



AfricaRice

AFRICARICE'S PARTNERSHIP STRATEGY

1. INTRODUCTION

The growing importance of partnerships between public institutions, civil society, non-governmental organizations, farmer's organizations, donor agencies and private sector operatives has recently assumed a dominant position in the international development narrative, especially in agricultural research for development. The Africa Rice Center (AfricaRice) has been using partnerships for more than two decades as its *modus operandi* ("ability to partner at all levels") in the implementation of its rice research for development activities to deliver products that improve livelihoods. The Center's two most important strategic documents, the 2011-2020 Strategic Plan and the complementary 2014-2020 Center Development Plan, abundantly make reference to implementing the Center's rice research for development agenda to boost Africa's rice sector through a range of partnership mechanisms. The key partnership mechanisms cited are – i) the Global Rice Science Partnership (GRiSP), a CGIAR Research Program (CRP) in which a global rice research agenda is developed and implemented along thematic lines; ii) the thematic rice Task Forces, which aims to build a critical mass of rice scientists in Africa along priority thematic lines; iii) the rice hubs (good practice areas representing key sites across sub-Saharan Africa, where value chain actors are connected); and iv) connecting with major development partners to ensure that technologies, products and services work and are used at scale.

Six core partners are involved in GRiSP, with IRRI leading the CRP globally, AfricaRice taking the lead in Africa and CIAT being the GRiSP leader in Latin America. Our NARS partners are members of the rice Task Forces, while rice value chain actors (farmer groups, rice millers, input dealers, rice retail business entrepreneurs, civil society organizations) operate in the hubs. Innovation Platforms established in the rice hubs are serving to enhance the quality of interactions between value chain actors. AfricaRice will engage with scaling and development actors to catalyze the outscaling of the Center's technologies, products and services.

A Division of Strategic Partnerships was established in 2013 to formalize, consolidate and institutionalize AfricaRice's partnership model. This partnership strategy document outlines how the Center manages its partnerships and the basis for the Center's strategic engagement with its member states and its multitude of partners across the continent and beyond.

2. PARTNERSHIP PEDIGREE (EXPERIENCE, SUCCESSES, & LESSONS LEARNT)

Partnership Experience

AfricaRice is by its very nature a partnership institution, with a Council of Ministers as its supreme governance body and the most important partnership organ, serviced by a technical arm, the National Experts Committee (NEC). NEC is composed of Directors General of National Agricultural Research Institutes of member states, and provides a platform and forum for annual meetings with Center staff to discuss major rice research, development and policy issues related to the programs and activities of the center.

The Center has a tradition and commitment to regional and international collaboration in rice research for development going back to its founding 45 years ago. From the very beginning, for its research and development activities the Center privileged and placed emphasis on coordinated on-farm adaptive trials. Technologies and varieties introduced from other regions were tested and utilized to the maximum to establish working linkages among member countries of the Association. The Center's partnership credentials were strongly reinforced with the establishment of Task Forces in the early years bringing national scientists together to collaborate and exchange knowledge. The concept of an 'open center without walls' has been embraced, meaning that scientists from institutions worldwide are hosted by AfricaRice. The establishment of a Visiting Scientist Scheme in 1998 made it possible to post NARS scientists at any AfricaRice station for up to a year. "Partnerships through networks", one of eight projects in AfricaRice's 2005-2007 Medium Term Plan (MTP) and housed under the then Rice policy and Development Program, was the first time partnerships were elevated to the level of a Project.

AfricaRice through partnerships has over decades built a regional network of rice scientists in Africa and beyond. The Task Force mechanism and Hub network connect every rice-producing country in Africa. The AfricaRice initiative of "Research Days" and now "Science Week" has facilitated joint planning, implementation and evaluation of research and results delivered. The added value of this are harmonized, reduced duplication of efforts and resources, and maximizing of complementarity. The Africa Rice Congress provides a forum every four years to take stock of advances made in rice R&D across the continent. AfricaRice is a founding partner of the Global Rice Science Partnership (GRiSP) and responsible for GRiSP activities in Africa.

