

COLLABORATIVE CROP RESEARCH PROGRAM

THE MCKNIGHT FOUNDATION

REPORT OF THE 1ST EAST AND SOUTHERN AFRICA (ESAf) HUB CONVENING



4TH – 5TH OCTOBER 2019
UFULU GARDENS CONFERENCE CENTRE, LILONGWE, MALAWI

This report documents the **Hub Meeting** of Eastern and Southern Africa Community of Practice (ESAf-CoP) held on 4th and 5th October 2019 at Ufulu Gardens Conference Centre, Lilongwe, Malawi. Essentially, the deliberations from all the input presentations, parallel breakout sessions, buzz groups and plenary sessions are reported as they transpired. It is not a synthesis report but a verbatim documentation of the proceedings and outcomes without interpretation. The meeting was facilitated by *Prudence Kajjage* (ESAf RT) and documented by *Joel Ochieng* (Emerge Centre for Innovations–Africa; ECI-Africa).



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LIST OF ACRONYMS

| | |
|------|---|
| AEI | Agro-Ecological Intensification |
| CCRP | Collaborative Crop Research Program |
| CoP | Community of Practice |
| EAF | Eastern Africa |
| ESAF | Eastern and Southern Africa |
| FAO | Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations |
| FRN | Farmer Research Network |
| NGOs | Non-Governmental Organizations |
| ODK | Open Data Kit |
| RMS | Research Methods Support |
| SAf | Southern Africa |

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The McKnight Foundation supports agricultural research and development in Africa through the collaborative crop research program (CCRP). The CCRP works in target countries through a community of practice (CoP) approach. From 2019, two regional CoPs (Eastern Africa and Southern Africa) have been merged to form the Eastern and Southern Africa (ESAf) CoP covering four countries – Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania and Malawi. Agroecology (AE) and Agroecological Intensification (AEI) in farming systems are the key themes underpinning the ESAf CoP. The CoP also aims at strengthening and supporting farmer-led research networks in which smallholders led joint experimentation for agroecological intensification (AEI) building on local knowledge and innovation. While the CoP already provides opportunity for different projects in the region to collaborate in different ways during implementation, another collaborative effort, the Hubs, provide an additional mechanism for socializing and domesticating AEI in local contexts (within and across countries) through engagement of stakeholders (as may be needed) outside the boundaries of CCRP funded projects. Three Hubs exist currently (in Kenya, Malawi and Tanzania), and efforts are underway to form a Hub in Uganda. This first Convening Meeting of the ESAf Hubs was held in Lilongwe, Malawi on 4th and 5th October 2019, with the following objectives: (1) to explore and energize the founding idea of developing Hubs as vehicles for AE transformation and intensification; (2) to share different visions with the aim of cross-learning and alignment; (3) to share experiences and lessons thus far; and (4) to identify opportunities for collaboration with other hubs and other stakeholders. The meeting followed immediately after the first meeting of the new (ESAf) CoP, held from 30th September to 3rd October 2019 at the same venue. Participants of the Hub meeting comprised: Team members from the three Hubs (Kenya, Malawi and Tanzania) and Uganda, CCRP ESAf regional team, the CCRP Leadership Team, representative of Farmer Research Network (FRN) projects in the region, and experts from other key institutions. The main emerging issues from the meeting were:

Views on what the Hub is: An assessment at the start of the meeting showed diverse perceptions and interpretations on what the Hubs were. Some of the views included: A centre that brings together individuals and networks to share on issues based on thematic areas; A platform, physical or virtual, that gathers and shares information and responds to emerging issues, supports resource mobilization, plays an oversight role; Is a wheel and spoke system – projects roll and rotate but held in the centre by spokes – supporting spokes/individuals to hold together; Dynamic network of NGOs, Farmers, Researchers that exchange information and learn from each other; Coordinating centre that brings together individuals/organizations with common agenda, practices, challenges, and who share and network; Community working together both physically and virtually at national, regional and beyond CCRP, providing direction; Central place, meeting holding, knowledge distributed, shared information house discussing experiences; Coordinating tower/centre that pursues agroecology agenda and makes members interested in the agenda; Is a decentralized network with bicycle wheel kind of outlook – where the Hub is the rim, but needs tension to retain shape; Centre through which services in agroecology are brought together – multidisciplinary players (social science, computing etc.) to consolidate research and findings for agroecology. In the context of role in AEI, participants viewed Hubs as: (1) Physical institutions that host – at the moment 2 universities and an FTC; (2) Hub CoP – community of actors engaging in Hub activities; (3) Partners championing effective AE knowledge and practice in places where they work, and comprise practice, movement and science actors as key partners.

Perspectives on AE Elements and Principles: Following background presentations and discussions on the FAO AE Elements and Principles, participants appreciated how the Elements/Principles connect science with practice. For efficiency, harmony and sustainability, the Principles need to transcend the donor divide. As such, there is need to integrate concepts/terminologies among actors (e.g., FAO, World Bank). Further, it became apparent that emphasis on Markets and Private Sector in AE has been low, highlighting the need to enhance conversation on these thematic areas. Generally, however, a clear pathway/trajectory to the transformation is lacking even for the other themes. It is also clear that data and evidence (which is lacking at the moment) are required to support the use of FRN indicators and their conversion into national and regional benefits for policy advocacy. It was noted that the Principles/Elements have areas of overlaps, possibly because the Elements were created from a synthesis of existing Principles. This necessitates a review/harmonization.

Review of the Elements: Three primary documents: The 10 Elements of Agroecology (FAO 2018), Principles of Agroecology (Sinclair et al 2019), and a Draft version of FRN Principles (Revision of January 2019), provided a foundation for review and harmonization of the Elements/Principles. In brief, the Review of the Elements recommended: (1) the inclusion of an aspect of Private Sector – greater engagement of Private Sector in AEI agenda; (2) a principle that focuses on Markets; (3) Plant Health and Ecological Pest Management; (4) Rationalization of the Principles in co-existence with other aspects of agricultural practices and social structures, e.g. economy leading to monoculture and more commercial focus; (5) Recycling in our farming systems versus free-range animal agriculture; (6) Culture and Food Traditions versus Diversification; and (7) Efficiency versus urbanization.

Operationalization of the Hubs – Vision, Partners and Activities: At the onset, the definition, shape and form (structure) of ‘Hub’ remained largely unclear. Gradually, as the meeting progressed the Hubs were understood to provide an additional mechanism for collaboration on AEI and its domestication in local contexts. This earlier uncertainty provided a discussion point on the blurry issue of whether the Hubs were exclusively for CCRP (or CCRP-supported) project transactions. It was clarified and agreed that Hubs will engage stakeholders outside the boundaries of CCRP funded projects. Areas flagged as needing improvement included absence of clear transformative elements – and theory of change, supported by bold strategies and actions.

The Hubs shared their indicative plans for the immediate term: Operational activities planned by the **Kenya** Hub included: information sharing during upcoming inception meeting; continuous learning from the process – learning cycles; Consultative and adaptive planning in taking forward the activities; and planning meeting to draw the roadmap. Partners here include Manor House Agricultural Centre (MHAC), Innovations in Development, Education and the Mathematical Sciences (IDEMS), Participatory Ecological Land Use Management (PELUM) Kenya; CCRP/FRN partners and close to another 30 partners added. The **Malawi** Hub will focus on, first, mapping and scoping study to identify knowledge gaps; Inception workshops; Establishing and operationalizing the Hub; Integrating FRN into activities of the Hub; putting in place a governance structure; sharing knowledge dissemination through graduate and undergraduate students. There is already ongoing dialogue with policy and gathering evidence/data to influence decisions, while workshops have been held at District level – part of downward dissemination, and the Hub already have other actors on board, such as universities (LUANAR), MoA, NGOs, which offer better opportunity for success. As soil degradation is a major challenge in Malawi, this was seen as a possible focus area for the Hub. **Tanzania** is building on an existing ‘Centre of Excellence’, and has lined up partners that include Universities (such as SUA, Nelson Mandela Institute), other Research institutes, FRNs in project areas, NGOs (such as Research, Community and Organizational Development Associates; RECODA, Sustainable Agriculture Tanzania; SAT, WorldVision Tanzania), and will need to liaise with older

Hubs, develop materials, and localize the Principles. **Uganda** is at infant stages of developing a Hub. The Hub could help bring together the current disparate efforts on AE work in the country. Other opportunities include the presence of an existing GIZ and Biovision Afri Trust projects on agroecology, and its geographic location – sitting in the centre of two Hubs (in Kenya and Tanzania). All the Hubs agreed to adopt a community-centred model and to be inclusive – including civil society for advocacy, government reps etc, to be a wholistic implementing station. The Hub was seen as a collaboration that does not require legal registration.

