

Agroforestry for Poverty Reduction

-- Realizing the Potential --

**Strategic Plan
for
ICRAF East and Central Africa Programme
2000-2010**

International Centre for Research in Agroforestry (ICRAF)

23 November 2003

ICRAF-ECA Strategic Plan

A. Background

The East and Central Africa (ECA) region is among the poorest in the world with more than 60% of the population living below the poverty line. Rural households in the ECA region are characterized by

- Low food production from agricultural pursuits – not enough to meet needs.
- Low incomes and consequent increasing poverty levels.

These in turn are caused by several factors:

- Environment degradation – reduction in the quality of the natural resource base associated with increasing population densities.
- Poorly functioning markets which cause high marketing margins which results in low produce prices for farmers.
- Inadequate access to information and poor flows of information to, from, and among rural farmers.
- Poor physical and institutional infrastructure, which constrain transportation, storage, credit and other essential services for farmers
- Inappropriate government policies which increase tenure insecurity over land and act as disincentive for farmers to invest in improving their land.
- AIDS, malaria, and other health problems which destroy families and communities and reduce the amount of labour available for productive activities.
- Restrictive trade policies which limit the flow of products among countries in the region and between the region and others.

The ECA programme of ICRAF was initiated in 1987 as a regional agroforestry research network that aims at improving the livelihoods of smallholder farmers and other users of tree products, and that strengthens national programs through collaborative research, education and development programs. Since its inception, the program has developed a wide range of agroforestry technologies that are being used by thousands of farmers. Additionally, the program has developed methods and tools that can help characterize land use problems, recommend appropriate interventions, catalyse wide-scale dissemination and assess impact. The programme also supported capacity building and institutional development in agroforestry research among partner NARS. The education and training component is supported through the Africa network for Agroforestry Education (ANAFE), an ICRAF-implemented Africa-wide program. The African Highlands Initiative (AHI) component of the program that was initiated in mid 90's strengthened our R&D agenda for integrated natural resource management.

In the next decade, the regional program faces 2 challenges – an unfinished agenda and emerging threats. For instance, the number of poor is growing in both rural and urban settings. The region, just like the rest of the developing world, is facing difficulties in adjusting to the many global changes including globalization, structural adjustments and liberalization, among others. This is made worse by the slow economic growth (< 3% annually) of most countries in the region, heavy foreign debt, declining employment opportunities, large rural to urban migration and decreasing government revenues from the traditional export commodities. This situation is further worsened by the HIV/AIDS

pandemic that is ravaging in nearly all the countries in the region. This has led to noticeable loss of skilled manpower in several countries. In Rwanda, the genocide of 1994 has complicated the issue further.

Unlike before, we are at the threshold of scientific and technological revolution. The science and practice of agroforestry is advancing. Implicit in this are many worrisome challenges. Advances in agroforestry research and development hold promise for economic growth, new technologies and institutional advances. With their aid, we could address the twin problems of low agricultural productivity and environmental degradation that are major manifestations of rural poverty. And fortunately, most of the agroforestry technologies are pro-poor. But, so far, the technologies have not reached most of the poor. This brings important concerns of equity and social development. Additionally, although the majority of the poor live in rural areas, they are also rapidly growing in urban areas, and projections are that more than 50% of the populations in the region will be urbanized by 2020. These urban populations have also high dependency on tree products - e.g., wood for their building, cooking and heating needs.

As we move into the next decade, we ask, what can trees and tree-based systems do to alleviate or reverse poverty and environmental degradation? Specifically, what can agroforestry do to meet the increasing demand for tree products and ecosystem services? How can this be realized against what seemingly is conflicting background - meeting the needs of the rapidly growing populations (both rural and urban), conserving the natural resource base (including forests, biodiversity habitats and water catchments), and promoting sustainable development to reduce rural poverty?. How can the great potential of Agroforestry be captured by the many who need it, and do rapidly and in a sustainable manners. These are the challenges for which the ICRAF-ECA programme is set up, precisely to act as effective bridge between agriculture and the environment in ways that lift many out poverty.

