

Concept note

International workshop on “Agricultural Innovation Systems in Africa” (AISA), 29–31 May 2013, Nairobi, Kenya

Prepared by founding members of International Scientific and Organising Committee, 28 December 2012

In the wake of a series of recent international events and initiatives focusing on understanding and fostering innovation¹, there is a growing awareness and interest in applying and making sense of the Agricultural Innovation System (AIS) concept and perspective and what it offers for understanding and supporting innovation systems, processes and networks. This has particular relevance for African agriculture as it faces several challenges, such as increasing and intensifying food production in a sustainable way and nourishing its fast-growing (urban) population, adapting to the consequences of climate change, and finding its rightful place in an increasingly global and complex international scene.

Several key issues deserve urgent attention from researchers, practitioners and policymakers involved with African agriculture and innovation:

- What insights and lessons can be gained from recent experiences and initiatives to promote and support agricultural innovation involving smallholders throughout Africa?
- How are the AIS concepts and approaches being operationalised in Africa? With what successes and challenges? What added value do they bring compared to earlier or current approaches to agricultural research and development?
- What are some of the key implications and recommendations for the way forward in terms of policy, research and practice with regard to supporting agricultural innovation in Africa, and how can the recommendations be implemented concretely in the near future?

Several initiatives and programmes seeking to understand and strengthen multi-stakeholder innovation processes involving African smallholders are jointly organising a series of events to allow mutual learning and synergies. The EU-funded FP7 project JOLISAA (JOint Learning in Innovation Systems in African Agriculture) will bring findings and lessons learnt from case studies about diverse innovation experiences in Benin, Kenya and South Africa. The PROLINNOVA² network will share its experience in promoting local innovation and farmer-led participatory research, including community-managed funds to stimulate these processes. CCAFS³ will take advantage of the events to expand its network of partners throughout Africa and to address its social-learning agenda. The AusAID-funded project Food Systems Innovation for Food Security (FSIFS) will offer its lessons about how to better incorporate research into food security initiatives. Beside their own “internal” international meetings, these four initiatives will co-organise two interlinked international events to be held in May 2013: the East African Farmer Innovation Fair (EAFIF) and the Agricultural Innovation Systems in Africa (AISA) workshop. All events will be hosted by the Kenya Agricultural Research Institute (KARI) and CCAFS.

¹ For example: the 2006 Innovation Africa Symposium in Uganda; the ongoing Convergence of Sciences: Strengthening agricultural Innovation Systems (CoS-SIS) programme in Benin, Ghana and Mali; the 2008 World Bank Report on Agriculture; the 2009 IAASTD (International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development) report; the 2012 report of the Working Group on agricultural knowledge and innovation systems in the EU Standing Committee on Agricultural Research (SCAR); the 2012 World Bank *Agricultural Innovation Systems Sourcebook*; the 2012 Forum on Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) report on multi-stakeholder innovation experiences; and various activities underway for the International Year of Family Farming (IYFF) in 2014.

² PROLINNOVA: PROMoting Local INNOVation in ecologically oriented agriculture, a Global Partnership Programme of the Global Forum on Agricultural Research (GFAR) in 20 countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

³ CCAFS: CGIAR Collaborative Research Program on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security, operating currently in Eastern and West Africa and South Asia.

This concept note focuses on this second event by outlining what the proposed AISA workshop aims to achieve, how it links up with the EAFIF, the target audience and the proposed programme. This note is meant to motivate other programmes and institutions to join JOLISAA, PROLINNOVA, CCAFS, FSIFS and KARI in co-organising and co-sponsoring this workshop so that it becomes a key forum and milestone for all those involved in this thematic area across Africa.

The objectives of the AISA workshop include the following:

- To learn jointly about agricultural innovation processes and systems in Africa
- To identify policy implications and develop policy-dialogue strategies and messages
- To explore perspectives for collaborative action research on innovation in smallholder farming.

Table 1 outlines proposed dates and place, linked events, participants, duration, budget and sponsoring.

