur. He/she will have the full backstopping of the NRI and partners, in such situations.
- Meet with the management team on a six-monthly basis to critically review implementation progress against plan and the impact of the capacity strengthening process. He/she will assist them to adjust the plan where appropriate.
- Be available 24 x 7 as a mentor both electronically and, where appropriate, face-to-face. He/she will be linked to the SCARDA management team and communications systems to provide input and to receive timely feedback.

It is our experience that this continued engagement is a critical success factor.

4. Institutional analysis schedule

This is shown in the Table 13 above.
Abbreviations and Acronyms

AARINENA  Association of Agricultural Research Institutions in the Near East and North Africa
AGRHYMET  Centre Regional de Formation et d’Application en Agrométéorologie et Hydrologie Opérationnelle
ANAFE  African Network for Agriculture, Agro-forestry and Natural Resources Education
ASARECA  Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa
AU  African Union
BASIC  Building Africa’s Scientific and Institutional Capacity in Agriculture and Natural Resources
BCA  Botswana College of Agriculture
CAADP  Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme
CBO  Community-based Organisations
CGIAR  Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
CORAF/WECARD  Conseil Ouest et Centre Africain pour la Recherche et le Développement Agricoles / West and Central African Council for Agricultural Research and Development
CPD  Continuing Professional Development
CRAL  Centre de Recherches Agronomiques de Loudima
CSIR-CRI  Council for Scientific and Industrial Research – Crops Research Institute
CTA  Centre Technique de Coopération Agricole et Rurale
DAR  Department of Agricultural Research (Botswana)
DFID  Department for International Development
DONATA  Dissemination of New Agricultural Technologies in Africa
ECOWAS  Economic Community of West African States
FAAP  Framework for African Agricultural Productivity
FARA  Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa
IAR4D  Integrated Agricultural Research for Development
ICART  Implementation and Coordination of Agricultural Research and Training
ICTs  Information and Communication Technologies
IER  Institut d’Economie Rurale
IPR  Intellectual Property Rights
ISABU  Institut des Sciences Agronomiques du Burundi
ISAR  Institut des Sciences Agronomiques du Rwanda
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tr>
<td>MAPP</td>
<td>Multi-country Agricultural Productivity Program</td>
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<td>MDGs</td>
<td>Millennium Development Goals</td>
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<td>NARI</td>
<td>National Agricultural Research Institute</td>
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<td>NARS</td>
<td>National Agricultural Research Systems</td>
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<td>NEPAD</td>
<td>New Partnership for Africa’s Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-governmental Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>NRDC</td>
<td>Natural Resources Development College</td>
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<tr>
<td>NRI</td>
<td>Natural Resources Institute</td>
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<td>NUL</td>
<td>National University of Lesotho</td>
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<td>RAFT</td>
<td>Regional Agricultural Forum for Training</td>
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<tr>
<td>RAILS</td>
<td>FARA - Regional Agricultural Information and Learning System</td>
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<tr>
<td>RAIN</td>
<td>ASARECA- Regional Agricultural Information Network</td>
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<tr>
<td>RUFORUM</td>
<td>Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture</td>
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<tr>
<td>SADC-FANR</td>
<td>Southern African Development Community-Food and Natural Resources Directorate</td>
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<tr>
<td>SCARDA</td>
<td>Strengthening Capacity for Agricultural Research and Development in Africa</td>
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<tr>
<td>SROs</td>
<td>Sub-Regional Organisations</td>
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<td>SSA-CP</td>
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