After nearly a decade and a half, we are proud of our achievements. However, our resources are relatively small compared to the many other regional programs and organizations, of both research and development nature, operating in the same region. One of our goals is to forge stronger partnerships and synergy with them.

B. Agroforestry: capturing the potential

This strategic plan provides the road map in which ICRAF's operations in the ECA region could contribute to sustainable development through five key activities: a) the generation of a wide range of agroforestry options and productivity - generating global and regional public goods, b) enhancing farmers' linkages with markets - improving incomes and fighting poverty, c) improving delivery mechanisms - enhancing communication among and with clients and partners, d) protecting the environment and enhancing ecosystem services - ensuring sustainability and, e) building capacity and strengthening institutions - enhancing national and regional relevance, continuity and ownership.

Trees on farms and in the landscapes can make significant contribution to the interlinked problems of poverty, low agricultural productivity and deterioration of the environment. Over the past decade, a wide range of agroforestry options have been developed that are now finding application among farmers. The main ones include: a) integrated soil fertility management approaches that combine the use of fast growing legumes (trees, shrubs and cover crops) with inorganic fertilizers, particularly phosphorus in phosphorus-deficient

soils, b) high value timber, fruit and medicinal trees that can be integrated into smallholder production systems and, c) fodder trees and shrubs. These and other applications of trees on farms (including fuelwood for cooking and heating) provide subsistence needs and reduce vulnerability. They are also generating rural incomes and employment.

The growing demand for increased crops and tree products has, in many countries, prompted the intensification of small landholdings. Forest scarcity and ban on its logging in some countries such as Kenya, increased prices of timber relative to those for grain, expansion of farming into marginal lands, tree domestication and outgrower arrangements in some circumstances have stimulated extensive tree-growing and commercialization on small farms. Rapidly growing domestic demand for commodity wood - for urban settlements, industry, fuel and infrastructure - offers the largest potential market. The decline in profitability of coffee-based systems offers opportunity for diversification and niche markets for shade-grown coffee. The environmental and biodiversity benefits associated with such systems are little understood.

There is, indeed, increasing evidence that potential of agroforestry to reduce poverty is real and can be put to efficient use in Poverty Reduction Strategies of countries in the region. In forest-scarce countries, agroforestry has expanded greatly on small farms. In Kenya and Ethiopia, for example, farms account for most timber and pole production. In agroforestry systems, the cost of tree production may be lower due to joint production with crops and livestock. Trees may even have a positive effect on the incomes of associated crops, as in the case of windbreaks.

One of the biggest obstacles to sustainable development in ECA region is the HIV/AIDS crisis. HIV is not an overnight killer and it specially affects rural communities in debilitating ways. As rural patients succumb to the disease, this results in reduced labour inputs to agriculture and greater proportion of agricultural returns spent on medicines. Rural communities are further burdened as often urban patients return to rural areas as the disease takes hold. Tree cultivation offers reduced labour enterprises as well as scope for growing your own medicine since many AIDS related conditions are treatable with medicinal trees, including STDs and skin infections.

There are also the additional benefits of carbon sequestration. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), estimates of C accumulation rates range from 2 to 9 tonnes per hectare per year, depending on the climate and the nature of the agroforestry practice. Unfortunately the magnitude of the contribution of trees of farms to the national economic development and poverty reduction is usually unknown to macroeconomists and policy makers. This is due to poor statistics and valuation methods and, to some extent, a lack of effective advocacy, information and coordination.

C. Our Vision for 2010

Our vision is for the use of trees and tree-based technologies on farms and agricultural landscapes, coupled with improved policies and institutional innovations, to make significant contribution towards alleviating poverty and improving food security and environmental conservation. By 2010, we expect a significant proportion of the agricultural poor in the region to have been reached, and benefiting from the outputs of the programme: strengthened institutions, improved policies, and appropriate technologies.

