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**Facilitation of innovation: experiences of RIU  
innovation platforms in Tanzania, Rwanda and  
Zambia**

**Development Policy & Practice**

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## **Executive Summary**

### **Historical development of RIU and key events.**

#### *Research Into Use programme*

The Research Into Use programme aims to accumulate and evaluate evidence in order to shape and share lessons on how best to enable innovation in the agricultural sector in developing country settings. RIU has two objectives:

- (i) to achieve impact at scale
- (ii) to generate lessons about putting research into use.

The programme consisted of 3 components, the Asia country programmes, the Africa country programmes and the Best-bet initiative. The Africa country programmes are discussed here.

#### *History and evolution of the programme*

The RIU programme was born as a result of the review of the DFID RNRRS programme that had supported agricultural research for development from 1995 to 2006. The adoption of the resulting research results was considered disappointing. A specific programme was called for that would support the adoption and use of research outcomes of the RNRRS. The result was the Research Into Use programme, a 5-year, £37million development programme of intervention in Africa and Asia. The first idea was to identify 30 promising research outcomes close to impact, and to support their breakthrough.

At the start of the programme it became apparent that this would not work. The realisation grew that adoption was not simply the next step in a linear research process and that better insight was provided by innovation system thinking. This triggered the RIU programme to develop an approach towards facilitating innovation for development. This came to bear specifically in the Africa country programme.

#### *The Africa country programmes*

The objective of the Africa Country Programmes was to facilitate agricultural innovation. Africa Country Programmes were established in Zambia, Rwanda, Malawi, Tanzania, Nigeria and Sierra Leone. This study concentrates on the RIU country programmes in Rwanda, Tanzania and Zambia.

The Africa country programme experienced a difficult start. Many organisations and consultants were involved in designing the approach and in the initial decision-making process on where to intervene and how. This resulted in a long inception period, mixed messages, an over-elaboration of the approach to be followed, and a limitation of the autonomy of the Africa country programmes.

These issues were identified by the Mid-term review and corrective measures were proposed by the following technical review. This resulted in an overhaul of the African Country Programme, shifting much of the decision-making from northern support organisations and consultants to local teams.

What characterises the programme today is a difference in interpretation of how to combine the objectives of achieving development impact and learning how to put research into use. Specifically, the balance between

these objectives, which at times require differing decisions, has never been entirely clear to the various actors involved.

### **Functions and composition of the country programmes**

The main intervention strategy of the RIU country programmes was built on innovation platforms. According to RIU an innovation platform consists of a broad range of stakeholders who share a common interest and come together to solve problems and develop mutually beneficial solutions.

All three countries visited initiated these innovation platforms. In Tanzania, the approach evolved into a looser network building approach with a central role for a brokering organisation (MUVEK), which was also the organisation contracted to execute the RIU programme. In Rwanda, commodity-based platforms were initiated. In Zambia, innovation platforms were formed around the theme of conservation agriculture. In both Rwanda and Zambia, a national level innovation platform was formed.

#### *Zambia*

RIU Zambia focused on conservation agriculture. Initially, 3 district level innovation platforms were initiated around this topic. One of the 3 became a rice platform rather than a thematic platform. Later on, 3 more district platforms on conservation agriculture were added. In addition, a national level innovation platform was initiated that focused more on providing support to the lower level platforms and advocacy for (policy) change at national level.

One of the main activities of these platforms was the development of local ripping (soil preparation technique) services through an Animal Draught Power Voucher Scheme. The platforms were also instrumental in the coordination of conservation agriculture activities. The media (radio, television and printed media) were used to communicate news of the successes of the activities related to the innovation platforms.

#### *Tanzania*

RIU Tanzania initiated innovation platforms on mechanisation, focused mainly on tractor owners and their services, a dairy platform and a poultry network focused on the establishment of a new value chain for local chicken. Support of the first 2 platforms was phased out after the mid-term review. The poultry network received additional support in scaling-out to other districts and regions.

An innovation challenge fund was launched at the start of the programme to support multi-stakeholder initiatives for innovation. Four proposals were funded at a first round of financing. The fund was abolished after the mid-term review.

#### *Rwanda*

Three commodity-based innovation platforms were initiated in Rwanda - a maize platform in Nyagatare district, a cassava platform in Gatsibu district and a potato platform in Gicumbi district. In addition, there was a fourth innovation platform, which focused on assuring access to smallholding irrigation infrastructure. The latter was phased out after the mid-term review. Furthermore, a national level platform was initiated, but its activities ceased in May 2010. RIU also supported a community radio station.

## **Key achievements of the RIU programme**

The main institutional change achieved by the RIU programmes has been the building of platforms improving the interaction between stakeholders for innovation in a sustainable manner. Evidence of these changes was found mainly at district level, and in some cases also at national level. A number of the initiated platforms were already functioning without RIU support, while planning was under way for those platforms still being supported. Most middle level platforms are likely to continue as either a loose network embedded in the district administration structure or as part of the private sector.

At national level in Zambia, policies on rice and conservation agriculture have been influenced through the involvement of the district and national platforms, and national bodies for these two areas have been formed. RIU Tanzania, through its dairy platform and chicken network, has secured tax breaks for milking and hatchery equipment.

At district level, other achievements, besides the continued existence of the platforms themselves as stakeholder interaction instruments, can be noted. In Zambia, RIU has contributed to improved coordination of conservation agriculture efforts and the development of new services for soil preparation, which used to be a major bottleneck in the adoption of conservation agriculture practices.

In Rwanda, all 3 commodity platforms have contributed to improved collaboration between economic and support actors in the respective value chains. Joint needs and opportunity assessments are catered for and the results of pilots are communicated through local radio, in particular in the case of the maize platform. On the ground, the platforms have contributed to intensification of production of their subject commodities and a durable improvement in the availability and use of high-quality planting material. The maize platform piloted new financial arrangements based on a warehouse receipt system, and a maize trading company with farmers as shareholders was created. The potato platform created a seed potato production association, producing mini-tubers that previously had only been produced by a research station. The cassava platform developed a system of multiplication and distribution of disease-free cuttings of improved mosaic-resistant varieties.

In Tanzania, the commodity platforms have, in a similar fashion, improved interaction between actors at district level. For example, the mechanisation platform has successfully developed a system through which smallholders have access to tractor services, simultaneously increasing the volume of work for tractor owners. The dairy platform continues to form the forum in which disagreements in the chain are discussed. Using a somewhat different approach, RIU Tanzania has initiated a local chicken value chain that did not exist at all before, and is solving problems in the chain as they emerge, while increasing the areas covered.

In Zambia, RIU has improved coordination of conservation agriculture interventions at district level, and initiated small-scale ripping services and rice trading centres. An effective link was established with local radio stations in order to generate wider interest in conservation agriculture and to communicate the findings of the platforms.

## **Key lessons and recommendations from the RIU Africa country programmes**

### *Levels of intervention*

The most important lesson to be learned from the RIU country programmes is that platforms or networks can function as a concrete forum for the facilitation of innovation. Specifically at 'middle' level, in the case of the district levels in the 3 countries concerned, improved interaction as a result of innovation platforms did contribute to institutional change. Middle level platforms require the local level organisation of stakeholders in order to be able to function. National level platforms can be valuable as 'think-tanks' in influencing decision-making, provided they consist of people with real powers of decision-making.

### *Initial decision-making*

The RIU programme invested a disproportionate amount of effort in initial decision-making. Considering the importance of middle level interaction, it would probably be more efficient to choose the intervention districts quickly, and then to consider further delimitation of the of the platform's mandate as a first step towards facilitating innovation.