Hub governance, strategies and engagement: Discussions on how the Hubs function as entities examined the governance structure, tools and resources, communication strategy, and monitoring and evaluation. Outcomes of these discussions included: (1) members need to be involved at the onset of its formation; (2) Hubs be managed separately from projects – hubs should not be projects; (3) further consultation is needed to agree on appropriate housing/hosting of Hubs; (4) need to agree on operational space and considerations; and (5) need to strengthen leadership skills of Hub leaders to manage a decentralized network of partners. To maximize the achievement of objectives, Hubs require some direct engagement with members through a diversity of approaches, including capacity building - identifying capacity gaps and taking action to fill these – including cost-sharing arrangements, bringing local leadership on board for greater success, being open to inclusion, while at the same time managing the expectation of stakeholders. Further, there is need to harmonize targets for research area – taking care of student versus farmer versus Hub interests. Efforts aimed at integrating AEI into University curricular must bear in mind that change in university curricular takes time. As such, it may be a quicker win to target younger universities that are still developing their core curricular than the more established ones, then progressively move to effect gradual change in the others.

Policy influence: It was noted that policy influence is demanding financially and in other resources. Thus, Hubs and partners should consider sourcing funds for policy influence, although it is still unclear what capacity Hubs have for policy influence. There is need to clarify in work plans whether Hubs should purpose to influence policy directly, or to support those doing so – bearing in mind that the Hubs are virtual entities. Meanwhile, Hubs need to play a facilitative role of bringing together all the evidence needed. This process can benefit from lessons from the Sustainable Agricultural Intensification Research and Learning Africa (SAIRLA)'s illustration on how to generate, share and facilitate the use of knowledge/evidence by decision makers (policy, investors) – the social learning process. This journey should start by Hubs identifying key stakeholders for policy influence, clarity on what each Hub should focus on, and need for clear definition of policies to be influenced.

Meeting evaluation and next steps: The convening meeting provided an opportunity for interaction between and among Hubs and learning what each is doing and learning. This was made possible through group work/discussions – the integration of different Hub members in group discussions, and external perspectives from experienced people. To improve the quality and interest in future meetings, case studies on Hubs, having the Hub meeting ahead of the CoP meeting, and providing more opportunity for Hub interaction on the first day of the meeting. A lighter program that allows for some free time for networking should be considered. To enrich discussions and be more inclusive, the private sector needs to be fairly represented. As part of the next steps, projects and Hubs agreed to develop a list of priority activities.

1. INTRODUCTION, WELCOME AND OPENING

1.1 Context and Objectives of the Convening Meeting

The McKnight Foundation supports agricultural research and development in Africa through an international program, the collaborative crop research program (CCRP). Previously, the CCRP worked in target countries in Eastern Africa (EAf) – Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda, and; Southern Africa (SAf) - Malawi, Mozambique and Tanzania, through a community of practice (CoP) approach. Each year, the CCRP holds CoP meetings for the respective regions to share methods, results and lessons among projects and stakeholders, and to plan for the subsequent year. From 2019, the two regional CoPs have been merged to form the Eastern and Southern Africa (ESAf) CoP covering four countries – Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania and Malawi.

While the CoP already provides opportunity for different projects in a region to share learnings and/or collaborate in different ways during implementation, another collaborative effort, the Hubs, provide an additional mechanism for socializing and domesticating AEI in local contexts (within and across countries) through engagement of stakeholders outside the boundaries of CCRP funded projects. The first Convening Meeting of the ESAf Hub was held in Lilongwe, Malawi on 4th and 5th October 2019, following closely after the first meeting of the new (ESAf) CoP, held from 30th September to 3rd October 2019 at the same venue. Participants comprised: Team members from three Hubs (Kenya, Malawi and Tanzania) and Uganda, CCRP ESAf regional team, McKnight Foundation, CCRP Leadership Team, Farmer Research Network (FRN), and experts from other key institutions. The full list of participants is in [Appendix 1](#).

The key objectives of the meeting were to:

- Explore and energize the founding idea of developing hubs as vehicles for Agroecological transformation and intensification
- Share their different visions with the aim of cross learning and alignment
- Share experiences and lessons thus far
- Identify opportunities for collaboration with other hubs and other stakeholders

1.2 Welcome and Opening Remarks

The ESAf CCRP regional team (*Prudence Kaijage*) welcomed participants to the 1st ESAf Hub Convening Meeting. He emphasized the need for projects to collaborate and to have coordinated operations for greater impact.



Figure 1: Prudence Kaijage Welcoming Participants to the 1st Hub Convening Meeting

1.3 Getting to Know Each Other

Prudence asked participants to:

- Sit at a table with those unfamiliar to them.
- In groups of three, get to know each other – name, their project, their interest, and their view on the Hub-what they think it is.

Each group then shared the views of their teams on what they thought the Hub is (**Table 1**).

Table 1: Participants view on what the Hub is:

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Participants view on the Hub | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Centre that brings together individuals and networks to share on issues based on thematic areas• A platform, physical or virtual, that gathers and shares information and responds to emerging issues• Supports resource mobilization• Plays an oversight role• Is a wheel and spoke system – projects roll and rotate but held in the centre by spokes – supporting spokes/individuals to hold together• Dynamic network of NGOs, Farmers, Researchers that exchange information and learn from each other• Coordinating centre that brings together individuals/organizations with common agenda, practices, challenges, and who share and network• Community working together both physically and virtually at national, regional and beyond CCRP, providing direction• Central place, meeting holding, knowledge distributed, shared information house discussing experiences• Coordinating tower/centre that pursue Agroecology agenda and make members interested in the agenda• Is a decentralized network with bicycle wheel kind of outlook – where the Hub is the rim, but needs tension to retain shape• Centre through which service in Agroecology are brought together – multidisciplinary players (social science, computing etc) to consolidate research and findings for Agroecology |
|-------------------------------------|--|



Figure 2: Some of the participants getting to know each Other in groups of three

2. DIVERSITY OF PERSPECTIVES ON AEI AND RFN

2.1 AE Elements, Principles and the Role of Hubs

This session began with the following brief tee-off presentations and discussion:

- (1) Ric Coe - Background to the Elements and Principles - how they were created and why some overlaps occur (Figure 3)
- (2) Beth and Sara on Principles, Pathways and Hubs' role in AEI Transformation.

The understandings that came out of these presentations and discussions are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2: Outcome of presentations on AE Elements, Principles, and Role of Hubs

| | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Elements and Principles | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Principles have areas of overlaps and combinations The principles connect science with communities and practice Trajectory/clear pathway to the transformation is lacking Unpacking, with pictorial and other visual aids may enhance understanding of the Elements The Elements were created from a synthesis of existing Principles – explaining some of the overlaps Emphasis on Markets and Private Sector in AE has been low – need to enhance conversation on these An overdrive may undo many of the Elements, e.g., diversification Many groups seem to identify an entry-point Principle or Element, then progressively adopt the other Elements Principles need to transcend the donor divide – and the need to integrate concepts/terminologies among actors (e.g., FAO, World Bank) Data and evidence are required to support the use of FRN Indicators and their conversion into national and regional benefits for policy advocacy |
| Hubs' role in AEI transformation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hubs are physical institutions that host – at the moment 2 universities and an FTC Hub CoP – community of actors engaging in Hub activities The Kenya Hub comprise practice, movement and science actors as key partners DEMS Hub support – support capacity strengthening Partners champion effective AE knowledge and practice in places whether they work |



Figure 3: Ric Coe Giving a Background to the Elements and Principles of Agroecology

2.2 Review of the Elements

Participants were provided with copies of the 10 Elements of Agroecology (FAO 2018; Figure 4), Principles of Agroecology (Sinclair et al 2019; Figure 5), and a Draft version of FRN Principle Revision (January 2019), to facilitate a review/an appraisal of the Principles. They were then asked to form table teams to review the Principles by indicating on Cards, which ones were

- Most exciting – those that reflect they way we see AE and work with farmers
- Additions – for additional Elements or Principles they wished to add
- Questions/Less Important – Principles that they thought were less Important

The outcome of the review is summarized in Table 3 and appears in participants' own words in Figures 8 and 9 and 10.