This vision encompasses the greater developmental goals at the global level to which the programme will contribute. These includes, among others, the Millenium Development Goal of cutting by half the number of people of hungry and those in absolute poverty by 2015, New Partnership for Africa's Development and the Poverty Reduction Strategies of the various target countries

The key components of this goal involve strengthening the capacity of partner institutions to conduct agroforestry research and development and to engage farmers in developing and promoting agroforestry innovations. We will develop strong public-private linkages in our R&D agenda. We will facilitate the empowering of women, youths and other marginalized groups in society. Our program plays a leadership role to facilitate partners' progress in all these areas.

D. Our Mission

Our mission is to:

- To develop agroforestry interventions with partners and farmers that will intensify smallholder production and produce tree products and services for use and sale.
- To promote research-development linkages and pathways, facilitate dissemination and extension of agroforestry interventions, and ensure the smooth flow of feedback from farmers and other partners.
- To support capacity building and institutional development of national programmes in agroforestry and natural resource management principles and practices
- To collect and synthesize knowledge on agroforestry and other complementary disciplines, and facilitate their production and use by different stakeholders including research and development , private sector and policy makers

E. Our 10-year targets

It is expected that the ICRAF-ECA Programme will yield various products, which will impact on many different categories of people, both within the region and outside. Some of these products include:

- Strong knowledge base developed, on natural resource and poverty problems within the region, and with potential to solve these problems through agroforestry systems.
- Quantification of key ecosystem services of agroforestry trees developed.
- Domestication of targeted species undertaken, and quality germplasm production and management systems developed for priority agroforestry tree species.
- Facilitate the development of demand-driven germplasm distribution systems, with emphasis on devolving seed supply to the private sector.
- Policy options for expanding/strengthening agroforestry adoption developed.
- Various agroforestry technologies and interventions that contribute to productivity, profitability and sustainability of farming developed, tested, adapted, and disseminated.
- Enterprises and markets chains for agroforestry products and services developed.

- Better understanding and use of local information systems, which will help in reaching significant numbers of farmers with agroforestry information and interventions. Strategic alliances and partnership with research and development organisations (NGOs, national extension agencies, private sector, schools and farmer organisations). Promotion of farmer organizations and their role in dissemination.
- Institutionalization of agroforestry and enhanced capacity of national institutions in agroforestry research and development and in natural resource management, including negotiation skills for carbon-offsets trading from agroforestry systems.
- Supported the implementation of a regional network on agroforestry through a strengthened Trees-on-Farms Network of ASARECA.
- Tree-based options identified, tested and disseminated for key groups of beneficiaries, including women, the poor, and HIV/AIDS-affected groups.

F. The structure and organization of our R&D agenda

(i) Problem Domains

The program focuses its R&D activities on priority Problem Domains. Problem Domains are broad problem categories within the regions, with spatial definition and both biophysical and socio-economic dimensions. Five principal domains have been identified for ICRAF-ECA R&D activities. These are:

1. High Potential Highlands
2. Lake Victoria Basin and other major watersheds in the regions
3. Major water towers and watersheds of national and regional significance
4. Arid and semi-arid lands
5. Urban and Peri-Urban agriculture

Key problems in each domain are as follows:

- a) **High Potential Highlands** - low and declining land (soil and water) productivity, declining profitability of coffee-based systems, limited products and diversification of farm enterprises, and poor market access, and in some countries there is shortage of fuelwood, often resulting in the use of crop residues and livestock manure, exacerbating further the decline in soil fertility and productivity
- b) **Lake Victoria Basin** - degradation of land and water resources, poverty and health problems particularly high incidence of HIV/AIDS and malaria
- c) **Major water towers** - deforestation and conversion to agriculture, conflicts between wildlife and agriculture, conflicts over water among up and downstream users, excessive extraction of wood and fuelwood, inadequate policies and incentives for market-led production and conservation of natural resources.
- d) **Arid and semi-arid lands** - inadequate water and water harvesting techniques, extraction of wood and fuelwood enhancing degradation and desertification, and shortage of fodder
- e) **Urban and Peri-urban** - lack of policy support, poor tree germplasm for nurseries and lack of mechanisms among tree nursery operators to take advantage of competitive market situations.

