

EAFF WORKSHOP REPORT

Key insights, opportunities and challenges for climate and agriculture



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About AICCRA | Accelerating Impacts of CGIAR Climate Research in Africa (AICCRA) is a project that helps deliver a climate-smart African future driven by science and innovation in agriculture. It is led by the Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT and supported by a grant from the International Development Association (IDA) of the World Bank. Explore AICCRA's work at aiccra.cgiar.org

About EAFF | The Eastern Africa Farmers Federation (EAFF) is a regional farmer organisation whose mission is to represent, lobby and advocate for the interests of Eastern Africa farmers and to build their capacities. EAFF envisions a prosperous and cohesive farming community in Eastern Africa. EAFF envisions a prosperous and cohesive farming community in Eastern Africa. Explore EAFF's work at www.eaffu.org



Introduction

The EAFF, in partnership with AICCRA, hosted a hybrid workshop on 5 March 2024 for its member organisations to discuss the opportunities and challenges arising from the most recent climate change summit held in Dubai in December 2023, namely the 28th Conference of Parties (COP28) meeting to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). This workshop report captures the key messages, challenges and opportunities highlighted during the meeting, which are critical to guide the EAFF and its member organisations in their continued work to drive the climate-agriculture agenda towards COP29.



Stephen Muchiri, CEO of EAFF, welcomed all farmer organisations and participants to the meeting.



Romy Chevallier, Policy and Engagement Specialist at AICCRA, moderated this workshop and facilitated the question and answer session.

Key expert reflections of COP28



Elizabeth Nsimadala, President of the EAFF, opened the meeting by reflecting on COP28 from farmers' perspective, noting both positive and disappointing outcomes.



COP28 put food and agriculture high on the agenda, with the launch of the [United Arab Emirates Declaration on Sustainable Agriculture and Resilient Food Systems](#). Farmers were included in various high-level sessions and events, but their contributions were not adequately acknowledged or integrated into climate strategies.

However, farmers felt that their voices were overlooked in climate action the Sharm el-Sheikh Joint Work (SSJW) on Agriculture and Food Security did not progress and farmers were not mentioned in the outcome document for the COP, raising questions about who will drive food systems transformation and how farmers can contribute without being empowered and included in decision-making.

Looking ahead, farmers need to enhance their engagement in both the SSJW negotiations, as well as the discussions of the UNFCCC Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) and the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA). Farmers also need to be central to climate policy development and work towards stimulating ambition in the next round of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). Securing climate finance directly for farmers is crucial for a just transition to resilient agri-food systems. The EAFF remains committed to climate discussions and will consult stakeholders to strengthen their position.



Dr. George Wamukoya, Team Leader of the Africa Group of Negotiators Expert Support (AGNES), emphasised the importance of engaging with farmers in climate change negotiations, as they are directly affected by the outcomes.



Agriculture has been part of the negotiations since 2007, leading to decisions like the Sharm el-Sheikh Joint Work on Implementation of Climate Action on Agriculture and Food Security (SSJW).

However, there are challenges in a number of areas, such as with the use of certain terminologies around 'food systems', issues related to coordination and in operationalising decisions. The G77 and China, as well as the Africa Group, seek a formal coordination structure for implementation, unlike other partners who prefer an informal one. This was

a sticking point. In addition, workshop topics were suggested, that included sustainable agriculture, means of implementation, and fisheries. However, there is still no clarity on the way forward.

The COP28 discussed the Global Stocktake (GST) and the Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA), setting targets for 2030 and beyond, including for climate-resilient food production. A two-year framework will develop indicators to track adaptation, linking to national adaptation planning processes and NDCs. AGNES is working to increase the number of Long-term Strategies (LTSs) in African countries to inform NDCs.

Dr. Wamukoya emphasised the need for national farmer organisations (NFOs) to engage in NDC committees, as budgetary allocations and international funding align with NDC priorities. AGNES can assist NFOs in engaging with national focal points and leaders. NFOs should engage early to be part of national delegations and negotiate for their priorities. Some civil society representatives from farmer organisations are part of their national delegations and key negotiators for agriculture. AGNES writes to governments to request the inclusion of specific experts in national delegations. A party badge accreditation is crucial for access to negotiation rooms, allowing for potential game-changing contributions.



Laura Cramer, Policy Engagement Specialist at Accelerating Impacts of CGIAR's Climate Research for Africa, discussed the role of CGIAR, a research-for-development organisation, in international climate negotiations.