In brief, the Review of the Elements recommended the following:

- Inclusion of an aspect of Private Sector – greater engagement of Private Sector in AEI agenda
- Inclusion of a principle that focuses on Markets
- Inclusion of Plant Health and Ecological Pest Management
- Attention should be paid to improve understanding on the Principles, e.g., the use of visual aids
- Rationalization of the Principles in co-existence with other aspects of agricultural practices and social structures, e.g. Economy leading to monoculture and more commercial focus; Recycling in our farming systems versus free-range animal agriculture; Culture and Food Traditions versus Diversification; Efficiency versus urbanization

Table 3: Most exciting, Addition and Questions/less important Principles

| | |
|----------------|--|
| Most exciting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Values and Diets • Co-creation of Knowledge • Synergy • Economic Diversification • Farmer-Centered AEI Agenda • Socialization of the biophysical sciences • Soil Health • Combination of the Elements • Circular and Solidarity Economy • Culture and Food Traditions • Diversity • Networks |
| Additions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plant Health • Ecological Pest Management • Allowing Elements to emerge organically • Bringing in Science to Movement practice • Visibility of Private Sector • How to integrate the two sets of principles • How to provide better pictures to illustrate the principles • Principles and counter-principles should be looked at as a continuum |
| Questions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Markets not explicitly handled • Reduction of inputs – externalities and pollutants • How to operationalize the Principles in guiding practices • Efficiency is required, even for internal resources such as manure • Economy leads to monoculture and commercialization • Are all AE Principles applicable to all farmers? • How can we achieve efficiency with urbanization? • How to assess progress on Elements • How to fit Recycling in our farming systems, e.g., burning resources, free-range animals • Is Diversity understood at farm level • How best to engage farmers to achieve Co-creation • Culture and Food Traditions could conflict with other Elements e.g. Diversification |
| Less important | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human and Social Values (<i>indicated as less important by only one Group</i>) |

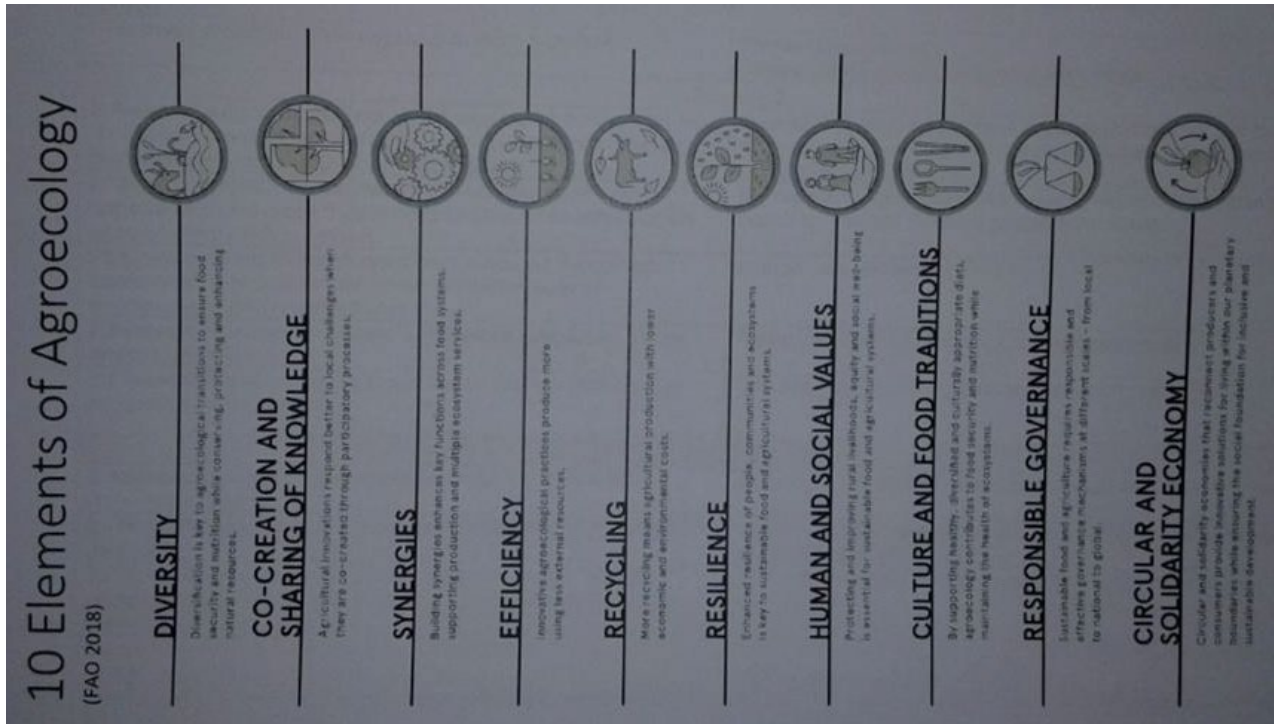


Figure 4: The 10 Elements of Agroecology (FAO, 2018)



Figure 5: Principles of Agroecology (Sinclair et al 2019)



Figure 6: Table team A reviewing the Principles of Agroecology



Figure 7: Table team B reviewing the Principles of Agroecology



Figure 8: Most exciting – those that reflect the way participants see AE and work with farmers