In each of these biophysical problem domains, there are social and institutional-related problems such as the problems of declining labour and labour productivity caused by the

HIV/AIDS pandemic at both household and national level, inadequate land tenure and property rights that are disincentive to land users investing in tree planting and other sound land management practices, gender and equity imbalances that often marginalizes women and the youth in favour of the men, market failures often occasioned by inadequate information and intelligence on the market situation, among others.

Within each problem domain, ICRAF-ECA focuses its research to addressing identified problems and opportunities, for which integration of trees into farming systems provides solutions and improvements for farmers and the environment. This work is guided by the overall hypothesis that the integration of agroforestry options with institutional innovations that empower farmers, improve access to markets and enabling policy environment can, indeed, enhance the adoption and impact of trees to reduce poverty. Operations in each domain will involve the use of integrated approaches, including GIS mapping of selected biophysical and socioeconomic variables, and will be development- and impact-oriented.

(ii) Research and Development Themes

The Research and Development operation within any Problem Domain, will cover four thematic areas. These themes relate to the various services and products that trees contribute to the farming system, and define the thematic boundaries of the Programme. The themes also include processes for dissemination and scaling up impact, capacity building, and other crosscutting disciplines, such as policy research.

The **4 themes** and focal areas under each are as follows:

- **Analysis of problems, priorities and impacts:** *The goal of this theme is participatory diagnosis of land use problems, and the development and dissemination of appropriate technologies.* The focal areas of this theme include
 - (i) determining recommendation domains (both biophysical and socio-economic) of promising agroforestry technologies using geographical information systems,
 - (ii) increasing the number and diversity of agroforestry options available to smallholder farmers and improving their adaptations and adoption through the participatory research that incorporates feedback of farmers and end-users into research and development
 - (iii) assessing impacts (both *ex- and post-ante*) and identifying cost-effective and participatory processes for wide-scale dissemination
 - (iv) determining the potential of some of the tree species to become weeds and develop appropriate management practices for them
 - (v) improving delivery mechanisms - enhancing partnerships and communication with clients and partners

- **Market chains:** *The goal of this theme is to facilitate the development of agroforestry products, enterprises and markets.* The focal areas of this theme are:
 - (i) Improve market position - developing tools for analyzing the value chain in the market and help smallholder farmers establish a competitive position including improving production and marketing technology, product quality and reliability of supply.
 - (ii) Strengthen producer organizations - facilitate the development of strong local producer organizations for tree products that can make capital investments, assemble products in bulk and processing, organize marketing deals establish product quality controls.

- (iii) Promote strategic business partnerships – facilitate the formation of strategic business partnerships that benefit both private industry with reliable supply of products at competitive costs and local producers with high quality planting materials, technical assistance, quality control, investment resources for expansion and marketing and business expertise.
 - (iv) Strengthen business services - facilitate the provision of reliable and appropriate business advisory services to smallholder farmers that includes management services, business planning, organizational support, technical assistance for production, conservation and processing; market information, insurance, marketing assistance and financing.
 - (v) Facilitate the development of market information systems for agroforestry products that improves the function of markets and helps producers and buyers to link with each other.
- **Watersheds and Biodiversity.** *The goal of this theme is to enhance landscape level impact of agroforestry on water and biodiversity conservation - ensuring sustainability.* The focal areas of the theme are:
 - (i) Assess information gaps - determine information needs of natural resource management and rural poverty problems and priorities and channel them into policy and strategic planning processes at the local, national and regional levels
 - (ii) Improve small farmers' access to information - disseminate information that support the reform and implementation of forest, tree and land-tenure policies that enhance livelihood security and ability to benefit from agroforestry for vulnerable rural populations.
 - (iii) Develop methods and monitor impact - assess and develop tools for assessing the potential impact of agroforestry on plant and wildlife biodiversity, watershed functions and carbon sequestration
 - (iv) Strengthen institutions - enhance through the provision of information, training and developing strategies the capacity of national and regional institutions governing the management of water, land and tree resources.
 - **Working institutions:** *The goal of this theme is to strengthen the capacity of national and regional institutions engaged in agroforestry research, development and education.* The focal areas of this theme are:
 - (i) Institutionalize agroforestry and build capacity – establish critical mass of national and regional expertise with capacity to support multi-stakeholder diagnosis of problems and identification of agroforestry solutions.
 - (ii) Farmers of the Future– strengthen training of youth in schools, colleges and vocational training centres
 - (iii) Networking - strengthen linkages between institutions involved in agroforestry research, education and development at national and regional levels

