

Objectives of the project:

The overall objective of this project is to strengthen agricultural innovation partnerships and processes that support climate-relevant and sustainable transformation of agriculture systems in Rwanda. It will strengthen capacities for agricultural innovation in six districts, supporting individuals, organizations and policy level, to address outstanding challenges, expand and promote best practices in identified thematic areas.

**Background:**

According to Rwanda's Vision 2050, the country is keen to build on the successes of the last 20 years that have seen the economy rebound. In fact, Rwanda's economy depends heavily on agriculture for its income, employment opportunities, and improved people's livelihoods especially rural habitants. The value chain of different commodities has been facing challenges related to lack of sustainable strategies able to create an enabling environment for farmers to undertake farming as a business and thus improving incomes and building their resilience to climate and economic shocks.

This project builds on, and further develops, the approaches and lessons learnt from the EU-supported CDAIS (Capacity Development for Agricultural Innovation Systems) project (2015-2019), which strengthened capacities for agricultural innovation in three local partnerships (Cassava value chain in Ruhango District, Dairy value chain in Burera and Effectiveness use of Water in Nyagatare and Gatsibo Districts) and at policy level. The proposed Action will address outstanding challenges from the earlier project and will expand and promote best practices in new locations and thematic areas. The project will apply a multi-sector and interdisciplinary approach to improve capacities for climate-smart innovation in local innovation partnerships in six districts and at the national level. Thematically, the project will focus on three areas: diversification of livestock and crop systems; effective management of irrigated areas, and crop intensification and diversification in drought-prone areas.

The theory of change to achieve the objectives:

The expected impacts are Climate-relevant and sustainable transformation of agriculture systems to reduce poverty and contribute to food and nutrition security in Rwanda. This will be done in two ways: (i) addressing outstanding challenges in the previous innovation partnerships of the Rwanda-CDAIS project, where four districts will be assisted to refine and further assess and strengthen their capacity and support their innovation objectives, and; (ii) expanding and promoting the Tropical Agriculture Platform (TAP) approach – TAP Common Framework on Capacity Development for Agricultural Innovation Systems – in new thematic and geographic areas in Rutsiro and Bugesera districts.

It is expected that the capacities for climate-smart innovation among actors engaged in local innovation partnerships in six targeted districts will be improved. This means that (i) Innovation partnerships will be established, facilitated and strengthened to streamline climate-smart agriculture best practices (output 1), (ii) Technical capacity needs and functional knowledge gaps on gender-responsive climate-smart agriculture will be addressed (output 2) and (iii) Climate smart agricultural best practices will be adopted and endorsed by the policies for their scaling up (output 3). Analysis of food systems will be conducted by research and academia in the six innovation partnerships to guide a series of multi-disciplinary research projects to develop technologies, practices and business

processes. Technical gaps will be identified and capacities of innovation partnerships to strengthen value chains and improve targeted farming systems will be developed through tailor-made solution packages to address specific needs identified. The training may cover a wide range of possible topics, involving a range of service providers. Cross-cutting issues such as youth and women will be integrated throughout, and will even be specifically targeted on innovation partnerships.

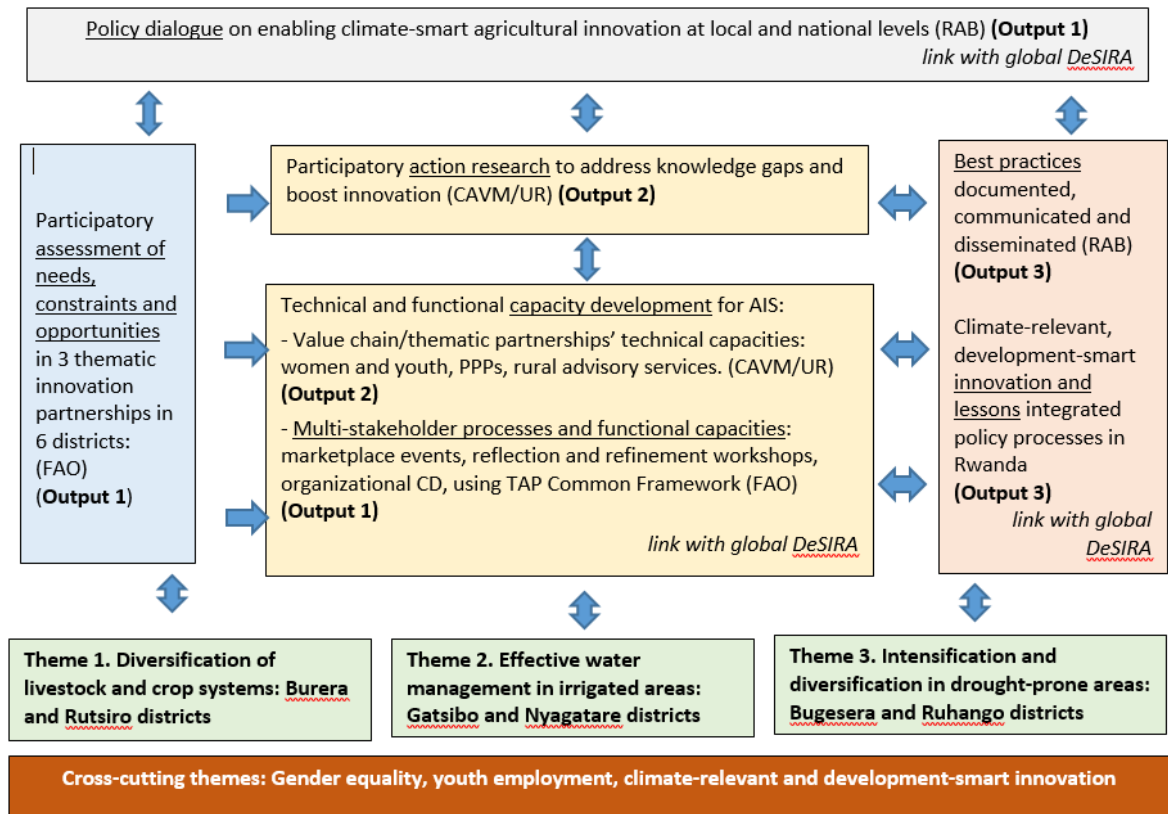
The project will work towards increasing access of households to agricultural advisory services and other services to strengthen capacities and access to specific information and supports. At local level, the project will work with a wide range of actors participating in each innovation partnership, including district-level officials, agricultural service providers, farmers and farmer organizations, NGOs and local enterprises and other private sector actors.