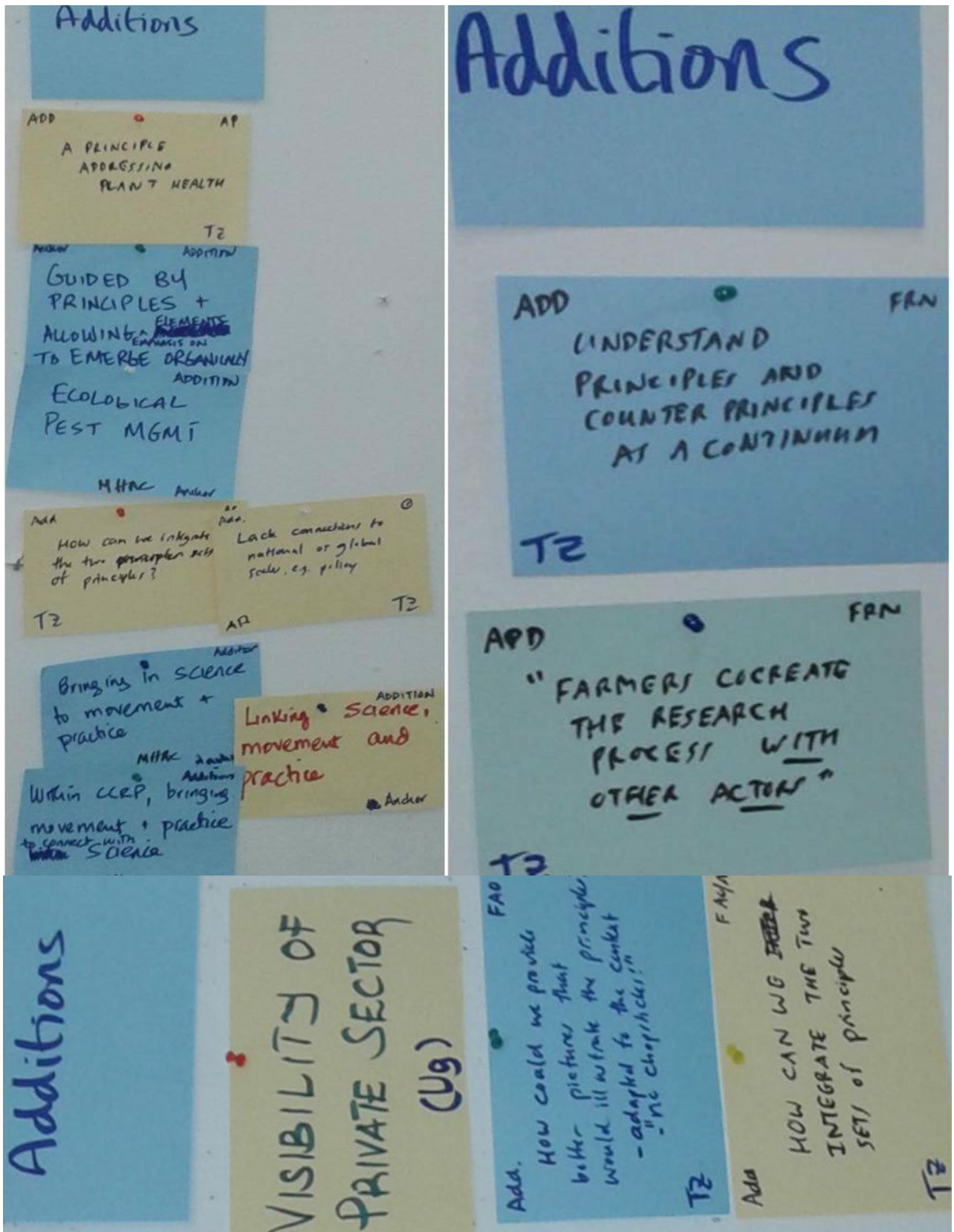


Figure 9: Additions – Elements or Principles they wished to add

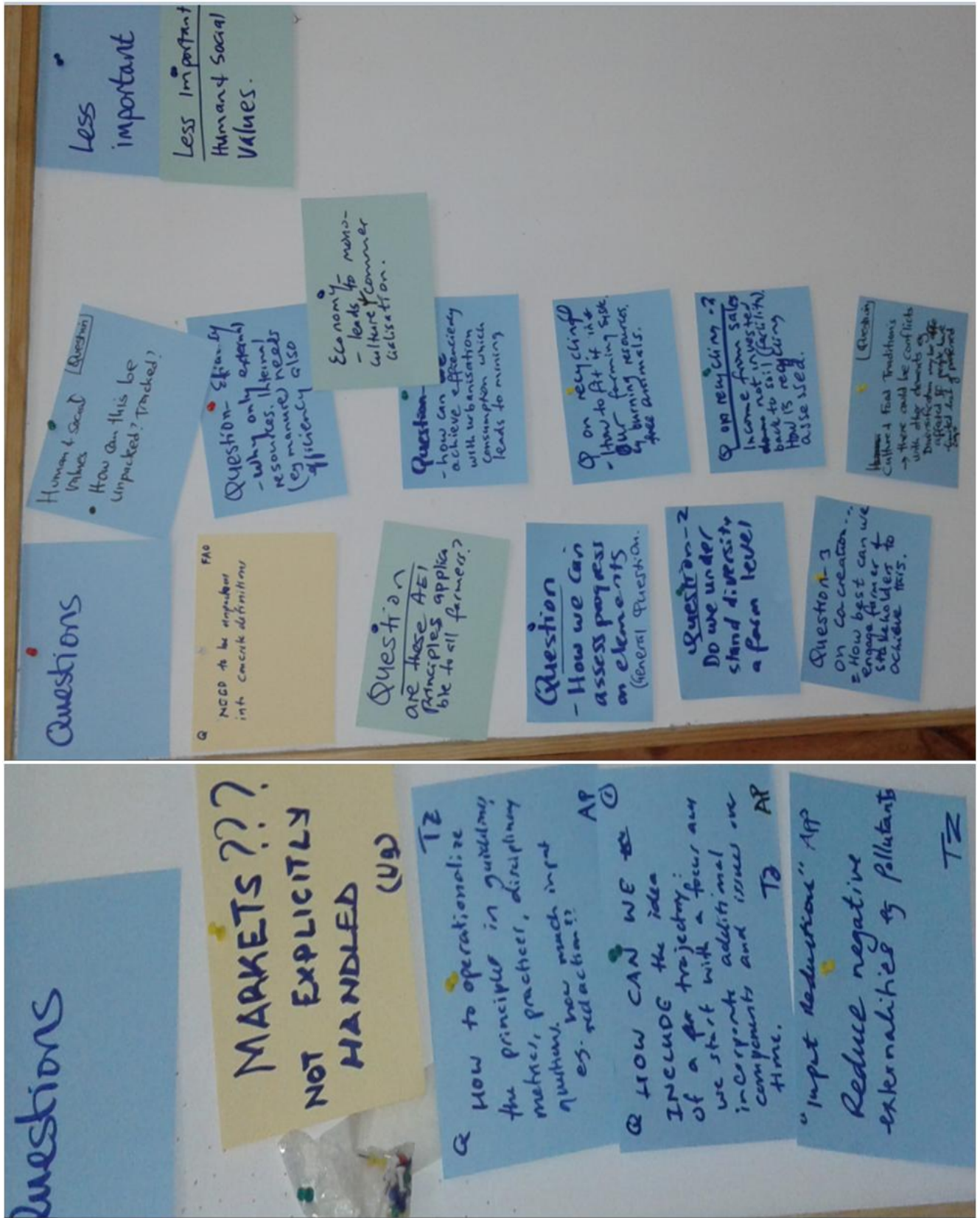


Figure 10: Questions/Less Important – Principles thought to be less important

3. OPERATIONALIZING THE HUBS

This session intended to map out the operational plans of the Hubs. Three key activities were conducted for this purpose:

- Brainstorming within Hub groups on: The journey - where they are (Baseline); and where they want to go (Vision), Their key partners and core activities, How the partners and core activities interact, How things will get operationalized
- How the Hubs function as entities, focusing on Governance structure, Tools and resources, Communication strategy, and M&E (social learning/value creation stories)
- How the Hub relates and engages with key external stakeholders, focusing on Stakeholder engagement process and outreach mechanism, e.g., model farms; Student engagement and how to influence other academics/faculty; NGOs, and Policy influencing.

3.1 The vision, partners, activities and operationalization

Participants brainstormed within their Hub groups on:

- Where they we now (Baseline); and where they want to go with the Hub (Vision)
- Their key partners and core activities
- How the partners and core activities interact
- How things will get operationalized

Each Hub then gave a brief presentation (Figure 12) on their status and vision, partners, core activities and how they would operationalize things. These are summarized in Table 4 and appear in Figure 11.

Table 4: Summary of Vision, Partners, Activities and how Hubs will operationalize

| | |
|-------|--|
| Kenya | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key activities include: Capacity building – student involvement; Building communities through workshop and shared activities; Research especially in (1) soil health and (2) Pesticidal effects – Tephrosia; Diagnosis – FDG with farmers in five counties • Operationalization will be implemented through: information sharing during upcoming inception meeting; continuous learning from the process – learning cycles; Consultative & adaptive planning in taking forward the activities; Planning meeting to draw the roadmap is underway <p>Partners include: MHAC family; IDEMS/AMI; PELUM Kenya; CCRP/FRN partners and close to another 30 partners added.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities add value to AE thinking within communities • Community centred model of the Hub • Legal status of the Hub – there is no need to be a formal entity – it is a collaboration • Hub should focus with government agenda/policy • Hub to be inclusive – including civil society for advocacy; government reps etc, to be a holistic implementing station |
|-------|--|

| | |
|----------|--|
| Malawi | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on improving rural livelihoods • Mapping and scoping study to identify knowledge gaps • Inception workshops • Network links established • Partners include Universities, NGOs – NASFAM, MOGA Kusamala; CISANET; Public DAES • Core activities include establishing and functionalizing the Hub; Research to close AE knowledge gap; establish and operationalize governance structure; sharing knowledge dissemination through graduate and undergraduate students • Partners already promoting AE, interaction enhanced • Developed workplans • Integrate FRN into activities of the Hub • The definition, shape and image of ‘Hub’ is unclear • Hub should have a clear niche – identify activities within an area of research strength • Ongoing dialogue with policy and gathering evidence/data to influence decisions • Workshops have been held at District level – part of downward dissemination • Other actors already on board, such as universities (LUANAR), MoA, NGOs, which offer better opportunity for success • Soil degradation is common in Malawi, and this can be seen as a focus area |
| Tanzania | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vision: Improved livelihoods of farming communities emanating from application of principles of AE • Partners: include Universities such as SWA, Nelson Mandela; Research institutes; FRNs in project areas; NGOs – SAT, RECODA, WorldVision Tanzania • Core activities: Research; Capacity building; dissemination; • Divergent opinions on agroecology noted during discussions with other non-MRN projects/institutions; • The tag ‘Centre of Excellence’ needs to be used sensitively as it may connote exclusion of other actors – the intended meaning, however, is a system where resources are shared, with a centralized or shared foci. • Tanzania should liaise with older Hubs; develop materials and localize the Principles |
| Uganda | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Characterized by scattered efforts opportunity to bring them together • There is already a GIZ project; Biovision Afri Trust on agroecology • Uganda is at a humble beginning – building synergies to apply AEI principles within region • Identification of strategic partners that will not depend on the Hub for their operations • Communication network efficient and strategic –the Hub can be a glue that holds the parts together • Geographically in the centre of two Hubs – this is an opportunity |

