The Sustainable Agricultural Intensification Research and Learning in Africa (SAIRLA) project is a five-year programme (2015 to 2020) funded by the UK Department of International Development. The project seeks to generate new evidence and design tools to enable governments, investors and other key actors to deliver more effective policies and investments in sustainable agricultural intensification (SAI) that strengthen the capacity of poorer farmers’, especially women and youth, to access and benefit from SAI. SAIRLA has commissioned research and will facilitate multi-scale learning to understand different ways of achieving SAI and its developmental implications. In Ethiopia four of the eight cross counties research projects are being implemented and these are:

- Research and Learning for Sustainable intensification of Smallholder Livestock Value Chains
- Bringing evidence to bear on negotiating ecosystem service and livelihood trade-offs in sustainable agricultural intensification
- Smallholder Risk Management Solutions (SRMS)
- What works where for which farmer: combining lean data and crowd-sourcing for household- specific targeting of agricultural advisory services

These learning platforms can be considered a learning alliance, that is, a series of linked platforms existing at different institutional levels (community, district, national regional, global), created with the aim of bringing together a range of stakeholders interested in innovation and the creation/ use of new knowledge in an area of common interest. This will enable learning to take place within a framework of local and national conditions and norms and will ensure that what is produced is relevant and appropriate and is essential to address the issue of scaling up.

National learning Alliances (NLA) are now being established in each of the target countries: Ethiopia, Tanzania, Ghana, Malawi, Burkina Faso and Zambia. The aim of each NLA is to co-generate, share and facilitate use of knowledge by SAIRLA research projects, decision makers (policy makers and investors) and other key stakeholders to develop equitable SAI in ways that enable women, youth and poorer smallholders to participate in and benefit from agricultural development. In Ethiopia the NLA participants will engage in multi-stakeholder social learning processes to stimulate cooperation and collective actions among various stakeholders for the common purpose of developing equitable SAI in Ethiopia. The four research projects will be an integral part of the NLA.

National Learning Alliances (NLA)

Complex problems such as how to deliver equitable sustainable agricultural intensification in Africa require innovative solutions. Finding such solutions requires diverse stakeholders to engage and learn together with the ultimate aim of developing the collective commitment and capacity to turn ideas and plans into action. This can be achieved through facilitating multi-stakeholder engagement and learning processes.

More information
http://www.sairla.nri.org/news
https://africa-rising.net/

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