Partnership Successes

The CGIAR Consortium notes from perception surveys that many CGIAR Centers tout their ability to partner and list their current partnerships as an asset, while their partners have frequently held a different view. AfricaRice is an exception in this regard. The 2004 Center Commissioned External Review (CCER) on partnerships, the Center's first CCER on partnerships and acknowledged similarly as the first such CCER in the entire CGIAR, commended AfricaRice for a unique and exemplary partnership model. The fourth EPMR in 2000 congratulated the Center for its leading role in partnerships amongst the CGIAR Centers. AfricaRice's partnership model was further acclaimed by the CGIAR and this assessment was echoed by the 5th External

Program Management Review (EPMR) conducted in 2007, which acknowledged the success of the Center's highly diversified and privileged relationship with NARS partners.

AfricaRice has provided the NARS of member countries with substantial pass-through funds from donor funded projects for implementation of joint research and development activities in-country. It has distributed to the NARS large amounts of germplasm in the form of foundation, breeder and certified seed. It has also contributed to capacity development of NARS at all levels (degree training, training courses, workshops, on-the job and vocational training). These benefits have been extended to NARS in all countries where AfricaRice works, even those countries that are not members of the Association.

AfricaRice and its scientists have received many awards and accolades because of the leading role the Center plays in rice research and development in Sub-Saharan Africa and because of its successful partnership arrangements. This increased recognition of excellence is exemplified by the following awards:

1. The CGIAR King Baudouin Award received in 2000 for the development of high yielding upland rice varieties called NERICAs, based on the three perspectives of high quality science (interspecific hybridization techniques), impact and partnerships (participatory varietal selection).
2. The Government of Cote d'Ivoire conferred the insignia of National Order of Merit to four AfricaRice staff members
3. The Senegalese President's Grand Prize for Science and Technology received by the AfricaRice Sahel station in 2003 for the development of the ASI thresher-cleaner.
4. The World Food Prize received in 2004 for the development of upland NERICAs.
5. ROCARIZ Network (merged AfricaRice and CORAF/WECARD network) recognized as the best run network in the Sept 2004 evaluation report of UASID funded collaborative agricultural research networks in West and Central Africa.
6. Japan Koshihari Rice Prize received in 2006 for development of the upland NERICA varieties.
7. UN South-South collaboration Prize received from the United Nations in 2006 for Triangular South-South collaboration in the development of the NERICA varieties.
8. The 2010 CGIAR Young Promising Scientist award and the 2012 and 2015 Agropolis Foundation's Louis Malasis Promising Young Scientist presented to AfricaRice scientists.

Lessons learnt

The Center's decades of partnering have taught it many lessons, which include:

- Partnerships are still relevant today, possibly even more so than in the past and the enviable comparative advantage (and possibly competitive advantage) that AfricaRice has, making it best placed to coordinate and play a pivotal role in advancing rice research for development efforts across the continent, in close collaboration with partners;
- The need to proactively link with scaling partners from the public and private sector to disseminate our technologies and receive feedback, and use their M&E systems to be able to demonstrate outcomes and impact;

- The general sense that difficulties and problematic differences in the functioning of partnerships needed to be better understood in order to be successfully resolved;
- The need to use much more AfricaRice's strength as an Association of member states to influence policy making in the region;
- Building a critical mass of NARS scientific expertise and dividing responsibilities with partners through Task Forces or Networks is essential for the Center to effectively cover an expanded continental mandate;
- NARS will remain key partners and shareholders in AfricaRice's research and development, and capacity strengthening activities;
- Alliances with sister CG Centers and advanced research institutes will be extensively used to speed up strategic partnerships within AfricaRice;
- Understanding the linkages between effective partnership and mobilization of resources, and building on successful resource mobilization from the South;
- The need to maintain a comprehensive and exhaustive list of partners housed in a dedicated and readily available partnerships database;
- Partnerships being viewed by stakeholders as an important way to maximize the comparative advantage of the partners, which is especially relevant when resources for agricultural research are becoming scarce.

3. CATERGORIES OF PARTNERS

AfricaRice's research for development agenda will be implemented through partnerships with multiple actors and ranging from strategic upstream research and capacity development to actively linking with development partners for scaling out technologies to generate impact and outcomes following our theory of change. Our partners, who can be placed into broad functional categories based on the functions performed, with possible overlaps among categories, will have responsibility for providing complementarity, synergies, advocacy, context, increased relevance and collaboration according to their capacities and specificities.

