

Africa Regional Centres of Excellence (ArcX) related to green transition Programme

AGROECOLOGY COMPONENT

The Agroecology component of the Africa Regional Centre of Excellence (ArcX) programme focuses on strengthening Regional Centres of Excellence (RCoE) also called Regional Multi Actor Research Networks (RMRN) in sub-Saharan Africa. This initiative aims to facilitate the transition towards productive and resilient food and farming systems. By leveraging new knowledge, competencies and policies, the programme addresses complex agricultural challenges and co-creates solutions based on agroecological principles that integrate both scientific and local knowledge.

Objectives

1. Strengthen the scientific, technological, and institutional capacities of Sub- Regional Organisations (SROs) and RMRNs/RCoEs in agroecology to produce, collect, access, process, share data/information and to conduct impactful research activities using a gender-sensitive approach.
2. Enhance the contribution of RMRNs/RCoEs in agroecology to transformative, high-quality research and the generation and dissemination of scientific knowledge.
3. Improve cross-sectoral and cross-regional coordination and strategic steering of RMRN and other RCoEs to address the challenges related to Science, Technology and Innovations in Africa's green transition.
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Final beneficiaries:

The final beneficiaries of the agroecology component include all African farmers and other citizens who benefit from the preservation of their food systems, which sustain their livelihoods, enhance climate resilience and promote local well-being.

Areas of Impact

1. Data collection and sharing: the networks will document, utilize and share principles and practices on agroecology from the diverse actors across Africa. The data gathered will be made accessible through open-source information systems.
2. Support to decision making : the networks will produce and channel scientific and policy analyses on agroecology to decision-makers and other stakeholders to ensure better-informed decision-making across the regions.
3. Capacity building: the networks will strengthen institutional and human capacities to improve academic and vocational training related to agroecological approaches and foster better coordination and networking among agroecology stakeholders.
4. Support to innovation : the networks will produce science-based research to support agroecological innovations (including bio-inputs) and to help scaling through improved regulatory frameworks and better access to market .
5. Global engagement: the networks will collaborate with continental and global institutions to anchor agroecology principles and practices into global agreements.



Target group: Scientific community (e.g. Economists, food systems specialists, agronomists, soil scientists, earth observation specialists), data/information/knowledge managers, international organizations, private sector, academia, local communities, Regional Economic Communities, and global bodies..

Organizational set-up

Overall coordination of the component is ensured by a leading organization, having relevant technical and scientific expertise to harmonize knowledge sharing across actions implemented in African regions by three dedicated consortia led by Centres of Excellence in collaboration with EU Delegations, INTPA and Joint Research Centre (JRC) thematic units. **The JRC Thematic units will provide scientific support both at the continental level to FARA and RUFORUM as well as at the regional level to SROs and RMRN/RCoEs.**

Lead Organisation: Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) , RUFORUM

Lead organisation of RMRN/RCoE:

Eastern Africa: International Centre for Insect Physiology and Ecology (ICIPE)

Western Africa: West and Central African Council for Agricultural Research (CORAF)

Southern Africa: Centre for Coordination of Agriculture Research and Development (CCARDESA)

Background

To strengthen the liaison between researchers/scientists, farmers' organisations, private actors, civil society organisations and policymakers in Africa, this component builds on [FG(1)] the results achieved under the Development Smart Innovation through Research in Agriculture (DeSIRA), an initiative launched in 2017 to support research and innovation projects in Africa, Asia and Latin America, and strengthen research capacities and research governance involving key actors at national, regional, continental and global levels.

Additionally, the action will leverage existing interactive knowledge exchange platform such as the ones managed by CORAF, CCARDESA, ICIPE, , RUFORUM and FARA..

Within this framework the RMRN for Agroecology represent therefore a critical step toward addressing the challenges facing the different regions to transform their food systems. Through collaboration, capacity building, and knowledge and data production and sharing, the RMRN will ensure that agroecology principles and practices continue to support food systems transformation from local to continental level while contributing to global efforts towards climate change effects and biodiversity loss.

The component started end of 2023 with the signature of a contract with FARA/RUFORUM. At the same time CORAF, CCARDESA, ICIPE launched a process to identify third parties and regional agroecology champions, to promote agroecology concepts and practices in their respective regions. The process is currently in its final stage and will be completed by end of 2024.

More information: faraafrica.org/about-fara/