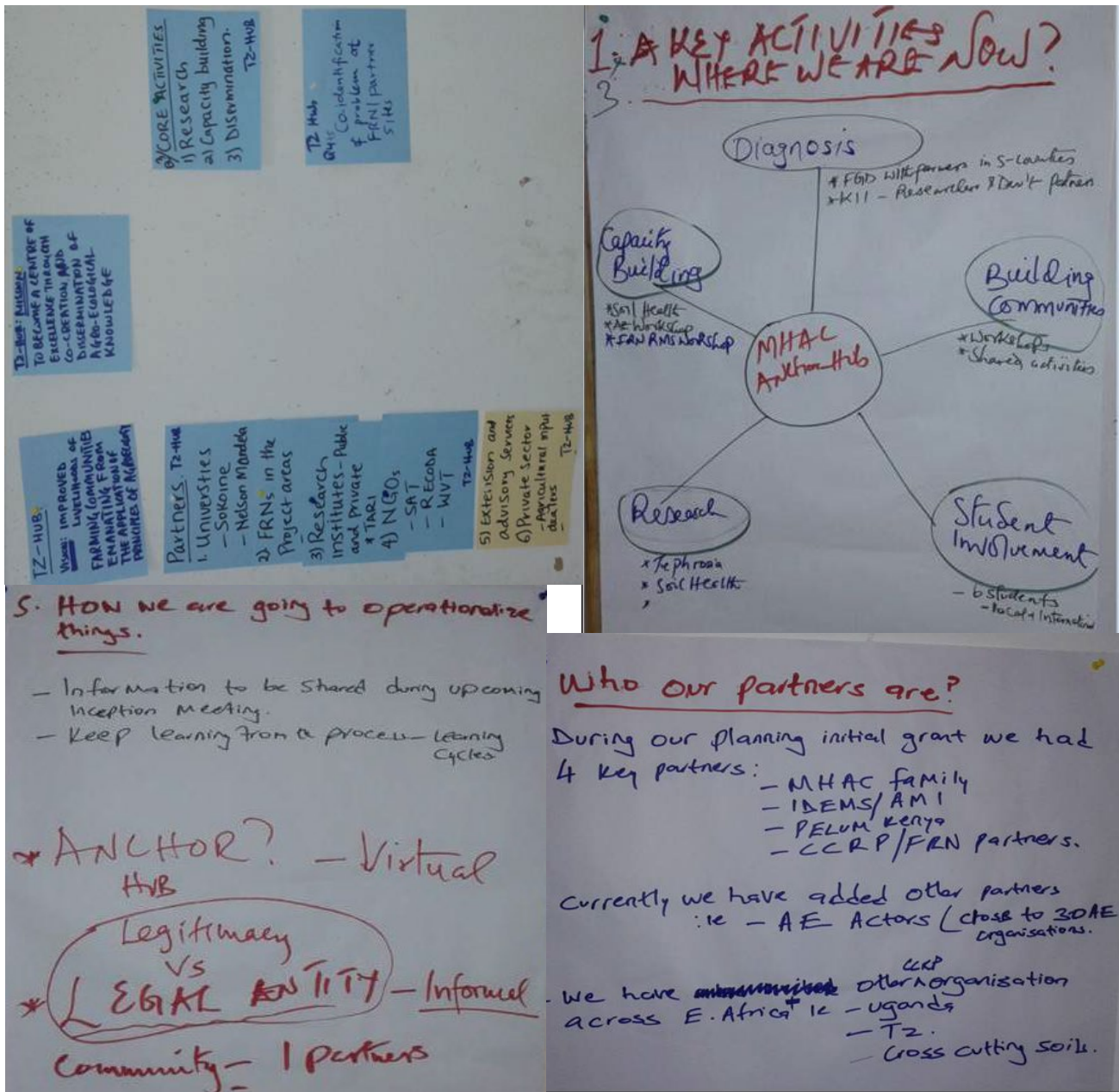


Figure 11: The vision, partners, activities, and how the Hubs will operationalize things



Figure 12: Hub representatives giving a brief presentation on their Vision, partners, activities, and how the Hubs will operationalize things

Common issues across Hubs that were highlighted and should be addressed:

- Conceptual questions regarding what a Hub is – whether Hubs should be left to evolve/develop or should be predefined
- Whether it would be better to develop Principles of the Hub rather than its definition
- The presentations did not clearly illustrate the transformation journey
- How to influence – strategies and actions not taking centre stage – absence of clear transformative elements – and theory of change
- The relationship between Hub and CCRP, specifically in the context of whether the Hub is exclusively for CCRP or CCRP-supported transaction.

3.2 How the Hubs function as entities

Participants brainstormed within their Hub groups on how the Hubs function as entities, focusing on:

- Governance structure
- Tools and resources
- Communication strategy
- M&E (social learning/value creation stories)

These are summarized in **Table 5** and appear in **Figure 13**.

Table 5: How the Hubs function as entities – Governance structure, Tools and resources, Communication strategy, and M&E models

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| Governance structure | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hub formation – members not involved in formation but invited to help run it • Appropriate housing/hosting of the Hub is not fully agreed on • Operational space is not clearly defined – is it geographic – distance to members? • Involvement of members inn early stages of formation • Hub leader needs skills to manage a decentralized social system • Hubs be managed separately from projects – hubs should not be projects • Resource mobilization by Hubs for AEI practice and sustainability |
| Tools and resources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are human beings a part of resources? • Who has the right to decide on which resources are good for the Hub? • Identification and generation of resources to share • Using the right technology is key to success • Sharing of resources on web links and innovative ways to summarize key papers • Support needed to create and maintain websites |
| Communication strategy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To who and how should we communicate – audience needs require different strategies and messages • Need to communicate to both pro-AEI and those who don't support AEI • Hubs require some direct engagement with members through a diversity of approaches including capacity building • Each Hub should be clear on what to communicate • Need to conduct a communication needs mapping |
| M&E | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moving from TOC ro key leverage points and indicator learning points • Need to follow up on changes in intentions and learning to see changes in action • Cultivating ability to spot emergent indicators in the whole team, and document them – evidence mindset • TOC and M&E should be flexible and change over time • Participatory M&E learning strategy a key leverage point • Support needed for research training – IMEP, Webinar e.g., on participatory M&E tools |