The functional categories of AfricaRice partners are:

- **Research partners** are more directly involved in research, usually through collaborative agreements, and thus also accountable for certain outputs. They may be comprised of research institutes/organizations, universities, academic institutions, research companies and research think tanks.
- **Development partners** are partners that are more indirectly involved in the research (local adapters) and/or play a significant role in the dissemination and adoption process (disseminators). These are largely nongovernmental organizations, civil society organizations, development agencies, advocacy and activist groups, public media and lobbyists.
- **Other partners** may not be directly involved in developing, adapting, or disseminating research products, but can be involved in funding research because they are in need of information, knowledge on our outputs for various purposes (e.g., for the public good, influencing policy). This includes, for example, certain international or regional

associations or organizations, media, development funds, regional development banks, donors, and political organizations.

Two additional categories of partners need to be mentioned as they are unique and different from the partners cited above – i) farmers, who typically do not have formal partnerships with research institutions and are represented by farmer groups ii) the private sector (for-profit and not-for-profit), which can have multiple roles from funding research to joint collaboration and providing expertise in the implementation of research and development activities.

Taken together, development and other partners may also be referred to as **boundary partners**, that is, ones that are not directly accountable for delivering or using our outputs but should know about them and could adapt and adopt them using their own resources. AfricaRice has over 150 rice research, development, and other partners representing many institutional and societal sectors worldwide (Figure 1).

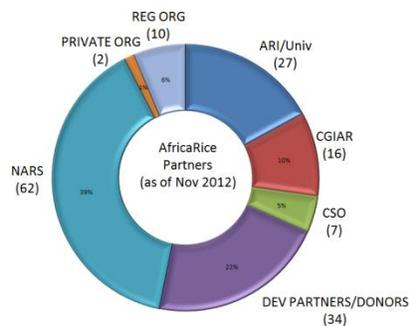


Fig. 1: Current rice research, development, and other partners of AfricaRice. Source: partner inventory as of November 2012.

AfricaRice has a range of diverse partners in the rice research and development landscape that it operates in. Details on these partners and the various interactions taking place at the national, sub-regional, regional and global levels are shown in Figure 2 below.

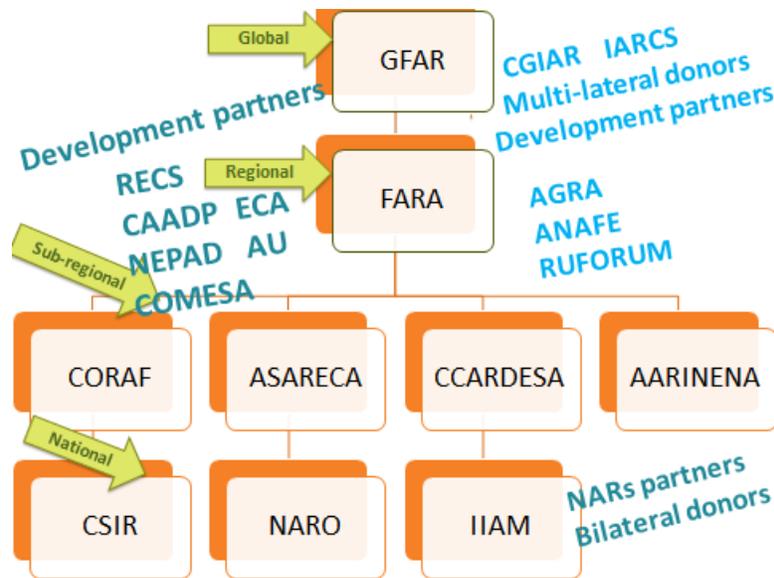


Fig 2: Range of diverse AfricaRice partners

National Agricultural Research and Extension Systems (NARS): The NARS have been the key partners of AfricaRice since the creation of the Center in 1970. They range from NARS of post-conflict countries such as Liberia and Sierra Leone, which require major assistance, to NARS with strong national rice R&D capabilities (e.g. Egypt). NARS are actively involved in research priority setting and implementation of R&D activities on the ground. AfricaRice works in particular with NARS through the Task Force mechanism and the rice sector development hub network.