The themes are conducted in an integrated manner within the problem domains, and in research sites. Most research activities and projects invariably involve two or more themes. A study on agroforestry for soil fertility replenishment, for example, could have elements of soil conservation, wood production and fodder production. Additionally, monitoring and impact assessment is built in each theme and activity as this makes the task participatory and easier to accomplish.

(iii) Research to Development Continuum

ICRAF-ECA's research is done from a strong systems perspective, and has a development orientation. The research also contributes to generation of global knowledge in agroforestry. Some different types of activities undertaken in the context of the research-development continuum are:

- *Characterisation of landuse and agroecosystems* (for problem identification and technology targeting). These are done through use of GIS and remote sensing tools, and also through general PRAs, and through focused formal and informal surveys.
- *Development of technologies and other agroforestry-based interventions*. This involves both on-station and on-farm research, with the latter being predominant. The on-farm research ranges from researcher-managed research, to farmer-designed and managed trials.
- *Pilot dissemination studies*. At each benchmark site, technologies that begin to show farmer interest and adoption potential will be scaled-up through a community-based pilot project. This involves the testing of technologies on whole community basis – and requires analysis of social, cultural and institutional factors influencing adoption and impact of technologies. The pilot studies will be specifically designed to test certain research and development hypothesis related to the dissemination of technologies. They will involve partnership between research and development organisations, and farmer groups. Successful pilot projects can evolve into full development project. Pilot projects require R&D collaboration.
- *Policy research and institutional innovations*. Policy research will be conducted at local, national, and regional level to address critical constraints and opportunities. The program will focus on strengthening existing institutions as well as developing new institutional arrangements. For example, two current initiatives in this area are facilitating the development of consortiums of partner organizations and assessing the appropriateness of the Landcare movement as a means of promoting farmer organizations in east and central Africa

Facilitation of development projects. Successful pilot projects are expected to provide outputs and lessons, which can be fed into full development projects. ICRAF-ECA can provide technical support to development projects, in the incorporation of agroforestry interventions. Development organisations (e.g. NGOs, Government Extension Departments) manage these development projects. ICRAF-ECA's role in such full-scale development projects is to provide facilitation. This can include assistance in the following areas:

- Information support
- Training of extension staff
- Germplasm management
- Products and market development strategies
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Impact assessment studies
- Policy analysis

RELMA in ICRAF

In January 2004, a new project on “ Improved Land Management for Sustainable Development ” was approved by Sida for a period of three years with the mandate to strengthen and influence development approaches at ICRAF in the three intervention areas: small-scale land management, capacity building, and information and documentation. The three areas are interlinked, and will be achieved in a holistic manner. Capacity building and Information & Documentation will support the activities in small-scale land management. These activities will be mainly linked to ICRAF’s themes, especially on Land and People. The project will fully integrate the current strengths of RELMA (Regional Land Management Unit of Sida) with those of ICRAF to drive increased effectiveness in achieving the project outcomes.

Over the last 25 years, RELMA has amassed a rich experience in tackling land management issues with a comparative advantage in catalyzing development, in diagnosing development problems, in outreach and information dissemination to development organizations, and in developing integrated interventions for smallholder problems.

The project will focus on the countries of East and Central Africa where RELMA has been actively engaged. These countries are predominantly the same as those engaged by ICRAF’s ECA, with the exception of Zambia. Activities will cover well beyond agroforestry interventions such as conservation agriculture and rainwater harvesting, which have strong interactions with food security and health in both ECA region and beyond.