### *Formality and autonomy*

RIU experience shows that a certain level of formalisation of the innovation platforms may be desired by the participants to gain outside recognition. In addition, a certain level of formality may help in establishing a platform as an autonomous entity that can continue to function with less external facilitation support. Care should be taken to avoid a level of formality that creates barriers to participation and the adaptation of the platform to fit changing needs, circumstances and opportunities.

### *Innovation platform participants*

Participation was at its most diverse in middle level platforms, which are the main engines of innovation as explained above. Individuals, representatives of larger groups of stakeholders and representatives of service providers were all represented. Platforms were farmer-dominated, while the private sector, especially the higher-end chain actors such as transporters, was poorly represented. Specific efforts were required to ensure their participation. The selection and recruitment of participants is a dynamic, continuous process and constitutes an important role in the process of facilitating innovation.

### *Capacity to participate*

To allow for effective participation in innovation platforms, capacity building of participants in terms of improved understanding of innovation, and the idea of joint learning, was necessary.

### *Steps in a process of building an innovation network*

A number of basic generic steps were distinguished as vital to the process of innovation platform building:

1. Delimitation of the innovation platform
2. Initial local stakeholder mapping and selection
3. Joint innovation system analysis and identification of promising entry points for action
4. Development of a joint action plan and agreement on division of tasks
5. Creating safeguards for platform sustainability and mechanisms for scaling-up

### *Innovation platform functions*

The innovation platforms, specifically at middle level, quickly assumed a wide-ranging mandate and, according to platform members, the functions of middle level platforms include:

1. Advocacy for change
2. Demand articulation
3. Access to financial services
4. Access to research and extension services
5. Access to inputs
6. Access to markets
7. Farmer collaboration
8. Innovation
9. Communication
10. Coordination of action between support organisations

From the RIU experience a number of roles have been identified that need to be fulfilled in order to facilitate innovation:

**Championing:** Representing local stakeholders at a higher level by virtue of a leading role in a local organisation.

**Brokering:** Make connections between actors that can benefit from each other's services or roles.

**Facilitation:** Stimulating and assisting the interactive process between stakeholders with the objective of improved quality of interaction.

**Thematic leadership (thrust leadership in RIU):** Taking the initiative on a certain topic

**Mobilisation:** Lobbying essential stakeholders to join a platform or local level organisation.

**Mediation:** Conflict resolution.

**Advocacy:** Promoting the network and ensuring support of and buy-in into the network by those individuals and organisations that matter.

**Problem solving:** Identifying, proposing and providing practical solutions for bottlenecks hindering progress of multi-stakeholder action.

**Technical backstopping:** Providing technical advice and training in order to ensure that opportunities discussed are economically, technically and socially viable.

### *Who facilitates?*

In the case of the RIU platform, the majority of the above tasks were taken on by an external organisation. Once a platform is established it may be possible for the participants in the platform to take on a number of the above roles. This is not possible, however, in the case of an informal network of actors held together entirely by the facilitator making connections.

### *Capacity to facilitate*

When considering the different roles involved, facilitating the initiation and functioning of an innovation platform requires a wide-ranging set of skills. A staff with a combination of all of these skills will be rare, which becomes a constraint when innovation platforms need to be deployed on a larger scale than is the case in the RIU country programmes. Building the required skills for facilitating innovation during an intervention deserves specific focused attention. Building the capacity to facilitate innovation within an organisation with a long-term mandate and presence would be preferable.

### *Joint stakeholder activities*

To forge new partnerships that can engage in joint learning, joint action is needed. Through this joint action, trust is built between stakeholders, and the collaborative environment can be created in which innovation can occur. Such joint action may require seed money.

*Who pays what?*

Resources are needed to ensure facilitation for a substantial length of time. In addition, resources are required for capacity building, joint activities and meetings. Who it is that will make the required resources available for the duration of a programme, and beyond, needs to be thought through.

*Keeping focus on innovation*

Keeping the focus of an innovation network on the combination of the participant's direct own interests and the wider public benefit through innovation will require active facilitation. Specific efforts will have to be made to translate the lessons learned into more generic insights and to consider opportunities for wider dissemination that have proven effective at local level

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## 1 Introduction

The assumption which the RIU programme is based is that research promotes innovation only when it is embedded in the wider set of relationships, interactions and processes that shape ideas and put them into use. The key research objective for RIU therefore is to find out how different approaches impact on maximising the benefits of agricultural research for its potential beneficiaries. The present monograph also contributes to answering that question, as it looks at one of its approaches, namely the African Country Programmes. Research into Use (RIU) established country programmes in Malawi, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Tanzania and Zambia with the explicit agenda of experimenting with ways of building capacity that enable research to be put into use. The main tools deployed were innovation platforms.<sup>1</sup> The Central Research Team of the Research into Use programme has asked the Royal Tropical Institute to document the lessons emerging from the RIU Africa Country Program.

### 1.1 Terms of reference

KIT developed *institutional histories* of the RIU programme with a specific focus on the African Country Programmes (ACPs). Institutional histories are narratives that record changes in institutional arrangements (new ways of working) that evolve over time. It recognises not only technological innovation but also institutional innovation as drivers of social and economic change.

The main items in the terms of reference addressed in this report are:

- Develop a **short institutional history** of the RIU programme with a particular emphasis on understanding the changing prominence of core concepts and the way this is played out in programme strategy, with particular emphasis on the Africa country programmes. This is reported in chapter 2.
- Develop a detailed **institutional history of the Africa country programme** with particular emphasis on exploring the ways in which the local and national political and institutional environment in the countries changed over time. For the purposes of this detailed examination Tanzania, Rwanda and Zambia were selected. This is addressed in chapters 3, 4 and 5.
- Develop a detailed account of the nature, role and **function of the intermediary/brokering** task (including the innovation platforms). The emphasis is on explaining in accessible language what brokering actually involves. This is discussed in chapter 6.
- Based on the above, develop a set of **guiding principles** for programme design for supporting intermediary agencies/brokers for enabling innovation and putting research into use. This is addressed in chapter 7. Also addressed in chapter 7 are the key policy messages for national and international support of agricultural research and innovation.

### 1.2 Methodology

The study started off with the elaboration of a work plan, including the fields of investigation and checklists for country visits. Two KIT researchers visited the UK to reconstruct the history of the entire RIU programme. Subsequently, three KIT researchers went to three countries (Tanzania, Rwanda and Zambia) to reconstruct the history of the country programme and explore what brokering means in practice. The chapters on the specific experiences in

<sup>1</sup> ToR KIT, November 2010.

Zambia, Tanzania and Rwanda result from visits to the African Country Programmes in January 2011 and are the result of the following steps:

- *Preparations and understanding of the African Country Programme.* Before the trip the Central research Team asked the African Country Programme to facilitate the visits. The ACPs sent several documents in preparation. In addition the website (<http://www.researchintouse.com/>) was consulted.
- *Fieldwork.* The African Country Programme organised meetings with different stakeholders involved in the different activities. In as far as was possible, at least three different stakeholders were interviewed for each activity/innovation platform. Different methods were used to allow for triangulation; these include desk study, timelines, stakeholder diagrams, focus group discussions and interviews. The African Country Programme also organised field trips to the current activities.
- *Analysis and reporting.* The reports, interviews and group discussions were analysed with regard to a number of issues. These are reported in the relevant chapters and used as input for further analysis of crosscutting issues.
- The three researchers developed a framework of analysis in order to compare the different experiences in the different countries. The authors shared preparatory documents as well as earlier drafts of this monograph with the researcher for Nigeria and Malawi, but since reports on those countries have not been received those experiences could not be integrated here.