While not negotiators themselves, CGIAR scientists can inform and advise negotiators by providing evidence to support decision-making. CGIAR follows several tracks within the negotiations, including the new collective goal on finance, the GGA, the SSJW, the GST, and Loss and Damage.

Cramer highlighted the importance of using science to inform negotiations but acknowledges that science is not neutral and can be influenced by organisational positions. CGIAR has been discussing the food systems language with the AGNES group to better

understand the challenges and find middle ground. She encouraged farmer organisations like EAFF to critically examine the food systems concept and decide how to align their interests and contribute to the discussion.

Partnerships are crucial and CGIAR is in talks with EAFF about a possible joint submission for the GGA. The International Livestock Research Institute is working to influence the discussion around livestock and climate change, adding nuance to the narratives dominated by the Global North. ILRI aims to highlight the role of livestock in livelihoods, food security, and the bio-circular economy in Africa and the Global South.



Philip Kilonzo, Head of Policy and Advocacy at the Pan African Justice Alliance (PAJCA) reflected on advocacy, activism, and engagement around agriculture and food security at COP28 and in international climate negotiations in general.



He emphasised the need for stronger mobilisation of African countries and farmer organisations to ensure that agriculture receives the priority and importance it deserves in climate discussions.

Kilonzo highlighted the challenges faced in positioning agriculture within COP28, noting that while there were strong positions

on agriculture, they were not effectively acted upon. He stressed the importance of strengthening farmer engagement and advocacy, particularly in influencing the inclusion of agriculture in countries' NDCs.

He also discussed the need to mainstream farmers within the implementation plan for the [Nairobi Declaration on Climate Change](#) (developed at Africa's first Climate Summit in September 2023) and he emphasized the need for farmers to determine and define clear matrices and indicators for assessing agricultural and farmer progress under the GGA. Kilonzo called for a cross-sectoral approach to building resilience in agriculture, linking it to broader issues such as water resource management.

Finally, he highlighted the need to engage with the Green Climate Fund (GCF) to ensure that farmer institutions have access to funding for locally led adaptation actions. Kilonzo noted opportunities to leverage geopolitical dynamics to strengthen agricultural investment in Africa and drive the agriculture agenda forward.



Emma Bowa from CGIAR, discussed the trend of COP Presidencies launching initiatives alongside the negotiations.



She highlighted two such initiatives: [the Food and Agriculture for Sustainable Transformation \(FAST\) initiative](#), under the Egyptian Presidency at COP27, and the Technical Cooperation Collaborative, under the UAE Presidency at COP28. These initiatives both aim to mobilise funds and implement projects at the country level to inform COP discussions and align agriculture and food systems policies. Bowa emphasised the importance of farmer organisations being involved in these initiatives as they provide opportunities for tangible action on the ground and can inform negotiations. She also mentioned that engagement opportunities exist throughout the year, not just during the main COP events, including expert dialogues and workshops that CGIAR is looking to partner with organisations on.

Regarding the use of food systems terminology, Bowa suggested that unpacking the key elements of food systems could help others understand its

meaning and address concerns raised by some countries and negotiating blocs. She emphasised the importance of including farmers in these conversations.

Finally, Bowa noted that CGIAR has prioritized tracks such as the GGA, agriculture, finance, and gender at COP, and has documented opportunities for engagement that may be useful for farmer organizations looking to participate in COP discussions.





In conclusion, **Elizabeth Nsimadala, President of the EAFF** emphasised the need for farmers to be engaged at every step of the process to ensure their concerns are addressed. She noted that ongoing discussions around the SSJW and the GGA further highlight the opportunity for farmers to play a role in shaping indicators and targets. Nsimadala also mentioned the importance of partnerships with organisations like PACJA,

AGNES and the CGIAR, as well as the need for farmer organisations to mobilise and organise early in preparation for COP29.

Nsimadala acknowledged the discussions around livestock and the need to highlight its benefits and contributions to adaptation. She also touched on the relationship between Africa and Europe in terms of trade, investments, and policies, emphasising the need for candid discussions and for the harmonisation of positions.

In closing, Nsimadala emphasised the importance of commitment from national farmers' organisations and the need for positions presented by the EAFF to be grounded in the work happening at the ground level. Enhancing farmer engagement in climate action is essential for addressing the challenges of climate change and building resilient agricultural systems.