ICRAF’s vision for the project is to strengthen its development approaches in ECA region, focusing particularly on the Lake Victoria Basin and the Nile River Basin, two agro-ecological regions high on the agenda of ICRAF’s ECA program. It envisions strengthening the linkages between research, development and education. The idea is to combine RELMA’s strength with ICRAF’s applied research into effective extension packages. This can only happen for more effective capacity building and scaling out. The project will be able to attract resources outside of Sida and develop towards becoming a regional and internationally recognised source of science and experience-based knowledge and information for sustainable land management.

G. Management of the regional program

(i) Within ICRAF

The ICRAF-ECA Programme operates within the overall framework of the ICRAF’s four thematic areas:

- Land and People
- Tree and Markets
- Environmental services
- Strengthening institutions

Elements of all these themes and their focal areas are undertaken within the ECA region, as part of the ICRAF-ECA Programme. ICRAF Programme scientists based at headquarters or

in the region, therefore, develop their research activities for the region within the context of both the region and centre-wide thematic focus.

(ii) Outposted Staff (Country Projects)

ICRAF-ECA has outposted scientists now in four countries and project locations (Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia and Rwanda). Tanzania will have an out-posted staff by 2004, depending on availability of funding and institutional arrangements in progress at present. In the past, these scientists were seen as outposted into particular NARS institutions within which they developed the research agenda for collaborative ICRAF-NARS AFRENA activities. This model still exists in some countries (e.g. Rwanda). In other countries, such as Kenya and Uganda, the new orientation is towards establishing a neutral ICRAF-ECA identity in respective countries.

Outposted scientists in ICRAF country locations would be able to develop collaborative research partnerships within the country. ICRAF-ECA scientists are also required to spend 20–40% of time engaged on regional crosscutting research. This ensures that each scientist has a regional responsibility beyond the particular site where one is based.

(iii) Partnerships with Regional Programmes, Networks, Public and Private Sector

The road to success is strategic partnership and stakeholder engagement. And this is what ICRAF-ECA's is built on. All ICRAF-ECA research is done through partnership thus putting research knowledge into practice. The program has forged strategic partnerships with a broad range of organisations (Fig. 1.0) that strengthen the program's research and dissemination activities.

Operating on the research–development continuum, the program is built on the premise that good solid science is essential for sustainable development. Towards this, the program links with ICRAF thematic Programs (1 to 4 described above) to provide the scientific underpinnings, tools and methods for wide-scale application of agroforestry at both regional and global levels. The thematic programs are effectively placed to do this through their linkages with advanced research institutes (ARIs), CGIAR-wide Challenge Programs and other regional programs of ICRAF.

On the flanks of the program are the sub-regional research organizations such as ASARECA with its national consortiums of research, education and training institutes are strongly involved. This linkages help research scientists (including Post Doctoral Fellows) and graduate students build their professional capacity and bring new talent and energy to the program.

On the upper half of Fig 1.0 shows the application of the science by farmers and end users through various agents that provide delivery mechanisms, rural development projects, schools, collective action groups (CAGs), NGOs and CBOs. Partnership with these institutions and governments help the regional program fulfil its goal to have a positive impact on mitigating food security, poverty and protecting the environment.

Arrows going up and down the sides of the figure represents the dynamic and interactive follow of information and feedback from the different partners on which continued development of all aspects of the program depends upon.