Preliminary insights were shared during a RIU programme meeting in March 2011 in Kenya. Feedback from this meeting is also integrated in this report. Hence, this monograph is based on findings and insights from our visit to the UK, literature reviews and comparison of experiences in Tanzania, Rwanda and Zambia, as well as a first discussion of the preliminary findings.

### 1.3 Strategic concepts

The change in core concepts is discussed in the subsequent chapters. Here, we present the concepts underlying the programme.

According to the RIU website (<http://www.researchintouse.com>) **innovation** means the application of new knowledge or of existing knowledge used in new ways and contexts to do something better. Knowledge includes information, technologies, practices and policies.

According to RIU (2010) an **innovation platform** consists of a broad range of stakeholders who share a common interest and come together to solve problems and develop mutually beneficial solutions. In RIU, Innovation Platforms are associated either with agricultural commodity value chains or with themes. The innovation platforms are designed along three levels: the national level, the middle level and the local level. These are clearly separated yet linked by different roles and hence needs.

In the RIU philosophy the **private sector role** needs to be prominent, as the main driver of innovation processes.

**Research** is another strategic concept for RIU. The programme did not demonstrate, however, a unanimous view on the role of research in innovation. As we will see later, at the start research was seen as a supplier of technology that needed to be supported in disseminating these technologies for the benefit of farmers and other actors. This was meant as a response to the disappointing adoption of research outputs. At the same time, innovation systems thinking was embraced, which is based on the basic principle that research provides a

service that benefits the innovation process, but is rarely the main driver of innovation.

#### 1.4 Limitations

The design of the Research Into Use Programme's African Country Programmes has a number of characteristics that directly influence the results of this study. The programme was aimed at putting research results into use, which would require an analysis of the institutional context in which these research results were developed. This is obviously beyond the scope of this study.

The ACP programmes have developed a logical framework. A logical framework is not always **compatible with** a dynamic innovation process.

It is difficult to attribute change to the RIU programme. In fact, attribution is difficult in the case of all programmes aimed at promoting agricultural innovation. The RIU country programmes lack detailed baselines that can be used to assess institutional change. Considering the fact that the programme is aimed specifically at partnering existing programmes and processes, the absence of some kind of baseline data hinders the attribution of some of the recorded institutional changes to the Research Into Use Programme. However, even if such a baseline did exist, it would still be difficult to unequivocally attribute changes to RIU intervention, as they did not take place within a vacuum but rather within dynamic changing systems.

This report is the result of a qualitative study aimed at drawing lessons from the RIU experiences with facilitation of innovation. It did not evaluate the effectiveness of the programme, nor did it systematically document development impact.

## 2 History and evolution of RIU

### 2.1 What RIU does

#### *RIU objectives*

The Research Into Use programme aims to accumulate and evaluate evidence in order to shape and share lessons on how to best enable innovation in the agricultural sector so as to achieve social and economic gains in diverse developing country settings. (<http://www.researchintouse.com>). Initially, RIU was set up to make better use of available agricultural research products. RIU is first and foremost a research programme that focuses on the relationships between agricultural research results and innovation. It works towards identifying better processes to help put research into use. RIU has two objectives: (i) achieving impact at scale, for more than 56 million people; and, in the process, (ii) generate lessons about putting research into use. RIU has a total budget of 37.5 million pounds. The objective of the ACPs is to facilitate agricultural innovation in such a way as to contribute to the ultimate goal of transforming smallholder farming and associated value chains into viable and sustainable enterprises. The RIU log frame was changed several times.

#### *RIU programme components*

The programme has three main components:

#### **Asia Country Programmes**

Through competitive calls, a number of projects in South Asia were selected. They are aimed at developing new partnerships to put research produced under the RNRRS into use. Currently, eleven projects are running on four themes: seed delivery systems, innovation in value chains, scaling-up natural resource management research products and investing in institutions for rural service delivery.

#### **African Country Programmes**

As already mentioned, the objective of the Africa Country Programmes was to facilitate agricultural innovation. Africa Country Programmes were established in Zambia, Rwanda, Malawi, Tanzania, Nigeria and Sierra Leone. In this report we focus on the African Country Programmes. The Rwanda Country Programme was the first of these, followed by Malawi, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Tanzania, and finally Zambia.

#### **Best Bet Initiative**

The Best Bet Initiative makes resources available for innovative ideas that can initiate new viable enterprises. The idea behind the Best Bet initiative is to identify convincing innovative ideas that have shown initial pilot success and to support their attaining a scale that makes them commercially viable and sustainable. Ideas are selected through the Dragon's Den - an innovative competitive process - and gain the funding deemed necessary for attaining the required scale.

#### *RIU programme management evolution*

Initial partners of the RIU programme were NR International (lead partner and coordinator), PARC<sup>2</sup> (for Monitoring and Evaluation) and NIDA (Nkoola Institutional Development Associates) a private consultancy firm based in Uganda. The partners had differing activity plans and budgets and, according to most respondents, worked in isolation from each other. At the UK level there was an advisory panel (the Programme Advisory Board) for the integration of

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.iodparc.com/>

innovation systems thinking in the programme, but the panel was only rarely called on for advice.

Today the RIU programme comprises (1) the directorate, seated in Edinburgh, and the UK support team, (2) the Central research Team (lead by the LINK programme of the United Nations University Maastricht Economic and Social Research and training Centre on Innovation and Technology (UNU-MERIT)), (3) an evaluation team lead by an outside consultancy firm and (4) a communications team.

Whereas the former team of partners was characterised as formal (in terms of procedures) and used many consultants for advice, the new team of partners operates in a rather informal fashion and uses in-house expertise instead of consultants. The budget, as a result, is also used differently—geared towards increased activities. The initial partners were each given their own budgets, whereas now the budget is decentralised and spread over the country programmes.

## 2.2 Critical events of the RIU Programme

The RIU programme is a follow-up to the Renewable Natural Resources Research Strategy (RNRRS). DFID invested over 200 million pounds in the RNRRS programme to generate research products, in addition to investments in the CGIAR. The RNRRS commenced in 1995 and ended in 2006. Its aim, according to the website, was to: *remove researchable constraints to the sustainable development and/or management of the natural resources*. It was managed through ten research programmes ranging from animal health and fish genetic research to forestry, livestock and plant sciences. Evaluation showed that a lot of research was done but little impact achieved. The English parliament exerted pressure on DFID to show impact from the investments. This triggered the development of a specific programme to bring research products developed under the RNRRS into use, for which a substantial budget was made available (37 million pounds). The programme was founded on the assumption that 30 promising research results could be identified that had the potential for breakthrough success, provided they would be promoted by investing substantial resources. Based on this assumption, RIU aimed to identify thirty promising research products from the RNRRS legacy and to strengthen the impact of each selected promising research result with an investment of around one million pounds.

In this reasoning, research produces 'products' which can later be transferred in a separate effort to its intended users. This linear thinking about agricultural research and extension is flawed and has been criticised by many.

At the start of the programme in 2006 there was a lot of ambiguity about the focus of the programme: was its main focus **getting** research *into* use or **learning** or **researching** how to get research into use. In other words, was it a development or a research programme? Currently, there seems to be a consensus on what it is the programme aims to achieve. Both research and development are now considered outcomes of the programme, which means that although there is no longer discussion about what the objective is, the two objectives remain united in a single programme. At times a tension can still be identified between the two objectives.