NARS will remain the key entry points for the Center’s activities in Africa, creating important leverage and rebuilding rice R4D capacity at national and regional levels. AfricaRice will act as both a developer of and a broker for rice knowledge and will tap sources from within and outside the African continent for the benefit of the NARS. Knowledge exchange and collaboration between AfricaRice and the NARS will continue through the use of the Task Force mechanism, the rice Hub network and through AfricaRice’s active participation in the Global Rice Science Partnership (GRiSP) and other CGIAR Research Programs (CRPs) that are expected to open new windows of opportunity for both NARS and AfricaRice staff.

Emerging strong national research systems: The national research systems in the so-called “BRIC” countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China) are vast and they have made rapid advances in recent years. In Africa, Egypt has excellent rice R&D capacity that has resulted in the highest average rice yield in the world and this experience needs to be tapped in irrigated rice-based systems in sub-Saharan Africa. Hence, these countries are expected to increasingly play a more strategic role in international research, including in Africa.

Advanced Research Institutes (ARIs) and Universities in Developed Countries: Partners from this sector contribute to GRiSP as direct research partners. Their main role lies in conducting basic research that is beyond the capacities and comparative advantages of CGIAR institutions and other GRiSP partners. Hence, mobilizing some of these institutions in the framework of

GRiSP will be of great importance to deliver on anticipated science-based innovations in Africa. For AfricaRice, important support has been obtained over the years from Japan through collaboration with JIRCAS and from France through collaboration with the French research institutes, IRD and CIRAD.

Civil Society Organizations (CSOs): Civil society, including nongovernmental organizations, farmers' associations, and many others, is widely involved at the downstream end of rice production and value chains and are considered essential partners for outscaling. Civil Society also plays an important role in providing feedback to researchers and policymakers on setting the right research and investment priorities. AfricaRice has many active partnerships with CSOs, mainly as development partners. ROPPA (the Network of Farmers' and Agricultural Producers' Organizations of West Africa) has observer status at AfricaRice's Council of Ministers and National Expert Committee meetings. AfricaRice will seek to expand its partnerships with the CSO sector, including global, regional, national, and local NGOs, farmers' associations, and other groups representing the agricultural, social, and environmental sector in particular in and around the rice sector development hubs, to enable testing and diffusion of scalable rice technologies and to work on sustainable development of rice value chains.

The Private Sector: The private sector (referring to the range of medium sized companies to large international corporations) is making substantial investments in specific rice R&D areas such as gene discovery and molecular breeding for hybrid rice development, crop protection, new machinery, and rice processing/new products from rice. It is thus generating intellectual property that could be of advantage to the public sector and must be captured in signed contracts and other agreements. Moreover, private companies are developing and operating increasingly sophisticated delivery channels (mobile phone technology) through which it may also be possible to disseminate certain public-sector know-how better and faster. Hence of high priority for AfricaRice will be developing new formal research partnerships and contractual relationships with the private sector with the key objectives of rice value chain and enterprise development to potentially benefit the youth, women, smallholder farmers and poor consumers.

Until now, AfricaRice's partnerships with the private sector have almost exclusively been with small to medium-sized companies operating nationally or locally, collaborating on adapting and disseminating new technologies or information to farmers and others. The partnership arrangements expected to be implemented with the private sector will fall under the following categories: i) the Center carrying out contracted research for development activities with funding received from a private sector enterprise; ii) the Center jointly implementing R&D activities with a private sector entity, with each entity using its own resources or with funding provided by a third party; iii) where the private sector entity is using the Center's reputation for joint advocacy and endorsement purposes.

AfricaRice will seek new partnerships with the international private sector (e.g. in the area of gene discovery, rice breeding and mechanization, and large scale seed production). AfricaRice will also work on local delivery partnerships involving in particular unemployed youth and

women that capitalize on expertise and networks for delivering products and services effectively and efficiently to farmers. It is anticipated that AfricaRice will engage with numerous private companies and NGOs in and around the rice sector development hubs to facilitate out-scaling of technologies and knowledge through new agribusiness development involving the youth. This could involve providing farm services and knowledge—seeds and other inputs, farm machinery, customized services (crop establishment, harvesting), market information, storage, procurement, facilitation of finance, contract farming, and other commercial services. In all its engagement with the private sector, AfricaRice will be guided by its obligation to produce international public goods and will therefore exercise due diligence to balance that against the perspectives of the private sector to make profit.