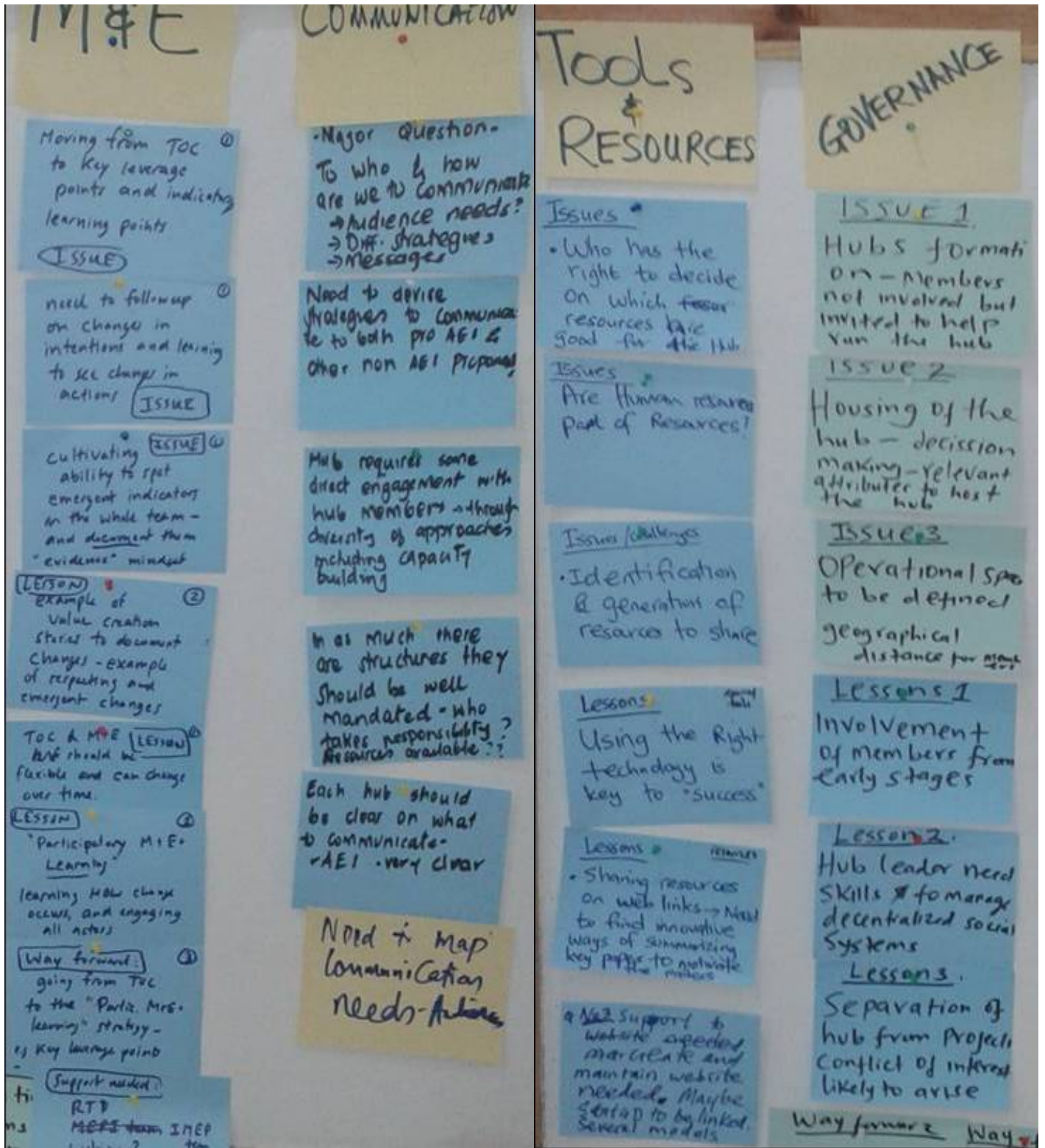


Figure 13: How the Hubs function as entities – Governance structure, Tools and resources, Communication strategy, and M&E models.

3.3 How the Hub relates and engages with key external stakeholders

Participants brainstorm within their Hub groups on how the Hubs relate and engage with key external stakeholders, focusing on:

- Stakeholder engagement process and outreach mechanism, e.g., model farms
- Student engagement and how to influence other academics/faculty; NGOs
- Policy influencing

These are summarized in **Table 6**, and appear in **Figures 14, 15 and 16**.

Table 6: How the Hub relates and engages with key external stakeholders

| | |
|---|---|
| Stakeholder engagement process and outreach mechanism | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Value the perspective of each stakeholder • Documentation for reference and for learning • Experience through doing it yourself • Understanding your environment – who is where and what they are doing • Expectation of the stakeholders may hinder or facilitate the work • There is a rich wealth of knowledge among the stakeholders which should be tapped • Mechanisms and processes exist which can be tapped • Local leadership should be brought on board for greater success • It would be desirable that gender and social issues are understood • Actions be well targeted for efficiency • Be open to inclusion • Identify capacity gaps and take action to fill it – including cost-sharing arrangements • Interests of partners and stakeholders be considered |
| Student engagement and how to influence other academics/faculty, NGOs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying best level of student training (BSc, MSc, PhD) • Harmonization of targets for research area – taking care of student vs farmer vs Hub interests • What would motivate faculty to participate in AEI activities • How to incentivize NGO activities • Change in university curricular takes time • Awareness creation • Attachments/internships • Facilitation support to partners • Recognition awards • Building strong relationships with partners |

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| Policy influencing | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Policy influencing is demanding financially and in other resources• It is unclear what capacity Hubs have for policy influence• It is unclear whether we intend to influence policy directly as a Hub, or to support those doing so – bearing in mind that the Hub is a virtual entity• Clarity on what each Hub should focus on, regarding policy influence• Need for clear definition of policies to be influenced• Hubs should generate and collate AE research for policy• Identify key stakeholders for policy influence• Hubs to play a facilitative role of bringing together all the evidence needed• Do a policy study/mapping to understand the integration in policies as a basis for engagement• Deliberate fund allocation for policy influence towards the Hubs |
|--------------------|--|