### Critical event 1: **Reviews of the RNRRS**

Several reviews of the Renewable Natural Resources Research Strategy (RNRRS) programme showed that there were no or only few research products readily available for a quick uptake. From the more than 1600 research results,

280 products were selected by the ten programme managers, based on their potential impact. These were considered in more detail, but in the end the reviews concluded that no such 'ready for uptake' research results existed within the RNRRS portfolio. Slowly it became clear that the assumption on which the programme was based (i.e. that there are research products from RNRRS programmes 'on the shelf' that can be put into use by giving them a push) was flawed. This drove home the realisation that the contribution of research to innovation is not that of sole driver of the first steps to a result, after which the result can be disseminated. This led to a shift in focus from promoting research products, based on Transfer of Technology thinking, to facilitating innovation, based on innovation system thinking. As a result, reviews of the RNRRS lead to a changed understanding of the role of research in RIU.

#### Critical event 2: **Mid-Term review**

Probably the main, and surely the most obvious, critical event that has influenced the entire programme was the Mid-Term Review followed by a series of technical reviews<sup>3</sup>. The RIU programme was revised following those reviews in late 2008 and early 2009. The main findings of the Mid-term review related to poor management, the lack of consensus on the balance between the objective of piloting innovation approaches and the objective of impact at scale, and the lack of a unified vision on the role of research in innovation. A more unified vision emerged as a result of the Mid-term review.

A new programme director and a new programme support team were appointed. The most important effect was that the country programmes were to be advised and supported technically through a small team with a single vision. In addition the programme management transferred more decision-making power to the national implementation teams, maintaining only a small administrative and communication unit at programme level.

Elements of the current vision that are common to the project partners relate to the ambition of RIU (both development and research) and the realisation that even in the private sector only a limited part of the research is actually taken up by the users.

However, even after the Mid-Term Review, differences in perception at the level of the RIU programme management still exist. Firstly with regard to the roles of public and private sector in facilitating innovation and secondly with regard to the desirable outcome of the RIU programme, improved understanding of and a capacity to innovate, or development impact as a result of the promoted innovation.

#### Critical event 3: **Launch of the Best Bet initiative.**

The programme stresses the need for private sector involvement. The Best Bet is based on this assumption and aims to test an innovative competitive funding mechanism in which grants are being provided to a number of large-scale technology promotion activities. The current study has not investigated the Best Bet programme. However, there is a reconfirmation of the focus of RIU towards an even more important role for the private sector.

To an extent, the Best Bet Initiative goes back to the assumption that good ideas can develop into viable business provided they are given the right kind of push. What has changed, with regard to the assumption at the beginning of RIU, is that the source of such opportunities is not the RNRRS research legacy.

<sup>3</sup> From this point on when we refer to the Mid-TermReview we will mean the Mid-Term review followed by a series of technical reviews.

Any promising idea that can turn new practices or ideas into a sustainable, viable business is eligible.

### 2.3 Critical events for the African Country Programmes

Initially, RIU wanted to work in 10-15 countries in which DFID had intervened with the RNRRS programme, covering at least three countries per region. In the end this was reduced to six countries in Sub-Saharan Africa based on criteria such as geographic division, post-conflict versus stable governance and land-locked versus coastal. This also highlights the degree to which the programme was 'designed' rather than emerged based on opportunities at the outset. Zambia, Tanzania and Rwanda provide very different contexts, both in an economic and political sense, for agricultural sector development. As a result, the embedding of the RIU programme and the functioning of both the ACPs and the resulting innovation platforms are very different. A major lesson from the first part of the Programme (i.e. before the Mid-Term Review) was that a blueprint approach for innovation platforms cannot work, and that what is successful in one country will not be necessarily successful in another. In Tanzania, for example, the main approach is brokering to address constraints that prevent producers from taking advantage of an opportunity (developing a new sub-sector) - according to the country coordinator from Tanzania this is the bottleneck approach. In contrast, in Zambia the approach towards developing the use of Conservation Agriculture is mostly technology-driven out-scaling including harmonisation and dissemination of information. In Rwanda, the focus was on commodity development through building stakeholder capacity and enhancing interaction through formal coalitions. Initially, there was a strong link between the African policy frames such as CAADP. However, those ties have not been fully pursued; partly because of a difference in horizon (RIU has a 5-year mandate and CAADP a 20-year horizon).

A few events have been across countries and critical for the current functioning of the programme.

#### Critical event 1: **Country assessments.**

In all cases these were carried out by consultants who are currently no longer involved. During this step first contacts were established with the main stakeholders. An external recruitment office was enlisted to recruit the experts who would carry out the country assessment. In hindsight this can be considered a poor decision, as the teams recruited did not produce, in a number of countries, a result that was of any relevance to the further development of the country programmes. Some respondents felt that the focus was centred so much on transparency and clear procedures that the quality and (probably) the consultant that were selected were not up to the standard required. In both Rwanda and Zambia the country assessments did have an influence on the programme design and, especially, on the composition of the National Innovation Coalition (NIC) as a result of the identification of the important actors in the national innovation system. It is debatable, however, whether an extensive study was needed to achieve this. In Tanzania, the country assessment was rejected at the central level, which resulted also in a difficult start for the programme.

#### Critical event 2: **Design of innovation platforms.**

The PICO team<sup>4</sup> and NIDA have had a strong influence on the design of the programme. There has been a concerted effort to ensure a balanced design of

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.picoteam.org/>

the RIU pilot for the six countries. In addition, many experts visited the country teams, providing theoretical support in the field of innovation system thinking. This did initially leave little room for manoeuvre for the country programmes to adapt to local opportunities, constraints and realities. The country programmes designed stakeholder interaction at three levels: the national level and the middle level, and additionally at the local level, mainly involving producers. These are clearly separated yet linked. This division is still evident in all cases and has influenced the design of mechanisms for enabling innovation.

**Critical event 3: National innovation Coalition.**

NIDA introduced the National Innovation Coalition concept for the specific purpose of embedding the programme in the national system. Rwanda was the first country to initiate a National Innovation Coalition as it was the first country to start with programme implementation.

**Critical event 4: Mid-Term Review**

In all of the countries the Mid-Term review had major implications for the programme's activities. The content and methodological support from RIU programme level changed from a number of teams (NIDA, NR International and PARC) providing advice and support, to a Central Research Team chief responsible for research and documentation of lessons. In terms of the management of the country programmes, they become directly accountable to the RIU administration in the UK. In Tanzania, the management as such did not change, as it had always been assured on contract by an organisation, rather than having specific people assigned as being answerable to the three separate overall executive organisations. In Rwanda and Zambia, the staff hired through RIU was answerable as a team to the overall RIU management.

According to the website, the innovation systems approach was initially used as a prescriptive framework for establishing a fixed menu of organisational and institutional arrangements for innovation. This resulted in an over-designed programme, which, unintentionally, reduced the ability to adapt the approaches, needs and opportunities that presented themselves. After the Mid-Term Review, less emphasis is put on a specific design and more on innovation system thinking as a tool to aid learning and capacity building for innovation.

Furthermore, after the Mid-Term review, all of the countries were granted more autonomy in the use of programme resources. Additional flexibility funds were made available for the programme's activities.