CGIAR Centers: The continuing reform effort by the CGIAR Consortium and the Fund Council to harmonize and streamline donor investments, and ensure that CGIAR Centers collaborate to implement large multi-institutional R&D programs (CRPs), points to the CGIAR's recognition of the importance of partnerships. AfricaRice will partner with other sister CGIAR Centers where and when needed by participating in the second wave of CRPs. The Center's involvement in multiple CRPs will forcibly influence how and in which direction its partnerships will evolve as the universe of partners continues to grow and expand. The CGIAR Centers and areas currently of particular interest for partnering are:

- IRRI as the lead Center for GRiSP for partnering on global cross-cutting rice research and development issues. Lessons learnt from our partnership with IRRI thus far makes it imperative that collaborative arrangements with IRRI operate under the agreed principle that AfricaRice will be the lead agency for bilateral projects deployed in Africa that involve both centers;
- CIAT as a member center of GRiSP for partnering mainly on germplasm exchange with Latin America;
- IITA on development of profitable and sustainable rice-based farming systems, value chains and agri-business development for women and youth entrepreneurs;
- IFPRI on supply-demand modeling, adoption studies, nutrition, value chains, and for greater collaboration and better guidance on policy and sector analysis;
- IWMI on enhancing water use efficiency in rice-based systems;
- WorldFish on aquatic systems that involve rice and fish farming.

International and Regional Fora and Development Organizations: AfricaRice will strengthen its partnerships with all major regional, sub-regional fora and regional economic communities with a major interest in the development of the agricultural sector in Africa. This includes:

- Regional & sub-regional fora (FARA, CORAF/WECARD, ASARECA, CCARDESA) and West Africa-based sub-regional agricultural development organizations such as CILSS, Sahel Institute and AGRYHMET;
- Higher-level political bodies and development initiatives targeting food security and poverty, such as CAADP (NEPAD), and CARD;
- Regional economic communities such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Central African Economic Community CEEAC), the Monetary and Economic Union of West Africa (UEMOA). AfricaRice will seek active linkages with RECs

in regions where rice is considered a priority commodity (such as in West Africa) to assist with policy formulation and building of rice research and extension capacity;

- International and regional development funds and banks, including IFAD, the World Bank, ADB, AfDB, BOAD and IDAB. Many of these directly contribute as donors to GRiSP through the CGIAR Fund/Consortium mechanisms. AfricaRice may also provide technical expertise and support to large-scale bilateral or multilateral investments by these agencies in agricultural sector development in high-priority countries, such as in Ebola-affected countries;
- In recent years, under the general CAADP process, Japan has also taken on the leadership role for establishing the Coalition for African Rice Development (CARD) through JICA. It is important that AfricaRice explores how it can collaborate with and connect to the vast JICA network in Africa;
- International organizations and centers such as FAO (new Africa-wide PARDA initiative), CABI (ICT for knowledge dissemination) and ICRA (capacity development for innovation platforms).

4. PURPOSE AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Through its partnership arrangements, AfricaRice mainly aims to deliver on the objectives of its 2011-2020 Strategic Plan – i) **improving food security** through productivity enhancing research and development activities resulting in at least 10 Sub-Saharan African countries reaching self-sufficiency in rice while many more countries should reach near rice self-sufficiency; ii) **reducing rural and urban poverty** by reducing the yield gap, increasing grain quality and raising the yield potential resulting in the generation of more revenue for rice processors and traders; iii) **reducing under-nutrition** by improving the purchasing power from uptake of improved rice technologies to help undernourished people in Africa to reach caloric sufficiency and afford more balanced diets; iv) **sustainable management of natural resources** through enhanced uptake of ecological intensification and diversification options in low-input rainfed systems and v) **capacity development** efforts to create a new generation of African rice research and extension professionals, 30% of whom will be women.

The Center aims to further strengthen existing partnerships as well as develop new partnership mechanisms to reach out to actors involved in R&D in rice-based farming systems and value chains in Africa.