“ Conversations around food and agriculture without farmers at the table will lead to no practical action on the ground unless we are headed into a future of producing food without farmers.

Elizabeth Nsimadala, President of the EAFF



Key recommendations towards COP29

- Farmer organisations should proactively engage with governments and other relevant stakeholders in the SSJW negotiations, SBSTA and SBI meetings.



Suggested action: AGNES is hosting a meeting in Nairobi from **9 to 12 April 2024** to address key areas of climate negotiations, such as adaptation finance, climate finance, health, and biodiversity. It will be useful for farmer organisations to attend this meeting and to contribute to its outcomes.

- The next iteration of **updated NDCs will be submitted in early 2025, ahead of COP30**. This presents an engagement opportunity for farmers to ensure their priorities are included and that the potential of the agriculture sector for climate change adaptation is at the forefront. It is essential that farmers and farmer organisations are central to the NDC process as budgetary allocations and international funding are aligned with the NDCs. NFOs have a responsibility to champion their priority areas to inform the NDCs.



Suggested action: AGNES can assist the EAFF members to identify and liaise with the national focal points and leaders in their respective countries. The ministries of agriculture are responsible for coordinating and collating evidence and priorities for the sector.

- Similarly, many African countries have not yet developed their **Long-term Strategies**, which presents another opportunity for farmer organisations to engage.

- The Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA) has a two-year framework to develop indicators for tracking adaptation.** Farmer groups need to communicate which indicators would be appropriate for tracking progress in terms of adaptation and mitigation in the agriculture sector. This links to each country's national adaptation planning processes and their NDCs.



Suggested action: AICCRA is working collaboratively with EAFF to jointly develop farmer-led indicators for submission.

- NFOs must form part of **national climate delegations**. The EAFF must work with the NFOs to contact the Ministry of Environment in each country so that they become a part of the national team for drafting a common position.



Suggested action: AGNES, and others, can officially write to governments and request that farmer experts are included in their national delegations.

PACJA can also assist NFOs make these linkages with government through their contact with national committees.

- For the EAFF, as a collective and unifying voice for farmer organisations, it is important to critically **examine the food systems terminology and approach**. It is important to consider where it makes sense for EAFF to align with the food systems terminology, what it identifies as its common interests, and to determine how to contribute to discussions around food systems.



Suggested action: CGIAR, AICCRA and others can facilitate a workshop for farmers to unpack and resolve these issues.

- **Partnership development is critical and there are many that can be strategically and mutually beneficial.**



Suggested action: EAFF to promote partnership development with the CGIAR to leverage its technical expertise in various negotiating tracks, as well as to jointly develop proposals for bankable projects and to ultimately access climate funds.

