

“Farmer led research and innovation : Strengthening participatory research-innovation on agroecology with family farmers in Burundi”.

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*Boosting agrifood research and innovation
cooperation for impact at scale*



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Introduction



CAPAD is a farmers' organization representing 153 164 family farming households and 163 different agricultural cooperatives in Burundi.

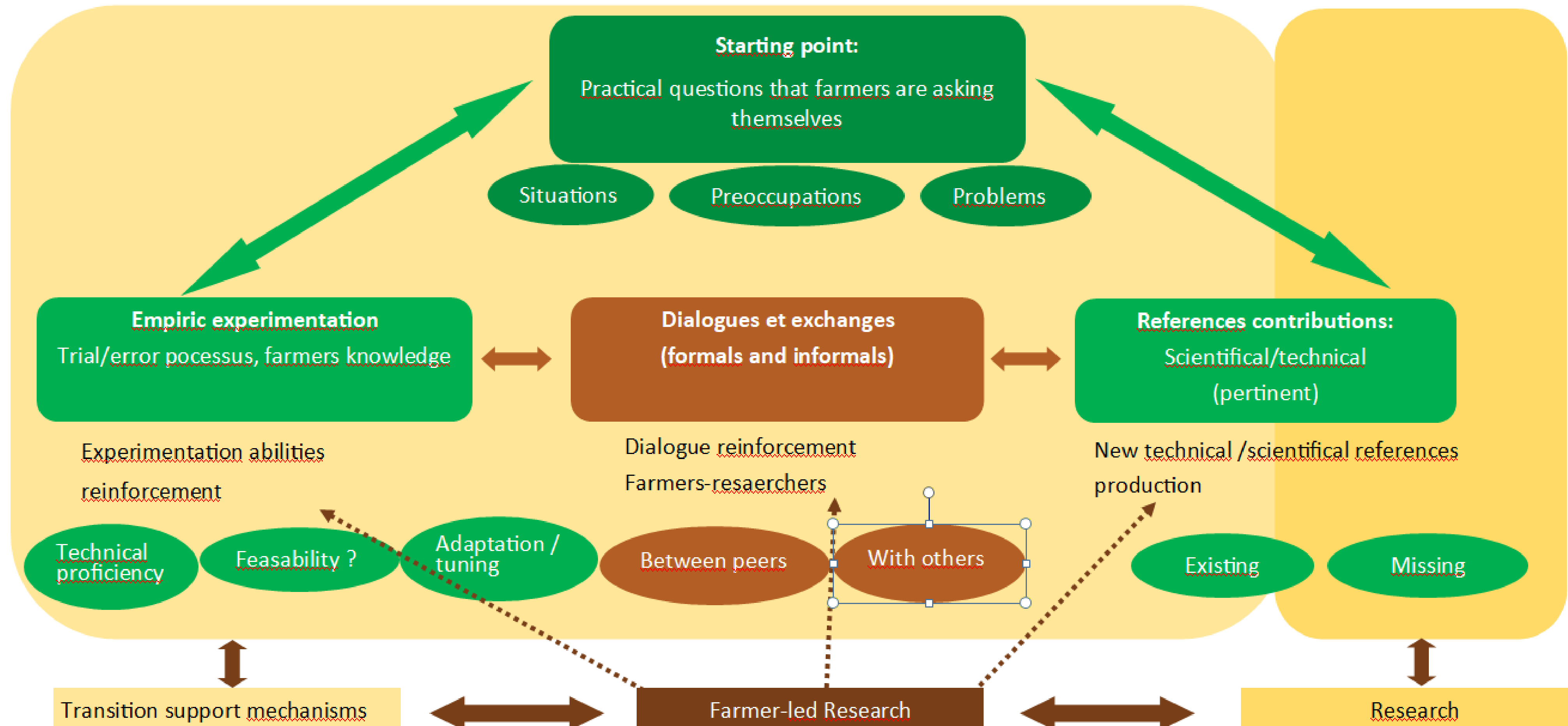
Concerns: Soil fertility and erosion, pests, climate change and farm resilience, seeds and agricultural inputs

Action-research in agro-ecology :

- Responding to farmers' real concerns by co-constructing accessible solutions, combining farmers' knowledge with scientific knowledge
- Building the capacity of cooperatives to provide technical support to their members
- Disseminating practices and innovations

Project presentation

Objective: To build an AR system on agro-ecology run by family farmers.



Farmers

Centre of the experimentation system :

- Expressing concerns
- Defining the issues
- Search for solutions
- Evaluation of protocols
- Implementing experiments
- Monitoring and evaluating results

CAPAD

- Support for farmers
- Process support
- Setting up the collaboration
- Steering innovation platforms
- Setting up local networks of farmers involved in dissemination and scaling up
- Capitalising on lessons learned

Results

Biological control of the armyworm in maize by applying a mixture of sand and ash:

- ✓ *Economical and accessible approach*
- ✓ *Significant reduction in infestations*
- *Labour intensive*

Towards another experiment :

Liquid solution of Neem / Tithonia

- *Experiment underway with neem*
- *Effectiveness of Tithonia*



Organizational set-ups

Research partners	Organizational set-ups
Farmers	Multi-stakeholder platform: Fertility
Researchers (University, ISABU, IITA)	FO/Cooperatives
CAPAD-CSA	Local networks of farmer-experimenters
Field animators	Public extension services

Key points of action-research:

- **Active participation** of all stakeholders in the various stages
- Stakeholder consensus on collaboration principles
- **Capitalization and exchange at the end of each cycle**
- **Building capacity to conduct an AR process**

Lessons learned and recommendations

- Moving from a top-down to a participatory research model
- Need to strengthen links between scientific and traditional knowledge
- Time required for activities and need to move quickly to meet needs (productivity improvements, pest attacks, etc.)

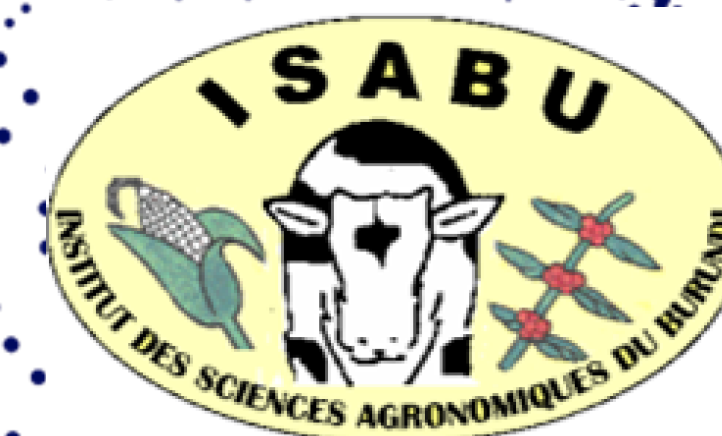
Recommendations :

- Couple the research-action axis with support for resilience and the circular economy (biomass, complementarity between livestock farming, agroforestry and cultivation)
- Promote/strengthen multi-stakeholder platforms for RA and advocacy
- Building the capacity of FOs to engage in dialogue with researchers

Thank you!

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