In terms of content, all of the countries were asked to focus on achieving impact at scale, both directly at the level of intended beneficiaries and as an impact through institutional change. This resulted in making choices based on which activities were to be continued and which ones terminated.

**Critical event 5: Preparing a strategy for post-project continuation.**

The Mid-Term review also led most countries to reduce their activities, focus on a few platforms and think about their strategies for post-project continuation of its activities.

In general it can be concluded that the RIU programme did experiment with different forms of platforms to facilitate innovation. What has hampered the programme in its development is the urge to over-design the pilot efforts from the outside. At the onset of the programme in particular, the country offices had very little freedom to deviate from prescribed models and were over-advised by external consultants. This has, in some cases, led to somewhat artificial innovation platforms, of which a number were abandoned later. In addition, the activities on the agenda were over-ambitious for the ultimately

fairly modest resources and timeframe in those countries. The Mid-term review forced the abandonment of a substantial number of activities. At the same time it brought more autonomy and control to the country programmes over the remaining activities, allowing them to develop further in a more organic fashion.

### **3 History and evolution of Zambia Country Programme**

#### **3.1 Activities of the RIU Zambia programme**

The Zambia RIU programme has initiated a National Innovation Coalition as the national stakeholder interaction mechanism for the facilitation of innovation. Its objective was the enhancement of innovation policies in general and conservation agriculture and rice development in particular.

Based on advice given by the RIU management, the NIC selected a number of priority topics to work on through district-level innovation platforms. Two innovation platforms focusing on conservation agriculture were initiated in Monze and Chipata district. In February 2010 another 3 platforms were initiated on the same theme in Petauke, Kalomo and Kazungula. An important activity coordinated through the district platform was the initiation of an Animal Draught Power Voucher Scheme for the development of local ripping services.

In addition, an innovation platform was initiated in Chinsali district that also started out as a conservation agriculture platform, but which has evolved into a rice sector platform.

Furthermore, the RIU programme worked on communication-led innovation through the local media (radio, television and the printed media). RIU has supported the development of participatory radio as a support tool for agricultural innovation. This did comprise activities related to conservation agriculture in collaboration with the innovation platforms, but not exclusively.

The RIU-Z has introduced five main programmes since the restructuring of the programme in 2009:

- (i) Support and development of District Innovation Platforms on Conservation Agriculture
- (ii) Within the activities of these platforms, develop an Animal Draught Power Voucher Scheme for the development of a local ripping service capacity
- (iii) Support of communication-led innovation through the local media (radio, television and the printed media);
- (iv) Development of the rice value chain in Chinsali; and,
- (v) Enhancement of influence on innovation systems policies in general and conservation agriculture and rice development in particular, through the National Innovation Coalition (NIC)

#### **3.2 History of the Zambia Country Programme**

The Research Into Use (RIU) Programme initiated five country programmes in Africa in 2006-2007. In 2008 Zambia was added to the list, after selection from a shortlist made up of Zambia, Mozambique and South Africa, representing the SADC region together with the already selected Malawi. RIU Zambia, therefore, started relatively late with the implementation of its programme, compared to the other five RIU target countries. Commencement of the Zambian Country Programme was approved by the RIU advisory board in January 2008.

The advantage of this was that some of the initial lessons learned from other country programmes could be used in Zambia. Some of questions raised, based on preliminary lessons, were: (i) Can thematic issues, instead of commodities, be selected as the basis for uniting stakeholders in order to facilitate innovation? (ii) What should the role of the National RIU team be? (iii) Can the

thematic choice be de-linked from the RNRRS database and rather be focused on research and innovation in general. These considerations resulted in an initial focus on three thematic issues, complete disconnection of the RNRRS database and the RIU Zambia programme emphasising the facilitation of innovation and communication.

**Table 1: Timeline of the Zambia country programme**

July 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ RIU programme initiated</li> </ul>
January 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Choice of Africa Country Programmes (other than Zambia)</li> </ul>
January 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Addition of Zambia to Africa Country Programmes</li> </ul>
May 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Zambia Country Assessment and Strategy development. Listing of potential issues and commodities</li> </ul>
August 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Establishment of the National Innovation Coalition (NIC) through nomination by MACO.</li> </ul>
October 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Zambia Country Assessment and Strategy document finalised</li> <li>▪ Appointment of the Zambia RIU Country team (invited NPF declined): One staff</li> <li>▪ Contract of Z-RIU with Pelum</li> </ul>
November 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Country coordinator starts</li> <li>▪ NIDA and general RIU management decide that Zambia would take on issues for the Innovation Platforms rather than commodities</li> </ul>
December 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Official launch of the RIUZ (Z-RIU) programme (NIC, Country team and Strategy).</li> </ul>
January 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Revised MTR report published (first version in November 2008)</li> </ul>
February 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Implementation Plan finalised</li> <li>▪ Thematic issues chosen: Conservation Agriculture; Remoteness and isolation and Knowledge market services</li> <li>▪ The National Process Facilitator was recruited, completing the country team</li> <li>▪ Identification of areas (SP, EP); CP and NWP dropped</li> </ul>
March 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 2<sup>nd</sup> NIC meeting; Implementation plan endorsed</li> <li>▪ District Inception Workshop for Platform Formation 25<sup>th</sup>/26<sup>th</sup> March 2009</li> <li>▪ Radio included. Remoteness and isolation not as standalone (result of social exclusion).</li> <li>▪ District IP formation in Chipata (stakeholder mapping and identification process around the two themes)</li> </ul>
April 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Symposium with UNZA on enhancement of agriculture (7-8 April 2009)</li> <li>▪ Training of the Monze and Chipata IP representatives on CA, IP management, ICT, governance</li> <li>▪ Formation of the Chipata, Monze Core (PCT) and Info (Media) team (as in executive committee)</li> </ul>
May 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ District IP formation in Monze (stakeholder mapping and identification process around the two themes).</li> <li>▪ 1<sup>st</sup> CAA inaugural meeting of GART (interim secretary) and CFU, agreed on RIU support logistics</li> </ul>
June 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ First regular Monze CA IP meeting</li> </ul>
July 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Meetings between Individual RIU Country Programmes and the Technical Review Team</li> </ul>
September 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ MoU between PELUM (o.b.o. RIU) and PANOS (PSAf)</li> </ul>
November 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Platforms on KSM and Remoteness and Isolation dropped;</li> <li>▪ Four priority activities remain: CA platforms, voucher system, communication and rice value chain.</li> <li>▪ Start of use of the flexibility fund (rice revolving fund; cleaning up Supa).</li> <li>▪ Start of Rice Value Chain Stakeholders Forum</li> </ul>
December 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Revised implementation plan for 2009 to 2011</li> </ul>
February 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Expansion number of IPs on CA</li> </ul>
June 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ National Innovation Coalition meeting</li> </ul>
September 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Second thematic meeting of the Conservation Agriculture Association (CAA)</li> </ul>
December 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Exit strategy formulation with all IPs</li> </ul>
January 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ RIU Institutional history study</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Consolidation; Capacity building (development entrepreneurship for ripping services; rice stakeholders; private sector involvement, community/local media outlets.</li> <li>▪ Local radio in Chinsali involvement in community radio programmes on rice value chain</li> <li>▪ Ripper introduction in rice cultivation with ADP</li> </ul>
June 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Planned closing down of the programme</li> </ul>

Comprehensive consultations with stakeholders in agriculture and natural resource management in 2008 by the country assessment team and the subsequent team working on the country strategy resulted in a number of choices. The resulting RIU-Z programme had poverty alleviation as the core objective of its programme. The country assessment study concluded that research results in Zambia were not used and that research operated in a supply-driven mode. It proposed an innovation system approach as the way to address this. Key constraints for poverty reduction were identified as:

- remoteness and isolation
- socio-economic power relationships
- limited priority for investment in rural livelihoods.