Table 1: Summary of main features of the AISA workshop

Item	Plan
Dates & Place	29–31 May 2013, Nairobi, Kenya (2.5 days)
Co-hosting organisations	Kenya Agricultural Research Institute (KARI) and CCAFS
Major linked event	East African Farmer Innovation Fair (28–29 May 2013)
No. & types of targeted participants	≈ 80 (depending on level of self and external sponsorship actually achieved) Researchers, development practitioners, policy- and decision-makers from Africa and beyond, cross-section of Kenyan stakeholders involved in agricultural innovation research, support and practice
Estimated budget	≈ USD 120,000 (for <u>80 pax</u>)
Confirmed and potential sources of funding	≈ USD 40,000 JOLISAA (confirmed), USD 15,000 CCAFS (confirmed + USD 15,000 for EAFIF), ≈ USD 65,000 other sponsors / self-sponsored (to be confirmed with AusAID, CTA, World Bank, FARA, WUR-CoS-SIS + individual institutions covering own costs)
Co-organisers	CCAFS, FARA, FSIFS–AusAID, JOLISAA, KARI, PROLINNOVA, World Bank, WUR-CoS-SIS (tbc)

Participants

The participants in the AISA workshop will include:

1. Representatives from each of the seven JOLISAA partner organisations
2. Northern- and African-based participants experienced in AIS and with long-term commitment in Africa
3. Kenyan representatives of state and non-state institutions and initiatives involved in agricultural research and development and innovation, including selected policymakers and farmer-innovators.

They will have diverse professional profiles and experiences, and will come from major stakeholder groups concerned with innovation in smallholder agriculture in Africa. The organisers of the AISA workshop will invite purposefully targeted persons involved in the following programmes and institutions, among others: JOLISAA (a consortium including CIRAD, WUR, ETC, ICRA, University of Pretoria, University of Abomey-Calavi and KARI), PROLINNOVA, CCAFS and its associated CGIAR members (such as Africa Rice, ILRI, CIP, ICRISAT, IFPRI, WorldFish and the ILAC initiative), AusAID/CSIRO (FSIFS), FARA/PAEPARD and its sub-regional fora (ASARECA, CCARDESA and CORAF), the World Bank, the Wageningen University and Research (WUR) CoS-SIS programme, Agropolis Foundation, CTA, the European Commission, GFAR, GFRAS/AFAAS, IFDC, EU-funded projects such as INSARD (Including Smallholders in Agricultural Research for Development) and SOLINSA (Support of Learning and Innovation Networks for Sustainable Agriculture), KIT, RUFORUM, the East African Farmer Federation and a selection of Kenyan organisations.

The actual number of participants will depend primarily on funding available from the co-sponsors, as well on the intrinsic interest in this topic among individuals and initiatives able and willing to cover their own costs to take part in this event. The limitation in number of participants will also allow intensive interaction of all, using learning- and output-oriented facilitation methods.

Proposed content of the AISA workshop

The focus of the AISA workshop will be to share and discuss experiences about understanding and strengthening multi-stakeholder innovation processes and the role of smallholders in innovation, and to identify and discuss priorities and recommendations for research, practice and policy. The workshop will be structured around five thematic sessions:

1. Opening and facilitated participation in the Eastern Africa Farmer Innovation Fair
2. Reflecting on conceptual issues / frameworks for assessing innovation experiences
 - Keynote paper + brief reflection papers by JOLISAA, CCAFS–PROLINNOVA, others ... (tbc)
 - Buzz-group discussions
3. Sharing main results and lessons about innovation processes/cases
 - Posters / marketplace
 - About 8–10 oral papers in two parallel thematic sessions
 - Facilitated discussions (group and plenary sessions)
4. Policy implications and policy-dialogue strategy and messages
 - Facilitated dialogue among representatives of major stakeholder groups (policymakers, donors, researchers, farmers-innovators and other innovation practitioners)
5. Identifying the way forward (World Café).

Oral presentations will be kept to a minimum and presentation of posters will be favoured, so as to allow for extensive and wide-ranging facilitated discussions and joint learning among participants.

Organising committees

An **International Scientific and Organising Committee** is being formed and will operate formally from early 2013 onwards, mostly through email and Skype communication and videoconferencing. Its tasks include: finalising the format and content of the workshop and the list of invited and sponsored participants; securing sponsorship from various sources; supporting preparation of workshop products in interaction with authors of keynotes, papers and posters; developing and editing the workshop proceedings; and ensuring coherence with the other events that will be held back-to-back with the AISA workshop.