At national level partnerships and capacities will be improved through stakeholders' collaboration. The project will work with existing stakeholder platforms in Rwanda at both central level (e.g. Agriculture Sector Working Group, the Agriculture Sector-Wide Approach or national value chain platforms) and local level (e.g. the Joint Action Development Forum, and the Farmer Federation) to jointly develop and implement capacity development activities. A number of policy consultations and national dialogues will be organized to discuss policy issues that emanate from the project's implementation.

The project's strategy for successful implementation will be mainly guided by the Tropical Agriculture Platform (TAP)'s Common Framework, an approach and tool kit for developing capacities for agricultural innovation system.

The risks that may impede the achievement of the targeted outcomes are: (i) Country-level activities do not address priorities of national system adequately, (ii) Participatory processes in development of functional (system) capacities are long-term processes, and tangible results may emerge slowly, (iii) Weak facilitation capacity at national level on using TAP Common Framework tools and other participatory research approaches for climate-relevant innovation, (iv) Existing gaps between research, practice and policy are difficult or slow to change, (v) Changes in leadership and key staff in local and national governmental organizations and project partners, leading to loss of ownership and support for project and disruptions in policy participation and uptake.

Below is the graph that depict the impact pathway.



Main activities:

The main activities of the project are:

- ✓ Organize inception workshops in innovation partnerships at district level and a national inception workshop,
- ✓ Identify and coach facilitators for the establishment and facilitation of local innovation partnerships,
- ✓ Conduct a participatory stakeholder mapping, assessment of the organizational capacity needs on CSA, and preparation of action plans in six innovation partnerships,
- ✓ Develop capacities of local innovation partnership actors (NGOs, local government, and farmer organizations) on resource mobilization for climate-relevant projects,
- ✓ Support meetings of project steering committee, innovation partnerships, and of national validation workshops or events,
- ✓ Analysis of current food Systems and stakeholder mapping through action research,
- ✓ Facilitate research exchange program between Rwandan University and EU research institution in support of the project activities,
- ✓ Establish business partnerships to scale up innovations along the value chains,
- ✓ Conduct review of enabling environment for agricultural innovation and organize policy consultations at local and national levels,
- ✓ Integrate climate-relevant, development-smart innovation and lessons learned into policy processes in Rwanda,
- ✓ Develop and implement strategies for dissemination and scaling up project's best practices, and

- ✓ Implementation of communication and visibility plan. The aim under this activity is to increase the visibility of the project activities by partners, document and share success stories and lessons learnt, and facilitate information sharing among partners through IT based Hub (Including printed communication materials such as flyers, leadlets, and others).

Organization:

FAO will be responsible of the overall management and coordination of the project and implementation of activities under the 3 outputs.

A Rwandan University in cooperation with an European University will be coordinating the technical and research related activities under this project.

The Rwanda Agricultural and Animal Resources Development Board (RAB) will be in charge of documenting best practices and innovation and this entails the responsibilities *related to dissemination, informing policy and scale up of best practices and innovations* pertaining the project.

The European Research Institution will provide technical support in the implementation of project activities, especially those under output 2 related to the technical capacity needs and functional knowledge gaps on climate-smart agriculture.

Implementing organizations:

FAO



**Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations**

Partners of the project:

- ✓ Rwanda Agriculture Board and Animal Resources (RAB),
- ✓ A Rwandan University and a European University.

Other main stakeholders:

- ✓ Farmers' organisations and NGO of six districts: Burera, Rutsiro, Gatsibo, Nyagatare, Bugesera, and Ruhango.
- ✓ CGIAR Centres (to be confirmed)

REPUBLIC OF RWANDA



**Ministry of Agriculture and Animal
Resources (MINAGRI)**

Localisation:

Rwanda: In Burera, Rutsiro, Gatsibo, Nyagatare, Bugesera, and Ruhango Districts.

Funding:

EU	€ 2,000,000
Total budget	€ 2,000,000

Duration:

Four (4) Years; from 15 January 2021 to 15 January 2025.