The Africa RISING Program

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Africa Research In Sustainable Intensification for the Next Generation (Africa RISING)

One Program - four Projects

1) Mixed Cereal-Legume-Livestock systems in West Africa (Ghana and Mali), led by IITA

2) Mixed Cereal-Legume-Livestock systems in East/Southern Africa (Tanzania, Malawi, Zambia), led by IITA

3) Crop-Livestock systems in the Ethiopian Highlands, led by ILRI

4) M&E, led by IFPRI

>100 partner institutions
>250 individuals
Program data

**Duration:** 10 years
Oct. 2016 – Sept. 2021 (Phase 2)

**Funding from USAID BFS:** Africa RISING main program
WA: $3.2 million/year  
ESA: $3.4 million/year  
ET: $2.0 million/year  
M&E: $0.765 million/year

**USAID Country Mission and other USAID contributions for dissemination of technologies and research:**
Zambia: $3.0 million since 2013  
Tanzania: $6.1 million since 2014  
Malawi: $6.0 million since 2016  
Mali: $9.0 million (to ICRISAT) since 2014
Purpose

Provide pathways out of hunger and poverty for smallholder farm families through **sustainably intensified farming systems**

Approach

a) Action research to
   • advance the production frontier
   • improve nutrition and food safety
   • transform key production systems

b) Facilitate dissemination of SI technologies within and beyond Africa RISING action research sites through development partnerships
Program Framework Phase 1

4 Research outputs:

1. **Situation Analysis:** to ensure technological interventions are responsive to farmers’ priority constraints: development domains, site selection, R4D platforms, baseline surveys, typologies, inventories of innovations, synthesis and co-learning

2. **Integrated Systems Improvement:** in terms of productivity, income, NRM: participatory evaluation and adaptation of combinations of technologies and interventions, modeling and decision support tools, ex-ante technology assessment, trade-off analyses; addressing new emerging research issues

3. **Scaling and Delivery:** assessment of scalability of integrated innovations, identification of scaling approaches, pilot testing/validating scaling approaches

4. **Monitoring and Evaluation:** development of M&E indicator collection, management and sharing platform, assessment of outcomes of SI interventions, adoption and impact studies
From Research to Development

Africa RISING research to impact pathways

Africa RISING phase I
- Diagnostic studies
- Partnership building
- Action research
- Multi-stakeholder platforms
- Evaluating potential outcomes
- Initial/spontaneous scaling

2012

Research outputs generated

Uptake and adaptation—pilot scale (initial outcome)

Africa RISING phase II
- Adaptive/backstopping research
- Scaling with development partners
- Wider dissemination

2022

Ultimate impacts on poverty and hunger

Early benefits (economic, social, environmental)

Dissemination and adoption (outcome)
West Africa Intervention Sites

Mali

9 communities in 2 districts in Sikasso Region

25 communities in 2 districts each in Northern, Upper East and Upper West regions
**ESA Intervention Sites**

**Tanzania:** 110 villages in 10 districts in Morogoro, Manyara, Dodoma, Mbeya, Songwe, and Iringa regions

**Malawi:** 24 EPAs in 6 districts in Central and Southern regions

**Zambia:** 6 districts in Eastern, Southern, Central and Western provinces
Ethiopian Highlands Intervention Sites

8 kebeles in 4 woredas/districts of Amhara, Oromia, SNNP and Tigray regions
Achievements

1. Situation analysis

- Baseline surveys in all countries, except Zambia, carried out
- Additional smaller, more targeted surveys and community analyses for identification of research entry points carried out
- Farm household typologies established
- Farming systems characterized and re-designed through modeling
- Willingness to pay studies for different technological innovations implemented
- R4D platforms at different levels set up in all countries
- Gender studies implemented
2. Integrated systems improvement: *genetic, ecological and socio-economic intensification*

Technologies validated and promoted for:

- **narrowing yield, food and feed gaps** - introduction of improved crop and fodder types/varieties and fertilizer recommendations, seed production, increasing crop diversity, food processing, improved livestock feeds and husbandry
- **enhancing soil fertility** - better crop rotations and spatial arrangements of crops, soil erosion control measures, appropriate livestock stocking densities, CA
- **increasing resilience** to extreme weather and climate - introduction of drought and heat tolerant crops and varieties, short-duration varieties, soil water conservation and harvesting techniques, small-scale irrigation systems
- **reduction of post-harvest losses** (food, fodder) - introduction improved storage facilities and handling practices
- **reduction of drudgery and labour** - introduction of new planting tools for CA, post-harvest and fodder processing machinery
- **increasing food safety** - mycotoxin management
- **income generation** - introduction of high value crops, higher yielding varieties, integration of small livestock
3. Scaling and Delivery

Different approaches piloted:
• Mother - Baby trials
• Community based technology parks
• Field days
• R4D Platforms
• Partnerships with development projects, private companies and public institutions
• Video shows
• Group trainings for farmers and extensionists
4. M&E

• Site stratification and selection (RO1)
• Development domains delineation (RO1)
• SI indicator framework for ex-ante assessment of impact of interventions in 5 SI domains and at different scales
• PMMT to report and monitor FtF and custom indicators, including training
• Data management and sharing through CKAN
• Africa RISING Baseline Evaluation household and community Surveys (ARBES) in all countries but Zambia (RO1)
• ARBES survey and data reports (RO1)
• ARBES-based household typologies for five countries
• Draft tool to track beneficiaries
• Various studies (targeting; production/dietary diversity; effects of different legume and fertilizer practices; determinants of technology “adoption”, willingness to pay for improved technologies; relationship between land cover change and poverty)
5. Communications and knowledge management

- Strong internal collaboration, communication and learning between the 3 projects
- Good visibility of the projects and the program
- Highly effective knowledge management and sharing framework established and in use
- Good understanding of Africa RISING by the donor (USAID) and their networks – produced specific materials targeted directly at the donors needs
- Range of publications targeted at various audiences and in different languages
- Establishment and use of the ‘Africa RISING brand’
- Comms team involved in all strategic decision making for the program at PCT and Project Steering Committee levels, offering different perspective to issues
- Strong communication backstopping to important and sensitive management functions
6. Capacity Development

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<tr>
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<th>MSc and PhD</th>
<th>farmers, extension workers, partners</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>11,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESA</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>15,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>WA</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>5,000</td>
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External Review Recommendations

USAID commissioned, September 2015 to March 2016, years 4-5 of the program
Primary recommendation: Africa RISING should be extended into a phase 2

Structure and focus
• continue in same sites, phase out current beneficiaries and replace by new ones to maximize exposure to new technologies
• carry out early adoption studies to inform scaling potential of technologies
• ensure that farmers have access to validated technologies at market costs
• include a homestead farming systems component to ensure greater women involvement
• better gender disaggregated planning and targeted women support
• more involvement of youth, esp. young women
• enhance the program’s gender capacity

• more nutrition and livestock activities
• ensure nutrition efforts harmonize with national nutrition programs, capacitate and include government nutrition workers
• measure the nutrition performance
Research

• continue along the Research to Impact continuum and complete unresolved issues from phase 1 research
• more post-harvest and livestock research, less on crop varieties and plant population management
• consider divestment of research in what is not part of a systems project, e.g., MLN, aflatoxin
• refrain from working on crops that are not government priority, e.g., faba beans, barley, potato in ET
• investigate the incidences and consequences of production variability in general and drought in particular
Partnerships