Two main areas of focus of the RIU-Z were subsequently identified as:

- Targeted capacity development for improving the functioning of the innovation system in relation to a theme;
- Establish district and sub-district platforms to address bottlenecks related to these themes. The situational analysis resulted in a long list of constraints and opportunities. Ultimately, however, limited practical guidance was obtained for the programme from the assessment and strategy development, as few choices were made.

In the RIU-ZIP (Zambia Implementation Plan, March 2009) an action-learning programme was proposed which was built on innovation system analysis and gave priority to strategic thrusts.

Two main intervention areas were identified:

1. Addressing the wider policy and enabling environment for innovation.
2. Strengthening the role of the small-scale farmers

A number of districts were chosen for the RIU intervention, based on on-going activities of potential collaborating partners. Monze, Chipata, and Chinsali were identified.

Two thematic priorities were identified:

1. conservation agriculture
2. farmer/community-based and enterprise-driven knowledge and services model.

The three poverty drivers identified in the RIU Zambia strategy were to be addressed as crosscutting issues in the country programme.

The identification of the themes rather than commodities was proposed by NIDA and endorsed by the stakeholder workshops. The theme conservation agriculture was selected for three main reasons:

1. Soil fertility and soil degradation are a major constraint, mainly in agro-ecological zone II (Eastern Province, Central Province, North-Western Province and Southern province), and basically along the line of rail maize belt;
2. The adoption rate of conservation agricultural practices was low while the benefits were proven by promising research results
3. The presence of other programmes on conservation farming.

Typically, conservation agriculture represented a promising potential technology (based on research results) that was not being used to its full potential. Adaptation of the technology was required, however, in order to make it acceptable to farmers, and the involvement of the private sector was needed in order to promote input supply by agro-dealers and the marketing of maize and rotation crops such as sunflowers and legumes (dry beans, cowpeas, groundnuts, soy beans, etc.) by local traders and other chain actors.

Conservation agriculture with the maize/legume rotation and conservation agriculture based on rice production were selected as the main themes. The earlier selected theme on the farmer-based enterprise-driven knowledge and services model was further elaborated into the conservation agriculture related animal draught power voucher scheme. In this scheme smallholder ripping services were developed. In addition to providing soil preparation, the ripping service providers also provided knowledge on conservation agriculture.

The conservation farming programme in Chinsali shifted its focus from conservation agriculture to marketable quality rice production as an income-generating activity in an area low on natural resources. The NGO involved also identified beekeeping as a strategy for the maintenance of trees in the area. In essence, the platform quickly changed from a theme-based approach (conservation agriculture) to a commodity-based approach (rice).

**Box1: What is conservation agriculture?**

Conservation agriculture aims at using natural resources in a sustainable manner. It is based on soil and water conservation and the use and maintenance of trees in the farmland. Conservation agriculture has a number of components (i) rotation of cereals with legumes and deep-rooting crops; (ii) minimum tillage such as potholing or ripping, but not ploughing; and (iii) Water conservation through continuous crop cover, mulching and ridging and potholing (depending on the climatic zone).

The technology was developed for Zambia in 1997 and was initially based mainly on potholing. Potholing is the making of planting holes with a narrow hoe or shaka hoe with minimum disturbance of the soil. The organic matter/manure or fertilizer is then concentrated in the planting hole. Weeding is done manually. This is a labour-intensive practice, which hampers the adoption of conservation agriculture. However, due to the loss of cattle and oxen caused by a CBPP and East Coast Fever (ECF or corridor disease) epidemic, many farmers have, since the turn of the century, been forced to work the soil manually rather than use oxen. Mechanical conservation farming is less labour-intensive. It is based on ripping the soil (by animal-drawn Magoye Rippers or tractor-drawn rippers) and chemical weed control (pre-emergence or post-emergence) in combination, optionally, with mechanical weeding.

Platform mechanisms at national, district and local level were identified as the mode of operation for RIU Zambia.

At local level the RIU Zambia programme initiated local learning sites where producers and local agents interacted and experimented with Conservation Agriculture. At district level multi-stakeholder platforms were initiated. These platforms had a pivotal role in articulating the voice of small-scale farmers represented in the study groups, helping them to influence policies through the national platform and to coordinate and plan action implemented at local level.

At national level the National Innovation Coalition (NIC) was initiated with the purpose of overseeing the whole innovation system and lobbying for policy change. Since the permanent secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives (MACO) is a member of the NIC, there is a direct line to influencing national agricultural policies. Many of the NIC members are also members of the Conservation Agriculture Association, and some also of the National Rice Development Task Force.

The RIU programme staff was directly involved in initiating and facilitating these activities. It provided training in facilitation and innovation systems thinking to the members of the district platform and the NIC. Conservation

Farming Unit (CFU) facilitators were trained to initiate and manage the learning sites. Unique in Zambia was the heavy involvement of the Zambia National Farmers Union, most specifically to ensure training and communication on conservation agriculture at local level through the CFUs, but also as active participant in the district platforms and the NIC.

Resources for strategic investment in the platforms' joint action programmes were made available by the RIU programme (through the so-called flexibility fund). Many of the activities funded were at the request of, channelled through and coordinated by the district platforms.

In addition, RIU funded communication activities. Similarly, these were coordinated at district level through the district platforms. For the communication component, each district platform had a specific communication sub-committee.

### **3.3 Critical events and decisions in the Zambia RIU programme**

#### *Mid-Term review*

The Mid-Term Review process resulted in two main structural changes in Zambia. First of all, there was a shift from a strong focus on M&E to communication as an instrument of impact. Secondly, the focus of the country programme shifted from the direct facilitation of innovation by its own staff to programme management and supporting others in the facilitation of innovation. In real terms, this resulted in increased focus on conservation agriculture and the dropping of some of the other themes, such as remoteness and isolation and the development of farmer/community-based enterprise-driven knowledge services. Also, the national level ambitions, with regard to the development of an electronic agricultural knowledge market, were abandoned.

Changes in management resulted in more autonomy for the Zambia team. Since then the RIU-Z Team has become more involved in project management and less involved in monitoring and evaluation and learning.

#### *Entry point selection*

Drawing on earlier experiences in other countries, the RIU programme management placed strong emphasis in Zambia on themes rather than on a commodity as an entry point for innovation platform building. As a result, it was fairly difficult to interest and involve private sector actors, such as producers, traders and processors of agricultural products. Their interest was not immediately triggered by the conservation agriculture theme. The Chinsali platform, which diverted the focus to rice, showed that it was easier to rally direct economic actors around a commodity, with the promise of collaborating for improved profits in the sector. .

#### *The role of the RIU Zambia staff*

The RIU-Z relied heavily on its own facilitation capacity to initiate and facilitate the platforms at district and national level and did not contract external facilitators. A relatively small number of specific assignments, such as the animal draught power voucher scheme, the radio communication programme, the selection of local rice varieties and the marketing of rice, were sourced out. This has consequences for the scaling-up of the experience. RIU-Z is a time-bound project that will come to an end in 2011. The experience and capacity developed by experimenting with the facilitation of innovation through platforms has not been institutionalised outside of the programme activity.