The Center's partnership strategy if successfully implemented will contribute in part to the following strategic objectives:

- Linking with research partners to leverage the best rice science worldwide;
- Strengthening NARIs capacities to build a regional network of rice scientists in Africa and beyond;
- Pro-actively linking with public and private sector partners to out-scale innovations and receive feedback to fuel the rice science agenda;
- Linking with policy makers to create an enabling environment for the rice sector to flourish;

- Raising awareness about AfricaRice’s work and mobilizing resources through our financial partners;
- Promoting effective partnerships for the delivery and adoption of technologies and innovations for the improvement of the African rice sector;
- Managing the Center’s growth by sharing with partners (depending on their capacities and comparative advantages) the portfolio of rice research for development activities for the continent.

5. PARTNER SELECTION GUIDELINES

Guided by the Center Development Plan, AfricaRice wants to team up with those partners that can truly help us achieve the objectives of our strategic plan. To do that, we will need to do a better job in selecting the partners in the first instance. AfricaRice will need to come to an agreement on joint objectives and to agree on how to monitor performance. Through due diligence, the past performance of potential partners will be investigated to ensure that there is keen interest and a demonstrable ability to undertake the activities that are envisaged in the partnership. AfricaRice aims for partnerships that work and in this regard is committed to critically reviewing the partnership landscape and adhering to the following principles in the process of partnering:

- Fostering trust and mutual respect, through long-term and transparent engagement processes and consistent and open lines of communication.
- Sharing a common agenda, with activities coordinated through a mutually reinforcing plan of action,
- Tapping into cutting-edge research skills and capabilities of world-class advanced research organizations.
- Engaging and conducting dialogues with stakeholders locally, nationally, and internationally. At the local level, learning alliances and innovation platforms involve the participation of stakeholders, some of whom may become project partners. At the national level, engaging in policy dialogues that involve a variety of stakeholders in the public and private sector. At the international level, actively engaging in dialogue platforms such as FARA and CAADP.
- Conducting shared measurements and analyses, and joint publications at all stages of the impact pathway.
- Providing backbone and coordination support to facilitate and maintain partnerships (e.g., host the secretariats of partnership arrangements, the various Africa-wide task forces and also organize major recurring events such as the Africa Rice Congress, Science Week).
- Fostering equal partnerships and striving toward minimum financial dependencies between partners so as not to skew power balances. Dialogue and joint activities will be used to seek commitments from clients and national partners to make complementary investments and policy reforms where it is investing.

- Clearly defining the roles of partners through such instruments as memoranda of understanding or of agreement, joint declarations, and joint activities such as workshops and dialogues.
- Contributing to partner capacity strengthening through degree training and complementary actions on knowledge exchange such as rice congresses, rice innovation fairs, and a web-based collaboration platform.

Some of the main factors that determine the success or effectiveness of partnerships are presented in Table 1 below:

Determinants of successful partnerships	Description
Trust and goodwill	Reliability and fulfilment of obligations; ability to convey sense of commitment to the relationship; quality, accuracy, timeliness, adequacy, credibility of information exchanged; understanding partners' motives, timeframes, objectives, styles, cultures, languages and stakeholders; respect and reciprocity; confidentiality and fidelity; partner is capable and will carry contractual obligations, takes initiatives for mutual benefit and does not take unfair advantage of other partner
Mutual Interest/Common purpose/Accountability	Agreement on common achievable goals, objectives, mission, vision, strategy, and agenda; compatible incentives, mutual commitment and interdependence; common set of values, ability to manage chance, risk and uncertainty
Effective communication/coordination	Exchange of shared conventions; setting realistic expectations and appropriate operating rules/norms <i>a priori</i> ; clarity of roles and responsibilities; managing expectations; clarifying M&E mechanisms; good communications (face to face, well established points of contact, quality of content, speed, frequency and duration, costs of information transfer, operational transparency); regular communication of results, milestones and deadlines
Joint decision making/shared power/inclusiveness	Jointly developed operating norms; democratic decision making processes; consensus; sense of ownership and representation; agreed codes of conduct; interdisciplinary teamwork/division of

