Multi Actor Platform Engagement

Deliverable No: 2.2 Summary of multi actor platform engagement
Lead partner: Rwanda Agriculture Board (RAB)
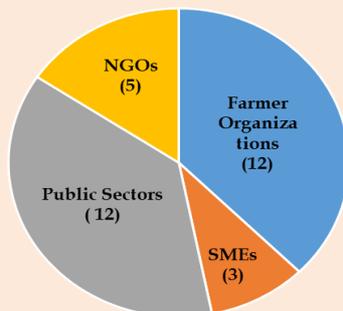**Prepared by: NIBIO & ILRI**
Other partners involved: NIBIO, ILRI, HU, KENAFF, SFHC, SUA &ARC
Objective: To achieve large scale exploitation of the results and strengthening EU-Africa research and innovation partnerships

Multi-Actor Platform: Definition & Concept

Multi-Actor Platform (MAP) is defined as a process of interactive learning, empowerment and collaborative governance that enables stakeholders with interconnected problems and ambitions, but often with different interests, to be collectively innovative and resilient when faced with the emerging risks, crisis and opportunities of a complex and changing environment (Woodhill and van Vugt, 2011). MAP represents cross sector collaboration that can range from formal roundtables discussions aiming for formal approvals of tools and technologies, to informal coordination mechanisms to manage local natural resources. *MAPs can create trust-based relations that enable the empowered and active participation of all, if implemented in the right spirit*. MAPs in all the six case countries of InnovAfrica (Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Rwanda, Tanzania and South Africa) are genuinely represented by involving representatives from various stakeholders (Fig. 1).

FIG 1. Distribution and numbers of MAP members in InnovAfrica (SME = Small and Medium Enterprises and NGOs: Non-governmental organizations)
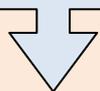

FIG 2. MAP members visiting project sites at Kirehe District, Rwanda in Feb. 2018 (Photo: DLO-Atlerra)
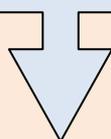
InnovAfrica Assumptions

Pilot testing of the promising Sustainable Agricultural Intensification systems (SAIs), Extension and Advisory Services (EASs) and Innovative Institutional Approaches (IIAs) in the case countries, transferring the knowledge, expertise and innovation outside the project sites during and beyond the project life, can be achieved through establishing functional MAPs and fostering close links among key stakeholders, and actively engaging MAPs at all stages of the project. It will enable large scale exploitation of results and strengthening EU-Africa Research and Innovation Partnership in the future.
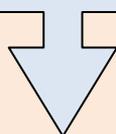
Approach

Established six functional MAPs. One MAP has been established in each case country. Existing networks of consortium members were used in the process

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Conducted multi-actor analysis at the early stage of the project to: 1) characterize and/or classify the actors; 2) identify their needs and constraints; 3) determine their roles; and 4) the time and degree and method of their engagement in the project (i.e. from design to implementation and evaluation/impact)

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Organizing bi-annual dialogue meetings for sharing project results, getting feedback, using the networks and their positions to further disseminate, exploit and upscale the relevant results during and beyond the project period, and to other countries in the region

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Involving MAPs in relevant Work Packages (WPs) for **maximizing the impacts of the results** e.g. i) addressing production and marketing constraints and identifying opportunities to generate innovative product value chain pathways (WP4), ii) developing policy frameworks (WP5), and iii) dissemination and upscaling suitable SAIs, EASs & IIAs (WP6)

How do we engage MAPs within projects effectively?

Through facilitators with right soft skills and who are curious to understand complexity of the process, confident and humble to listen to opinions and feedback. And by regular interaction with MAPs through various means possible in the project context.

How do we ensure that MAPs can function properly?

- Providing extra inputs/resources to support and actively engaging maps: *Collaborate*
- Organizing annual workshops and field visits to demonstration sites: *Involve*
- Promoting transnational workshops that could produce diverse outcomes: *Involve*
- Cross-fertilization of experiences bringing together maps from different countries: *Consult*
- Promoting end-user interaction in field visits that helps different actors talk and communicate: *Involve*
- Providing timely information and access to relevant project results: *Inform*

Key Messages

- MAPs with their experience can promote communication and exploitation of results. Thus, engaging with end-users through MAPs is important from the beginning to create trust, ownership and better outreach and use of results from projects.
- MAP members are able to bring local, practical knowledge to supplement scientific knowledge, resulting in findings that are contextual, co-designed, gain end user support and generate promising results.

REFERENCES

- Woodhill J and van Vugt S. (2011) Guidebook for MSP Facilitation. Chapter 3, page 41. GIZ/CCPS.
- http://www.innovafrica.eu/

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