### *Communication as a means of triggering innovation*

A more widespread feature of the RIU-Z programme as a whole was the involvement of at least four community radio stations in a participatory approach towards radio and conservation agriculture. The choice to actively work on communication linked to the learning sites and the district platforms provided the programme with a clear modality of scaling-up of results.

### *Installation of conservation agriculture learning sites*

A special feature of the initial conservation agriculture platforms was the relationship with the conservation agriculture learning sites. The sites were run by prominent farmers and the ZNFU's Conservation Farming Unit (CFU) learning groups. The RIU programme initially invested heavily in these local groups, directly (inputs etc.) and indirectly (training of CFU facilitators). The CFU facilitators were instrumental in promoting the interaction between the local learning sites and the district platforms. There was an overlap between the conservation agriculture learning groups or study circles and groups from other programmes such as Farmer Field Schools, and Radio Listening Groups or Radio Farmer Forums.

### *Use of the flexibility funds*

The flexibility fund was used for value chain functions (marketing and seed supply) rather than for development of platforms members' joint activities.

#### **3.3.1 Institutional arrangements**

The RIU-Z programme decided to specifically intervene in conservation agriculture in places where there were already programmes in existence, and to contribute by bringing the different initiatives, as well as the different stakeholders, together:

- (i) the public sector (MACO, DACO, GART, ZARI, donors);
- (ii) The private sector (agro-dealers, traders, business associations, processing industries);
- (iii) NGOs and civil society (National and International NGOs, producers and their organisations (associations and cooperatives); and
- (iv) The media (community radio and the printed media).

By choosing these districts the platforms quickly acquired the role of coordination and mutual reinforcement of various programmes related to conservation agriculture.

## **3.4 Main institutional change achievements**

At national level the NIC has influenced national strategies on rice development and enhancement of conservation farming in the National Sustainable Agriculture Strategy. In addition the NIC has been coordinating and sharing lessons learned on the four above-mentioned programmes and developing and sharing policy briefs, such as on the need for diversification and addressing marketing constraints.

During the programme there has been a gradual consolidation of the National Innovation Coalition through the Conservation Agriculture Association, Rice Stakeholders Association/Federation, and the Taskforce Conservation Agriculture and Rice in the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives (MACO).

At district level, the first 2 conservation agriculture platforms in Monze and Chipata Innovation Platforms have been integrated into the district administration system as sub-committees of the District Development Coordination Committee (DDCC). The new innovation platforms on

conservation agriculture in Petauke, Kalomo and Kazungula were linked, right from the start, to the DDCC structure. In the Chinsali rice platform, the facilitation role is being taken up by COMACO (Community Markets for Conservation), a non-profit rice branding and trading company. COMACO is also taking over the up-scaling in other districts (Mpika and Serenje).

#### **Box 2 Conservation agriculture and value chain development**

Africa Now is an NGO based in Livingstone, Zambia with 3 field officers and 1 support staff aiming at developing land-tied enterprise solutions with a strong market focus. The target group is the poorest people. The community involved was struggling with poor chilli pepper yields, for which they had found a commercial market (Elephant Pepper out growers scheme) despite the fact that they were using fertilizers. The potholing method of conservation farming and drip irrigation were introduced by Africa Now, using black soil in the potholes and, later, manure. Support was also provided by the Technical Services Branch of the DACOs office, which was coordinated through the Kazungula SIIF. The farmers have started copying the technology that they have seen on the demo sites and now have a good market for their chillies. The entire programme is supported by the Elephant Pepper development Trust (EPDT), as an NGO, and the trader involved is African Spices. The Kazungula SIIF helped to bring all these actors together, although not all are members of the SIIF.

Source: Mr. Highland Hamududu, Africa Now

A notable change in collaboration resulting from the RIU programme has been the involvement of communication and media actors. Local radio stations, such as Sky FM, the National Agricultural Information Service (NAIS), and the Zambia News and Information Services (ZANIS) engaged with stakeholders in conservation agriculture through the district platforms. An important role in this was played by a third party, PANOS Southern-Africa (PSAf), hired by RIU to shape the communication component of the RIU programme. Participatory broadcasts on conservation agriculture resulted in links with other stakeholders outside the platform, a further standardisation of the messages and identification of more sources of information, and the development of products and programmes for the printed press and the Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation (ZNBC).

All of the actors, including the private sector, were very positive about the radio programmes on conservation agriculture. Options for the sponsoring of some of the radio programmes by individual actors (NGOs and private sector) are available.

A crucial bottleneck when it comes to the adoption of conservation agriculture is the labour required for tillage and weed control. Upon the initiative of the Monze innovation platform, this was addressed by a system based on animal-drawn rippers through specialised service providers and the use of herbicides. (see Box 3).

### **Box 3 Animal-drawn ripping service provider scheme**

Conservation agriculture is hampered by the high labour requirements for soil preparation and weeding. Animal-drawn ripping and weed control using herbicides are much more efficient alternatives to manual soil preparation and weeding by hand. Through RIU Zambia, commercial ripping services were piloted as few farmers own oxen. Funds were made available to 80 farmers for the purchase of a pair of oxen and ripping equipment on a 50-50 co-funding basis, on the condition that services would be provided to other farmers. In addition to providing ripping services, the farmer service providers were also expected to provide advisory services on conservation agriculture. Potential entrepreneurs were selected based on their ability to contribute 50% of the cost of a pair of oxen, their experience with and their willingness to receive further training in conservation agriculture, ripping services and oxen use, and business skills development. The existing level of entrepreneurship was not used as a criterion, but being market-oriented was considered important. In some areas farmers were selected by the community on the basis of being qualified to provide community services on CA. This resulted in a number of prominent farmers facilitating the local learning sites on conservation agriculture being selected. In Monze 5 of the 9 prominent farmers qualified for the ADP voucher programme. Many female farmers (widows and divorced) showed great interest, were the first to apply and made it to the selection. Although no association has been formed yet, some informal learning and collaboration between service providers has already started, triggered by the initial joint workshop. CARE International supports the development of such services with the local agro-dealers, who have already shown to have an entrepreneurial spirit.

The ADP voucher scheme has contributed to social and economic change.

### **Box 4 Evidence of impact of the conservation agriculture ripping services**

Mr. Simasiku in Mechtome Camp in Kazungula District cultivates 4 hectares and has 3 hectares under conventional agriculture and 1 hectare Conservation Farming. He monitors his yield, and is explaining what he is doing to other farmers. Mr. Simasiku is an informal community leader. His maize yields have gone up on the CF hectare from 1.5 MT to 3 MT/ha. He is using the plant basin method on two limas with the shaka hoe and used manure and fertilizers in the other two lima. He has two lima in rotation with groundnuts, but he is not rotating with any deep-rooted rotation crop (cotton or sunflowers). He prefers to grow crops that also can be eaten. The weeding is also done by hand hoe. Weeding is the main constraint mainly due to labour problems; he now has two rippers drawn by oxen. He does not use herbicides. He is very enterprising though and runs his farm as a business. He is expanding the area under conservation agriculture and he managed to buy oxen based on the maize sold in the market. He is not one of the selected entrepreneurial farmers for the provision of ripping services, as he was not indicated by the community.