• be aware and connected to the development actors for scaling
• strategies to be developed for private sector engagement
• engage specialized organizations to assess different scaling approaches
• Provide advice on scientific direction, science quality and feasibility of proposed approaches for successful implementation
• Provide advice on strategic partnerships needed to implement
• Make recommendations on opportunities for better performance of the program
• Provide advice on strategic elements such as gender mainstreaming, innovation, capacity development, essential for success
• Review the global program performance and the relevance of its outcomes
• Conduct internal reviews of the three regional projects (plus the M&E activities) in preparation of donor-commissioned external program reviews
• Advocate and lobby for Africa RISING with other donor agencies to attract further funding
• Advise the Communities of Practice within own area of specialization
Phase I vs. Phase II
Africa RISING research to impact pathways

**Africa RISING phase I**
- Diagnostic studies
- Partnership building
- Action research
- Multi-stakeholder platforms
- Evaluating potential outcomes
- Initial/spontaneous scaling

**Africa RISING phase II**
- Adaptive/backstopping research
- Scaling with development partners
- Wider dissemination

- Early benefits (economic, social, environmental)
- Ultimate impacts on poverty and hunger
- Dissemination and adoption (outcome)
- Uptake and adaptation—pilot scale initial outcome

Research outputs generated

2012

2022
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<th>Phase I approach</th>
<th>Phase II approach</th>
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| Research focus           | ● System diagnosis  
● Typology identification  
● Identification of intensification trajectories  
● On-farm testing/ validation of SI options                                                                                                           | ● Research to backstop scaling initiatives.  
● Generic research on systems evolution/ intensification  
● Application of typologies—analysis, targeting                                                                                                      |
| Monitoring and evaluation| ● Monitoring and evaluation undertaken together and centralized within IFPRI  
● FTF indicators                                                                                                                                            | ● Monitoring decentralized to regional teams, while evaluation continues to be undertaken centrally by IFPRI  
● Strengthen custom indicators in phase II, (e.g. publications)                                                                                      |
| Research management      | ● Meetings among regional team only during learning events, and regional review and planning meetings                                                                                                     | ● More regular (a minimum of two) meetings among chief scientists to harmonize activities and cross learning                                                                                                    |
| Partnerships             | ● Involvement of more biophysical research partners                                                                                                                                                           | ● Involvement of more development partners                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Capacity building        | ● No clearly defined capacity building strategies                                                                                                                                                            | ● Harmonization of capacity building strategies                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Regional harmonization   | ● Ad-hoc cross-learning and establishment of common approaches  
● Program Coordination Team (PCT) provides overall technical and managerial advice and coordination across the three projects                             | ● Program-level development to ensure opportunities for cross-scaling and wider dissemination of research outputs  
● PCT to ensure maximum harmonization in approaches and high degree of cross-learning.  
● Application of program approaches and principles in all projects and countries                                                                          |
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<td>Multi-stakeholder platforms</td>
<td>● Understanding and establishment of R4D and innovation platforms</td>
<td>● More broad-based R in D approach to multi-stakeholder platforms</td>
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<td>Data management</td>
<td>● Developing data sharing tools</td>
<td>● Partners comply with data management policy and make use of data sharing opportunities</td>
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<td>● All data fully accessible</td>
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<td>Scaling</td>
<td>● Focus more on action research, less emphasis on deliberate scaling</td>
<td>● Proactive engagement with development partners and public institutions</td>
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<td>● Different approaches tested and documented</td>
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<td>Communications and knowledge sharing</td>
<td>● Multi-media products with internet, images, video, reports, blog posts</td>
<td>● More beneficiary-targeted communication in countries to support technology adoption and scaling</td>
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<td>● Process and event facilitation and documentation</td>
<td>● Communicating ‘the’ science</td>
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<td>● Much ‘grey literature’</td>
<td>● Greater media outreach</td>
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<td>● Communicating about the science</td>
<td>● More sophisticated web presence</td>
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<td>● Intra-program and project ‘internal’ communications and documentation</td>
<td>● Gender-differentiated communication products to address differing abilities and interests</td>
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<td>● Annual learning events and peer visits</td>
<td>● Regular cross-regional and cross-country exchange visits by researchers</td>
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<td>● Program-wide communities of practice around specific topics</td>
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