The composition of the International Scientific and Organising (ISO) Committee is as follows:

- Adewale Adekunle, FARA
- Alan Duncan, ILRI People, Livestock & Environment theme
- Ann Waters-Bayer, PROLINNOVA International Support Team
- Bernard Triomphe, CIRAD, JOLISAA coordinator (Provisional Chair)
- Geoffrey Kamau, KARI, JOLISAA–Kenya team coordinator
- Joseph Mureithi, KARI Deputy Director
- Laurens Klerkx, WUR Knowledge, Technology & Innovation Group / Cos-SIS / SOLINSA
- Luis Rodriguez, FSIFS/AusAid
- Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), Kenya (tbc)
- Patti Kristjanson, CCAFS Theme Leader Linking Knowledge with Action
- Riikka Rajalahti, World Bank Senior Agricultural Specialist
- Teresiah Ng'ang'a, JOLISAA-Kenya / PROLINNOVA–Kenya coordinator
- Wiebke Foerch, CCAFS Science Officer

The ISO Committee will work in close interaction with a **Kenya-based organising committee**, in charge of making all necessary logistical arrangements (venue, accommodation, catering, transport between sites), ensuring effective linkages and synergies between the AISA and EAFIF events, and actually organising the latter. This committee presently includes the following individuals: Geoffrey Kamau (KARI), Teresiah Ng'ang'a (PROLINNOVA–Kenya/KARI), John Kimengu (University of Nairobi), Monica Mueni (MoA Kenya, tbc), Mainza Mugoya (Eastern Africa Farmers Federation), Rahab Njoroge (IIRR) and Wiebke Foerch (CCAFS).

AISA workshop products

The three main products of the AISA workshop will be:

1. Content to be shared instantaneously via electronic social media prior to and during the workshop
2. Self-contained and concise synthesis of lessons and recommendations for policy, research and practice

3. Electronic proceedings made available online on relevant websites within three months of the workshop and including the following:
 - A general introduction presenting the workshop and proceedings
 - Collection of edited papers, including keynote and other oral papers
 - Collection of posters about specific experiences
 - Syntheses of the various sessions held
 - General conclusion and way forward, based on the conclusions of the workshop
 - Policy statement with the key recommendations.

Estimated costs and budget for AISA workshop

According to preliminary estimates, the total estimated cost of the AISA workshop will be USD 120,000 for 80 participants. Table 2 outlines main budget items and estimated contributions from various sources.

Table 2: Estimated cost structure of AISA workshop for 80 participants (in k€)

Category	Total cost (in USD)	% of total	JOLISAA sponsored	CCAFS sponsored	Externally sponsored	Self- sponsored
<i>Number of participants</i>	---	---	40,000	15,000	40,000	25,000
<i>Travel</i>	66,000	55%				
<i>Accommodation & food</i>	30,000	25%				
<i>Workshop catering + conference package</i>	10,000	8%				
<i>Organisational expenses</i>	14,000	12%				
Sub-total	120,000	100%	40,000	15,000	40,000	25,000

NB: In-kind contributions for facilitation and other expenses not reflected in these figures.

Externally sponsored participants (mostly from within Africa) will benefit from funding made available by JOLISAA, CCAFS and other confirmed sponsors (see Table 1), under modalities still being negotiated.

Self-sponsored participants (mostly from Northern-based and other international or externally-funded institutions / programmes) will use funds available to them within their own institutions / programmes.

The externally sponsored and self-sponsored participants will pay a registration fee of USD 130 per person to contribute to cross-the-board expenses such as renting of workshop facilities, catering costs, documentation and proceedings, among others.

This budget and, in particular, the actual possibility for self- or external sponsorship of participants, needs to be confirmed by the **beginning of February 2013** at the latest. Beyond that date, number of participants will be adjusted according to actual funding and commitments secured.

Timeplan & deadlines

- Sept–Feb 2012: Contact & negotiations with potential sponsors and self-sponsored participants
- Nov 2012–Jan 2013: Confirming ISO Committee membership, finalising workshop structure & content, confirming budget commitments, issuing targeted call for inputs
- Jan–Mar 2013: Logistical & organisational arrangements; setting up event website
- Mar–May 2013: Preparing and editing posters / papers; preparing draft workshop proceedings
- August 2013: Publication of electronic workshop proceedings.

For further information related to this event, please contact

- **Bernard Triomphe**, CIRAD, JOLISAA Coordinator, bernard.triomphe@cirad.fr
- **Ann Waters-Bayer**, ETC Foundation / PROLINNOVA network, ann.waters-bayer@etcnl.nl
 - **Patti Kristjanson**, CCAFS, p.kristjanson@cqiir.org
 - **Geoffrey Kamau**, KARI, gkamau@kari.org

See also JOLISAA / PROLINNOVA / CCAFS / KARI websites:

www.jolisaa.net / www.prolinnova.net / <http://ccafs.cqiir.org> / www.kari.org