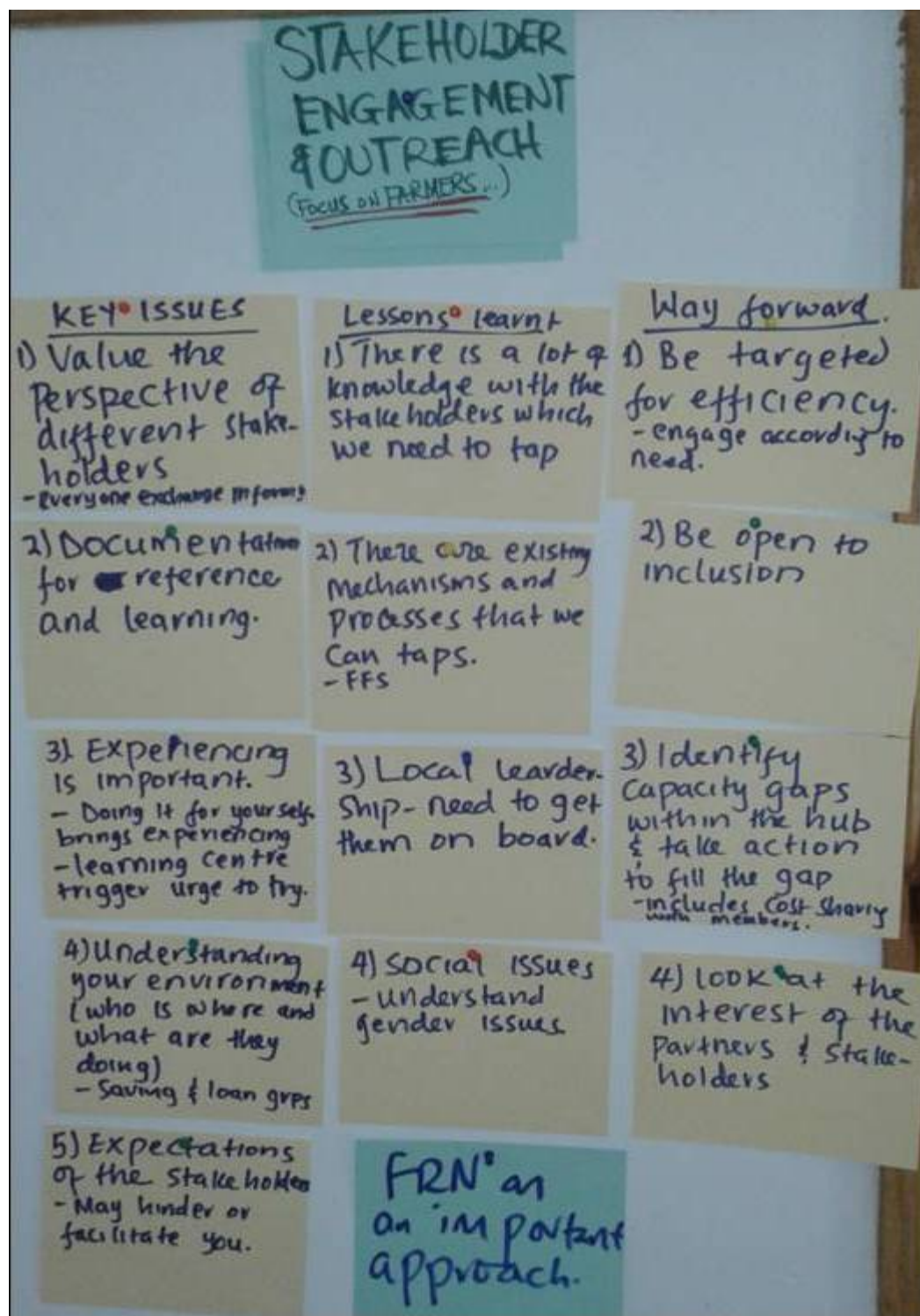


Figure 14: Stakeholder engagement process and outreach mechanisms for the Hub

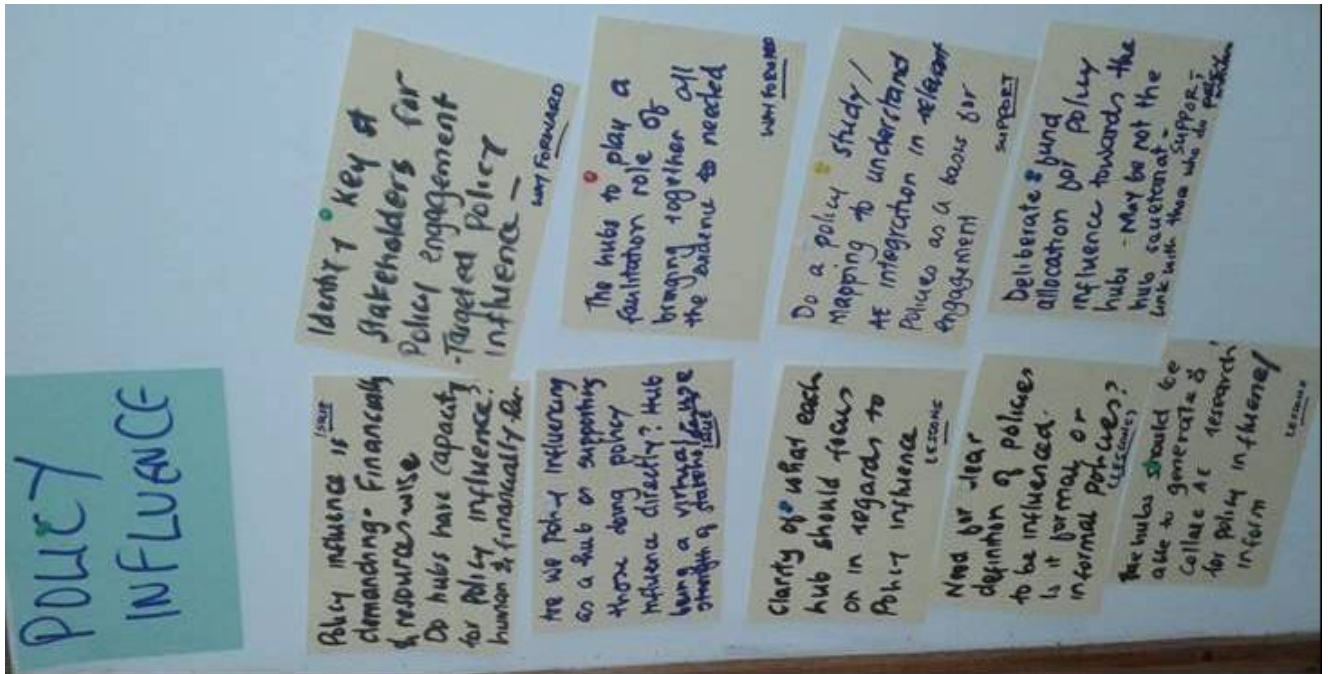


Figure 15: Hubs relationship and engagement for Policy influencing

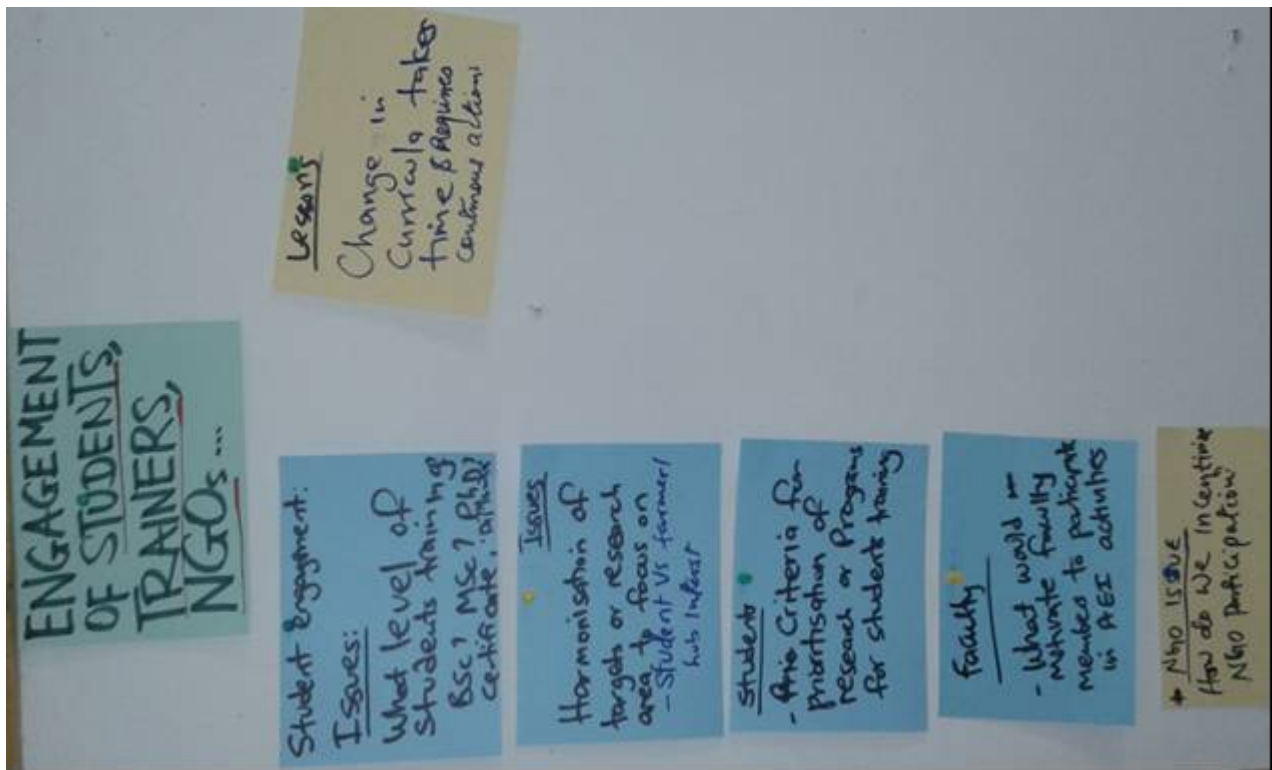


Figure 16: Student engagement and how to influence other academics/faculty and NGOs

3.4 Other presentations

The three brainstorming sessions were complemented by a presentation on Sustainable Agricultural Intensification Research and Learning Africa (SAIRLA) by Richard Lamboll. He illustrated how to generate, share and facilitate the use of knowledge/evidence by decision makers (policy, investors) – the social learning process.



Figure 17: Richard Lamboll giving a presentation on the social learning process: how to influence policy and decision making.

3.5 New insights on the Role of Hubs and Opportunities

Based on the brainstorming sessions, Hub group presentations and other cross cutting presentations, the groups were asked to indicate the new insights that they have had on the role of the Hub focusing on AE systems transformation and opportunities they see moving forward. The new insights and opportunities are summarized in **Table 7**, and appear in **Figures 18 and 19**.

Table 7: New insights on the Role of Hubs focusing on AE systems transformation and Opportunities

| | |
|---|---|
| <p style="text-align: center;">New insights on the role of Hubs</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop TOC • Workplan M&E for the Hub • Glue that holds the players together • Identify existing farmer participatory research and extension models to work with alongside the FRN • The Hub is still not well defined • Identification of strategic partners • Communication strategy • There is need to develop clear strategies |
| <p style="text-align: center;">Opportunities</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same geographical area – this enables members and Hubs to share certain resources • The Hubs can complement each other • Consolidate efforts of running/current CCRP projects • Training opportunities for farmers at MHAC facility • Organize dialogue sessions with influential persons guided by research evidence • Localizing the principles and elements of AE including symbols |

INSIGHTS

- Develop TOC
- Work Plan M&E for the hub.

The "HUB" is still not well defined (still cloudy/hazy)

Glue that holds players together?

INSIGHTS
Identify the existing farmer participatory research and extension models to work with alongside the FRN.
TZ 1