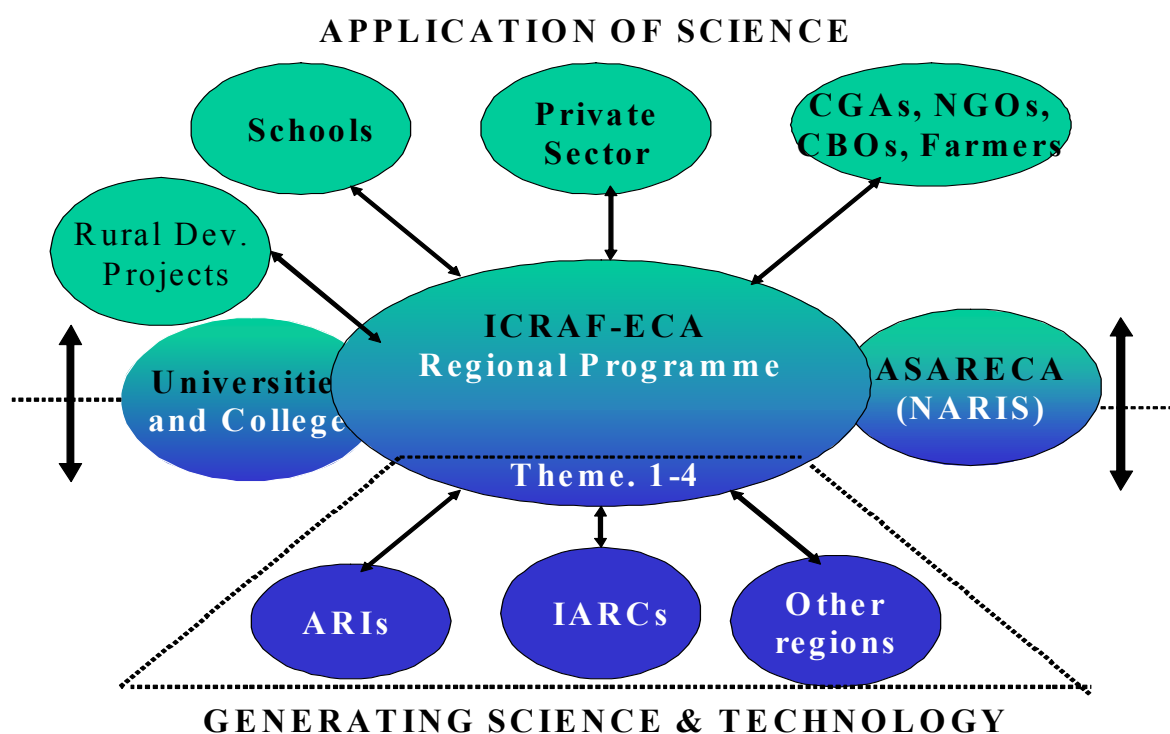


Figure 1.0: Schematic representation of ICRAF-ECA partnership outputs and linkages

ASARECA: Strong technical and management links will be established with ASARECA, to ensure that ICRAF-ECA research contributes to the ASARECA priorities for agroforestry research in the region. In this context, ICRAF-ECA will also provide both technical and management support to the new ASARECA Trees-on-Farms Network (TOFNet).

CGIAR Systemwide/Ecoregional Programme: ICRAF-ECA will be involved in collaborative research with the systemwide and ecoregional programmes such as the African Highlands Ecoregional Programme (AHI), the System wide Initiatives such as Soil and Water Systemwide Initiative and the UN’s Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) with headquarters in Addis Ababa and a regional office in Kigali, Rwanda, for the East and Central Africa region. Such collaborative arrangements will help strengthen the expertise mix and resource availability for the mission of ICRAF-ECA.

Other Partnerships: Partnerships will be established with other CGIAR centres operating in the region, and with NARS and NGO partners. Whenever necessary, ICRAF-ECA will establish links with commodity and NRM networks operating in the region.

Industry and the private sector. Partnerships will be established with the industry and private sector in rural and urban setting in order to promote value adding and marketing of agroforestry products. Direct transfer of technology can rise rapidly through encouraging

private investments. Marketing opportunities and channels will be explored at local, regional and international markets. Processes of sustainably empowering groups to collectively market agroforestry products and access inputs will be explored.

Rural Development Programs and Projects: The program will integrate its activities in rural development programs and projects planned and/or implemented by the governments and development agencies in the region. Examples are poverty reduction programs that include infrastructural development, health, water and sanitation. This linkage is essential in order to create synergy, enhance and amplify the contribution and impact of agroforestry.

Policy making institutions: The Program will foster relationship with national and regional policy-making institutions such as the East African Community, NEPAD and COMESA and assist them in developing policies that provide enabling environment for investment in agroforestry innovations.

H. Regional and Country Programs

ICRAF-ECA program currently operates with staff in Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia, Rwanda and Tanzania. The Tanzania program is jointly covered by ICRAF's Southern Africa Regional Program. Madagascar is covered by AHI while some limited activities are going on in Burundi through partnership arrangements. The coordination office is based at ICRAF headquarters in Nairobi. The decentralized implementation is in response to local context needs and institutions. Country programs are linked through an annual regional planning process. There is also a Regional Advisory Committee that guides the the regional program's research and development programs.