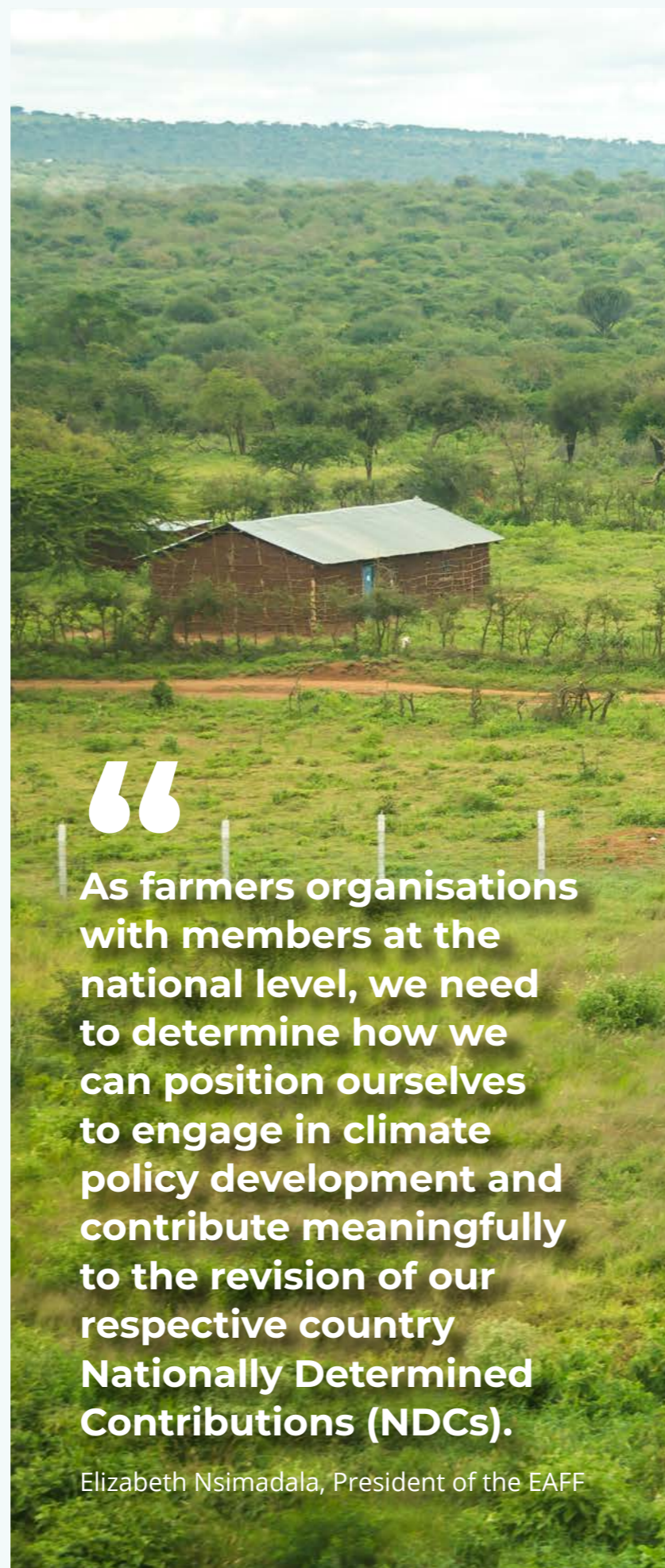
EAFF to build strong relationships with institutions such as AGNES and the PACJA that link farmer organisations to national NDC committees and ensure that invitations to the relevant workshops are issued.

- **Farmers need to engage actively and strategically at COP.** This can strengthen farmer organisations positions through the mobilisation of diverse actors and differing perspectives.



Suggested action:

Address nexus issues across a wide array of themes and stakeholder groupings. This will ensure that the position around agriculture for Africa will be amplified in a cross-sectional manner within the COP itself.



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As farmers organisations with members at the national level, we need to determine how we can position ourselves to engage in climate policy development and contribute meaningfully to the revision of our respective country Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).

Elizabeth Nsimadala, President of the EAFF

- The EAFF and its members need to engage the **African Union** as it works towards the implementation of the [Nairobi Declaration](#), adopted at the Africa Climate Summit in September 2023. There are still gaps around defining transitional issues such as agriculture.



Suggested action: EAFF to collaborate more closely with the African Union Commission to seize opportunities that drive African climate agendas forward.

- Farmer organisations should **leverage favourable geopolitical dynamics and close political relations, like those between Africa and Europe**, in terms of trade, investment and policies. It is important to unpack how these opportunities can be used to further relationships that are beneficial for agricultural investment in Africa, as well as assess when they are potentially detrimental.
- Conversations are needed to determine how best to **engage with the Green Climate Fund** to access funding for farmer institutions. Funding needs to be allocated to institutions that are proximate to people on the ground and that can support the implementation of locally-led adaptation actions with the leadership of farmers.
- **Farmer organisations need to mobilise and organise themselves** to better engage with national level institutions. Farmer organisations should prioritise their issues and ensure common positions are in alignment.

- There are numerous **COP Presidency opportunities** to consider engaging with:

- The [United Arab Emirates Framework for Global Climate Resilience](#) is an avenue to pursue farmers' interests by 2030. The framework talks to achieving resilience within multiple sectors, including the need to broaden the conversation to adopt a cross-sectoral approach.
- The [Food and Agriculture for Sustainable Transformation \(FAST\) initiative](#) is starting to mobilise funds. Some of the initiatives are to be implemented at the country level and will be used to inform discussions around the COP.
- The **Technical Cooperation Collaborative** encourages alignment of all agriculture and food systems policies at the country level and implements improvements for tangible action on the ground. As these initiatives unfold there will be more opportunities for farmer organisations to be involved and take part in discussions.
- The EAFF alone cannot do this. **Commitment is needed from the NFOs** as the positions must emanate from work that is happening at the ground level. In addition, it is important to consider the immediate and long-term impacts that climate change is causing at the national level.



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