	labor/allocation of responsibilities
History of partnership (Track record/legitimacy/reputation/credibility)	Past experience of successful collaboration; reputation of successful collaboration; organizational culture of partnering; history of long-term engagement and investment
Resources (Funding/competencies/skills/expertise/leadership /experience)	Understanding of resources, skills and capacities needed to meet objectives; adequate financial resource allocation across partners and functions; adequate quantity and quality of human resources; complementary expertise; leveraging core competencies; diversity of funding
Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning	Concrete tools, mechanisms and objective measures/indicators for monitoring, evaluation of performance and learning; transparency and accountability mechanisms; forum for reviewing progress; independent external review; mechanisms for forecasting and predictive capacities
Flexibility/conflict resolution	Flexibility and willingness to adapt partnership based on internal and external dynamics; built in risk management mechanisms; mechanism for dispute/conflict resolution; ability to compromise and exercise discretion
External environment	Competitors; social, political and economic climate; technological change ; complexity and uncertainty; topical or arising issues and values; direction setting and influencing contextual environment ; polices, legal system and infrastructure

Source: Mabiso, A. et al. 2013. Organizational partnerships for food policy research impact. IFPRI Discussion paper 01305

6. PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS

Partnership arrangements at AfricaRice are formalized through a i) Memorandum of Understanding/agreement, ii) Letter of Agreement, iii) Letter of intent or iv) Letter of understanding signed by the Director General or his/her designate. The text of the agreements is in either of the two working languages of the Center, English and French.

A standard agreement will specify details of the partners, assign responsibilities, provide a budget and time allocation to the partnership, include text on compliance with policy

guidelines, research ethics, intellectual property, and observance of laws, conflict resolution. A work plan on implementation to accompany an MOU is a compulsory requirement before an MOU is signed by the Director General.

7. PARTNERSHIP PERFORMANCE BENCHMARKS

To ensure that there are appropriate and required internal mechanisms and processes for tracking the success, impacts, outputs and outcomes of AfricaRice’s partnerships, the following key performance indicators will be reviewed as part of the Center’s system of monitoring and evaluation:

- i) Resources jointly mobilized;
- ii) Research and development processes, impacts, outputs and outcomes (number of joint publications, citations, patents, technologies and innovations issuing from partnership activities);
- iii) Level of achievement of targets, stated goals and objectives set out in the partnership;
- iv) Returns on investment (benefit/cost ratio) and the transaction costs involved;
- v) Capacitation of partners (e.g., number of partners trained, and number and frequency of backstopping missions);
- vi) Effectiveness of dissemination/sharing of information and communication
- vii) Sustainability of the partnership

8. STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

The Division of Strategic Partnerships will have the responsibility to lead the development, establishment, management, strengthening, monitoring and reporting on the Center’s partnerships. The following table provides details of the functions assigned to the different levels of staff in the operationalization of partnerships at AfricaRice:

Staff category/Office/Committee	Responsibility/Activity
Division of Strategic Partnerships (Support Unit)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lead the development, establishment, monitoring of performance and reporting on partnerships - Formalizing and structuring, consolidating, strengthening and institutionalizing AfricaRice’s partnership model - Evaluate the management of partnerships - Strengthen the capacity of Center staff in partnering - Review and update partnerships strategy, guidelines and better reposition AfricaRice’s partnership relationships on the African continent

	<p>for rice research and development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Advance the number, quality and effectiveness of AfricaRice’s partnerships for the delivery of technologies and innovations to improve the African rice sector - Renew partnerships as needed - Position AfricaRice and establish mechanisms for engaging with key sub-regional, regional and international agricultural research for development organizations - Maintain and update partnerships lists and databases - Report successes, lessons learnt and best practices in implementing partnerships and provide a basis for shared reflection on the Center’s partnership experience to address future arrangement
Different levels of staff, scientists & Units	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Initiation or forming a partnership (or a potential partner) - Mainstreaming of partnership arrangements and nurturing partnership culture - Maintain and share minutes of meetings and communications related to partnerships
Executive Management Committee (EMC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Final decision to formalize an agreement to partner
Marketing and Communications Unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maintains all agreements, MOUs, projects, Letters of Agreement, Letters of Intent (through OCS); DGO also maintains copies of MOUs - Maintain and continuously update the database of partners
Internal Audit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Oversight of compliance with agreements, regular partnership assessments
M & E Unit	<p>Monitoring, evaluation of partnerships and learning with a focus on sustaining relevance, advocacy and partners ability to deliver</p>