Recognizing that we cannot work everywhere due to limited resources, we shall seek to maintain field presence in selected key countries and regions within them. Senior staff in different countries and locations will be required to provide leadership for the 5 themes of the regional program.

I. Clients, Beneficiaries and Partners

The research will be tailored to a range of audiences. Farmers and extension services are the primary intended recipients of the outputs of the research and development outputs of the program. Other clients will be the:

- National Agricultural and Forestry Research Institutions
- Universities and Colleges
- Policy makers at national and community levels
- Non-Governmental Organisation and other development institutions
- The industry and the private sector

Important intermediary beneficiaries are, however, other scientists who may benefit from the development of research methodologies and novel approaches derived from the regional work. Publications and professional interactions will be important for influencing the processes and policies that affect adoption of agroforestry practices. This is a major pathway for information delivery as the basis for sustainable dissemination of agroforestry, thereby reaching the ultimate beneficiaries: farmers and end-users of tree products.

Partners: Partners in the implementation of this programme are:

- National and Regional Research Institutions
- Advanced Research and Training Institutions
- International Research Organization
- Non-Governmental and Community-based Organisations as well as collective action groups
- Donors and Investors
- Farmers, local communities and policy makers

J. ICRAF's Comparative Advantage in ECA Region

ICRAF has a strong comparative advantage for work in this region.

ICRAF's headquarters is based in Kenya, and therefore, there is a pool of experienced research and development scientists for agroforestry and NRM research available. Other specific areas of comparative advantage are:

- Strength in developing and implementing agroforestry education and training networks
- Disciplinary mix of expertise.
- Strength in agroforestry, tree-based interventions and tree species domestication and germplasm issues.
- Expertise and strength in soils research and NRM in the region.
- Network of major partners in tree-based technology and natural resource management.
- Strength in integration of tree systems with economics and policy issues.
- Strength in development and dissemination approaches, and strong network of development partners.
- Growing strength in enterprise and market development
- Good track record and recognition for working on food security, poverty alleviation and environmental enhancement, in a research–development framework.
- Strong partnership at both national and regional levels

K. Resource Mobilization strategy

Resource mobilization strategies will be enhanced and continuously updated, as this will determine the success of the regional program. Towards this objective, the program will continue to develop projects jointly with the thematic program leaders and scientists of ICRAF. Linkages with the traditional investors of the regional program will be strengthened and new and non-traditional investors will be sought after. This will include the industry, the private sector, Foundations, Trusts and philanthropists. Country specific bilateral projects will be developed to meet country-specific needs and access new resources. Also, funding from governments of the region will be sought after as an indication of their commitment and support for the program.

L. Conclusion

The process of developing the ICRAF-ECA strategy has been participatory. It involved a number of workshops and consultations in 1999, 2000 and 2002 within ICRAF's research and development programs and with our partners and stakeholders in the region.

As poverty levels in the region continue to rise, the challenges facing ICRAF-ECA program continue to increase. The program will continue looking for new innovations, opportunities and areas to tackle the problem. While maintaining focus on core mandate – research and development of agroforestry – we shall strengthen linkages with institutions with comparative advantage in key complementary areas that affects the impact of Agroforestry. This includes the HIV/AIDS crisis facing humanity.

By involving farmers and development partners through the research-development continuum, the program aims at enhancing the relevance of the products and process, thus reducing risks associated with the utilization and wide-scale dissemination of agroforestry technologies. It emphasizes enterprise orientation to agroforestry research and development through sustainable natural resources management.

The success of the regional program in delivering on its promise will, however, depend on its ability to fully operate as a demand-driven partnership program. In this regard, the program is continuously re-inventing itself to become fully professional, market oriented and accountable to its stakeholders. The regionalization process now covering 6 countries (Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi and Ethiopia) will be expanded to other countries in the region with identification of resources, relevant partners and networks in the region.