The HUB must find its NICHE & not just for R dissemination

Humble Beginning

- Start small
- Current CCP projects
- Build synergies to amplify AEI

We need to develop clear activities

Identification of Strategic partners

Communication Strategy

Figure 18: New insights on the role of the Hubs

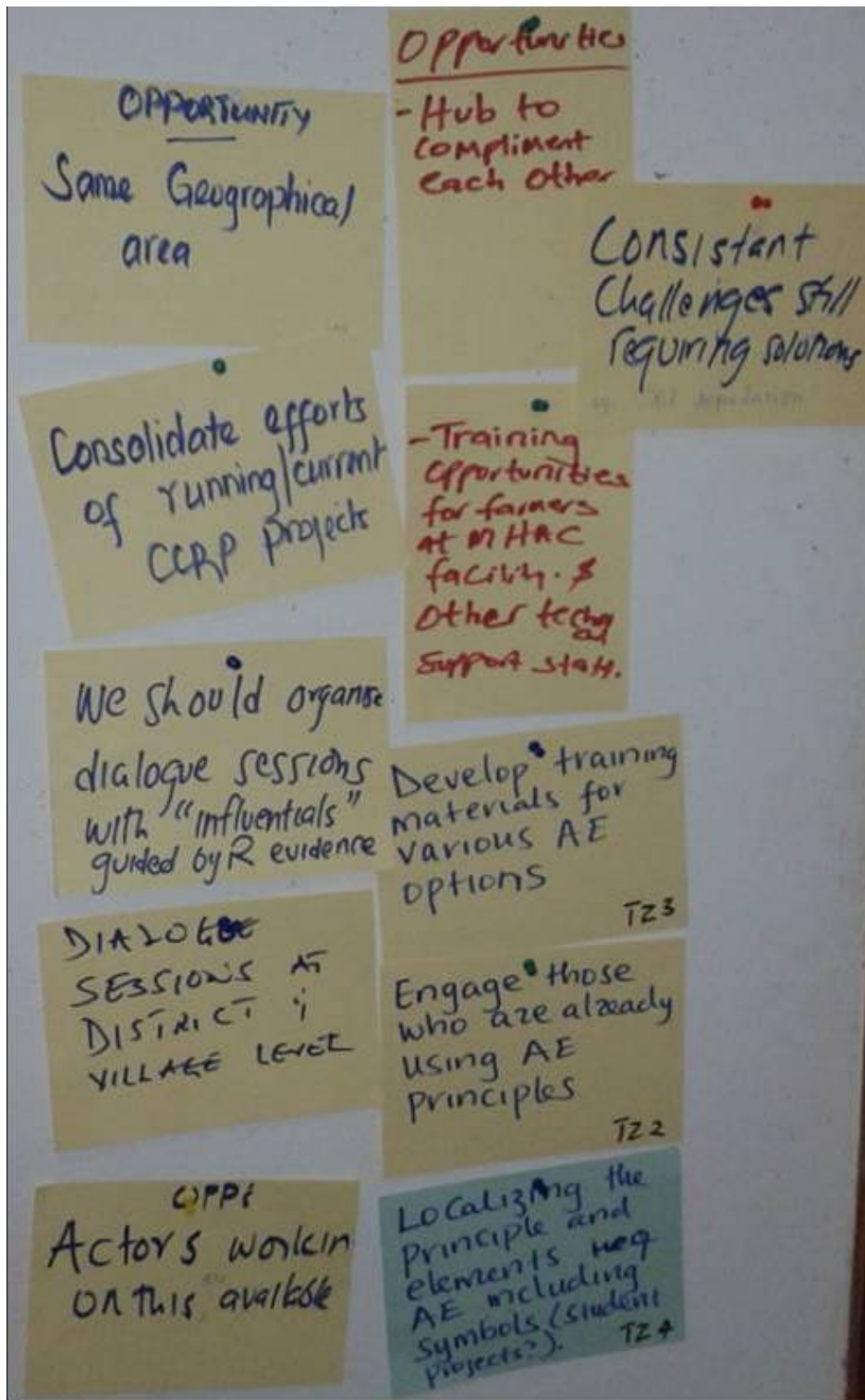


Figure 19: Opportunities for the Hubs going forward

4. MEETING EVALUATION, NEXT STEPS AND CLOSING

4.1 Meeting Evaluation

Participants were given an opportunity to evaluate the 1st Hub Convening Meeting of the ESAf CoP in their table groups. As part of the workshop evaluation process, participants were asked to discuss at the table groups and agree on:

- What they liked about the workshop
- What could have been better
- Suggestions for improving the meeting

The main observations, consisting both commendation and recommendation are presented in **Table 8**, while the raw evaluations (in participants' own expression) appear in **Figure 20**.

Table 8: Participants' Evaluation of the Hub Convening Meeting

| | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| What I liked about this meeting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interaction between/among Hubs and learning what each is doing • Group work/discussions • Facilitators raised our interest • Integration of different Hub members in group discussions • Social activities outside of the meeting – such as outside dinner and walking • Getting external perspectives from experienced people |
| What could have been better | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case studies on Hubs were missing • The issue of Hub anchoring was not clearly resolved • There should be more Hub interaction on Day 1 • It would be better to have the Hub meeting ahead of the CoP meeting • Private sector players be included in Hub meetings |
| What I disliked | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long and exhausting meeting • The agenda was overly packed |

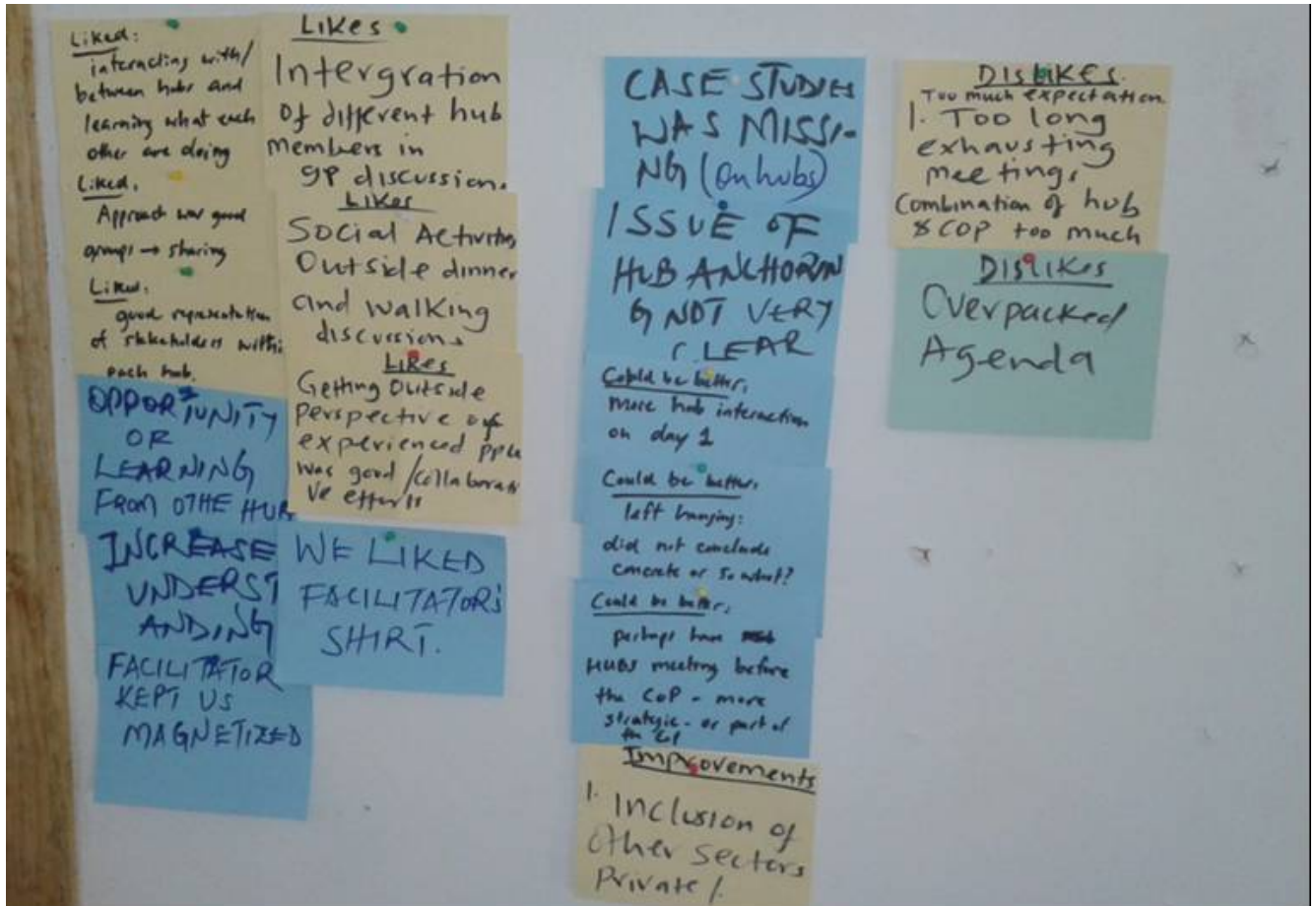


Figure 20: Participants' Evaluation of the Workshop – the Things They Liked Most, What could have been done better, and Recommendation for Improvement

4.2 Next Steps and Closing Remarks

In his closing remarks, the ESAf CCRP regional team thanked participants for attending and actively participating in the 1st ESAf Hub Convening Meeting. He urged all participants to continue working together in different ways. It was agreed that the following be undertaken as next steps:

- Projects and Hubs agreed to develop a list of priority activities (to do).
- In addition, the reports documenting the convening meeting would be available within four weeks (owing to the CoP meeting report that also need to be prepared), i.e., by 3rd November 2019.



Figure 21: Prudence Kaijage conducting the meeting evaluation and closing

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: List of Participants

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