9. 2 YEAR ROLLING ACTION PLAN

Activity	Planned Actions	Responsibility	Period	Budget
Strategic Partnerships (policy related)				
1. Review of the draft FAO-AfricaRice MOU with rolling work plan	1. Agree on revised FAO-AfricaRice MOU with objectives of organizing an African Heads of State Rice Summit in 2016 and implementation of the PARDA Initiative.	1. Signature of MOU by AfricaRice DG during FAO Regional Conference in Cote d'Ivoire	4-8 April 2016	No travel costs as FAO Regional Conference is in Abidjan, CIV
	1b. Work with partners (NEPAD Agency, AUC, FAO and AfDB) to organize Rice Summit in 2016	1b. Designation of AfricaRice team by DG to work on organization of Rice Summit	Second quarter 2016	Cost of travel and accommodation for AfricaRice team
2. Revision and signing of AfricaRice-African Union Commission (AUC) Memorandum of Understanding with agreed work plan of activities	2. Working visit to Rural Economy and Agriculture Department of AUC to revise MOU; contribution by EMC and Legal Advisor to vetting of document before signature	DSP to lead process DG to lead mission to Addis for signing	Second quarter 2016	
	2b. Working with AUC on organization of a Rice Summit of African heads of State; support for the CAADP agenda delivering the Science Agenda for Africa and deliver on the Malabo declaration priorities the SROs	2b. Designation of AfricaRice team by DG to work on organization of Rice Summit	Second quarter 2016	Cost of travel and accommodation of AfricaRice delegation (DG & DSP) in Addis for 3-5 days
Strategic Partnerships				

<p>(Technical side)</p> <p>3. Implementation of MOU with Regional Economic Communities (ECOWAS) and transfer experience to ECCAS</p> <p>4. Draft MOU for partnership with Syngenta Foundation for Sustainable Agriculture (SFSA)</p> <p>5. Draft MOU for partnership with Grow Africa (Private sector interested in rice production in Africa)</p>	<p>3. Support to implementation of ECOWAP +10; Regional Rice Offensive</p> <p>3b. Visit to ECCAS to define partnership framework; prepare MOU</p> <p>MOU will cover the areas of collaboration of interest to SFSA (Seeds, mechanization, breeding)</p> <p>Work with Joost (Grow Africa) to prepare and exchange on draft MOU</p>	<p>DG leads delegation to ECOWAP +10; Ministerial Business Meeting on Regional Rice Offensive</p> <p>Work with Head of Agricultural Partnerships, SFSA and exchange drafts to produce accepted draft MOU;</p> <p>DG to sign document at AfricaRice headquarters</p> <p>Joost to travel to AfricaRice headquarters for working sessions on draft MOU</p>	<p>November 2015 – November 2016</p> <p>Second quarter 2016</p> <p>Third Quarter 2016</p>	<p>Cost of travel and accommodation of AfricaRice delegation (DG & DSP) in Dakar, miscellaneous Working missions to ECOWAS and ECCAS</p> <p>SFSA expected to travel to AfricaRice headquarters</p>
<p>6. Organize 30th Council of Ministers Meeting</p>	<p>Discuss with DG, NARO and agree on specific dates for COM in Uganda; Invitations to be sent out to COM members; preparation of agenda and documents</p>	<p>DSP, ADG to work on invitations and prepare documents; Work with DG, NARO, for venue and other logistics in Uganda</p>	<p>Arrangements to start 2-3 months before COM (April 2016)</p>	<p>Cost of travel to Uganda and accommodation of AfricaRice delegation; AfricaRice agrees to pick up cost of Interpreters and running of Secretariat for COM</p>

7. Organize 9 th meeting of National Experts Committee (NEC)	Consider holding in Nouakchott, Mauritania; Will involve consultations with DG, CNRADA and Minister of Agriculture, Mauritania	DSP will work with DG, CNRADA, on logistics, venue, etc.	Arrangements to start 1 month before NEC Meeting (May 2016)	Cost of NARS DG's invited to attend and including cost of AfricaRice Delegation
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