

The Need

Rural organizations that support farmers are numerous and often strong; they form a collective rural infrastructure that could contribute to a grassroots research capacity. However, *farmers and rural organizations rarely have the opportunity to shape research agendas.*

Participatory methods have been effective at a small scale in producing rigorous and relevant research *but limited in achieving impact at scale.*

R+D systems *are limited in their* ability to produce research outputs that can be matched to a wide variety of social and biophysical contexts.

Many problems faced by smallholder farmers such as soil health and pests, diseases, and weeds, *are complex and require cross sector AEI focused collaboration.*

The Diagnosis

Stronger connections that link social, knowledge, technological, methodological, and political capital will be more effective in solving complex problems faced by smallholder farmers than the current R+D approaches.

CCRP Response

Farmer Research Networks : "Democratizing innovation through broader participation" (CCRP ToC)

A coherent set of principles for the development of FRNs, with integrated monitoring, evaluation and planning (IMEP) and an FRN working group

Grant-making: At least one FRN in each of the 4 CCRP regions, with a process and method well studied and documented

Capacity building on AEI, METI, participatory methods, managing power relations, leadership, governance and other relevant approaches and methodologies

High quality research addressing agriculture's technical and social problems and opportunities, conducted with the authentic collaborative engagement of farmers throughout the whole research process, and with the collaboration of farmer groups, NGOs, research institutions and other stakeholders.

Cross-sectoral collaborations and convenings, with emphasis on farmer participation

Pathway to Change

Increased use of contextually appropriate options by farmers

Farmers can derive and understand principles and learning which would not be possible by working alone or receiving extension

Large, networked datasets are produced and analyzed, revealing useful patterns of performance and providing a better understanding of principles and options by context.

Researchers are benefiting from contextualized farmer knowledge

More farmers and organizations are participating in multiple parts of the research process (prioritization and scoping, study design, implementation, participatory data collection, analysis and interpretation, and sharing and scaling).

Alliances and collaborations are built with like-minded organizations (e.g., funders, national and international NGOs) to set the ground for sharing learning, innovation and scaling.

Contextualized outcomes that provide evidence for potential at scale

Smallholders

Improved AEI performance for smallholder farmers.

Institutional

Stronger, more vibrant, rural organizations

Strengthened R+D sector (more relevant, sustainable and accountable)

Global

More and better AEI evidence

Other actors inspired by methodology and principles and FRNs spread.