Source: Mr. Silvasy Shibulo (DACO's office Kazungula)

The combined efforts of promotion and ensuring service provision do seem to offer the potential for a breakthrough for conservation agriculture as a mainstream practice. (see also Box 4): There is circumstantial evidence for the success with crop yields, as the percentage of maize marketed is increasing, leading to a bumper crop in 2009/2010. The sale of rippers in Monze has gone from zero in 2007 to a few hundred in 2010. The use of herbicides has increased but is generally still low. Maize fields that were not ploughed, but only ripped or potholed, are visible everywhere. Some farmers are buying cement and roof sheeting, or even constructing brick or block houses, as a

result of their revenues from maize. The problem now emerging is with the marketing of the rotation crops (notably cowpeas and soybeans), which are an essential component of the conservation farming system.

#### *3.4.1 Development of the rice value chain*

The team did not interact directly with the rice innovation platform in Chinsali, but feedback was obtained from the RIU-Z team, COMACO and through personal communication with Maija Hirvonen. The most important achievement in the rice chain has been the involvement of COMACO, which is marketing rice through its own 'It's wild' brand. In addition, a rice innovation platform (Rice Value Chain Stakeholders Forum) was established and that will continue to be a forum in which key rice value chain stakeholders and supporting services at district level can relate closely with the local level Community Trading Centres.

## 4 History and evolution of Tanzania Country Programme

### 4.1 Activities of the Research Into Use programme in Tanzania

After a number of assessments and studies an advisory panel was created to coordinate the decision-making with regard to the programme, which was later baptised National Innovation Coalition (NIC) in conjunction with RIU developments in other countries. This NIC only played a role, however, at the start of the programme.

Over the course of its lifetime RIU Tanzania has initiated innovation platforms on mechanisation mainly focussed on tractor owners and their services, a dairy platform and a poultry network focused on the establishment of a new value chain for local chicken. The supporting of the first 2 platforms was phased out after the mid-term review. Support for the poultry network was continued in order to be able to scale-out to other districts and regions.

An innovation challenge fund was launched at the start of the programme to support multi-stakeholder initiatives for innovation. Four proposals were funded at a first round of financing. The fund was discontinued after the Mid-Term review.

### 4.2 History of the research into use programme Tanzania

Date	▪ Event
End 2007	▪ Country assessment & strategy (reports) by Mr. Blackie
Jan 2008	▪ Revised country strategy (report) by Management Advisory Team
Feb 2008	▪ New country strategy (report) by Mr. Whiteside and Ms. Mosha- accepted by RIU ▪ UK Desk study on Zonal choices by Muvek
Mar 2008	▪ Feasibility study by Ms. Mosha – feasibility of Zonal Innovation Challenge Funds ▪ Open tender on country coordination
May 2008	▪ Establishing advisory panel
June 2008	▪ RIU officially initiated in Tanzania ▪ Country team recruited- Muvek (management) and EDI (Zonal Innovation Fund) ▪ Second advisory panel meeting (baptised NIC): planning implementation ▪ Based on advisory panel/NIC meeting: Strategy and implementation plan by Muvek
July 2008	▪ Information Markets Rapid Appraisal for Tanzania (by A. Mosha)
Sept 2008	▪ Consult regional authorities for selection of topics/priorities – Morogoro and Tanga regions
Nov 2008	▪ Stakeholder mapping and situational analysis Post-harvest and Dairy
Dec 2008	▪ Selection of priorities by NIC and MUVEK for Morogoro and Tanga ▪ First innovation platform meetings Mechanisation, Dairy and Post-harvest. Identification priority topics (thrusts) and challenges, selection thrust leaders ▪ Launch of Zonal innovation Challenge Fund
Jan 2009	▪ Call for concept notes mechanisation, post-harvest and dairy Innovation Platforms ▪ Meeting with regional authorities in Coast – recommendation of regional priorities
Feb 2009	▪ Consult regional authorities for selection of topics/priorities – Coast region
Feb/Mar 2009	▪ Second meeting IPs mechanisation, post-harvest and dairy. New members invited. Champions, facilitators and mobilisers assigned
Feb 2009	▪ First training workshops post-harvest losses and use of farm implements
Mar 2009	▪ 23 concepts notes invited to prepare full proposal for ZICF and 10 shortlisted and 4 funded
Mar 2009	▪ Communication strategy (general) by MUVEK

Mar 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Learning workshop on facilitating innovation in Multi Stakeholder Processes- (PICO team)</li> </ul>
Apr 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Poverty impact study</li> <li>▪ First platform meeting Coast</li> <li>▪ First brainstorm meeting for developing a system for increasing access to agricultural information</li> </ul>
May 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Second platform meeting Coast: stakeholder analysis and mapping</li> <li>▪ Second call for concept notes for IP poultry</li> </ul>
June 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Baseline surveys</li> </ul>
June 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Mid-Term Review RIU UK</li> </ul>
June 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Mechanisation innovation platform mobilises tractor owners and farmers for bundling of demands and supply of mechanisation services and union of tractor owners formed</li> </ul>
July 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Country coordinator meets technical review team to restructure the RIU Tanzania programme</li> <li>▪ Zonal Innovation Challenge Fund closed down (EDI contract not renewed)</li> </ul>
July 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Implementation on poultry started (activities planned through previous IP meeting)</li> </ul>
Nov 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Meeting with Central Research Team: Focus on poultry, expanding to five more regions</li> </ul>
Dec 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ New intervention logic Tanzania documented (2009-2011)</li> </ul>
Dec 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Involvement in post-harvest and dairy platforms ended; mechanisation IP scaled down</li> </ul>
Jan 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Rolling out the poultry programme in other districts (Kibaha, Bagamoyo, Mkurunga and Kisarawe)</li> </ul>
June 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Withdrawal from mechanisation platform</li> <li>▪ Introduction of ward champions for poultry for entire programme</li> </ul>
July 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Creation of Kukudeal</li> </ul>
Aug 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Start pilot of contract poultry-keeping and Kukudeal in Rufiji, Bagamoyo, Kibaha and Mkurunga districts (Coast region)</li> </ul>
Oct 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Out-scaling achievements IP poultry in Dodoma and Singida regions</li> </ul>
Jan 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Study on institutional history</li> </ul>

The first country selected for the Africa country Programme was Rwanda. After this other countries were added under the guidance of NIDA, amongst which Tanzania. The programme has three separate outcomes (the story so far, Tanzania):

1. Significant use of RNRRS and other past research results.
2. Research into use of evidence generated
3. RIU lessons on policies and practices generated and shared.

Four strategic objectives are being pursued<sup>5</sup>:

1. Enhanced stakeholders' capacity to collectively innovate for increased
  1. efficiency and profitability of their retrospective agro-enterprises.
  2. Improved exchange of agricultural information between information sources and targeted end-users through a functional Public-Private partnership
  3. Improved programme communication and harmonisation for effective sharing and influencing local, national and international policy agenda
  4. Ensure sufficient learning, evidence gathering, documentation and sharing of lessons.

The first activity under Research Into Use in Tanzania was the country assessment in February 2007. Another team of experts, also involving the same external consultant, developed a country strategy in December 2007. Both the assessment and country strategy were rejected by the Strategic

<sup>5</sup> Intervention Logic 2009-2011, Tanzania.

Management Team and were not used in the later stages of the programme. This caused some delay to the set-up of the African Country Programme in Tanzania and created some resistance among those involved from the start.

Subsequently a country review was undertaken. This new review and the resulting strategy were at least partly followed in the further development of the programme. Subsequently a zonal selection study was undertaken. It was agreed that the eastern zone embodied all the agro-ecological characteristics present in Tanzania and as such would be the best option. The regions identified were Morogoro, Coast (officially called Pwani) and Tanga. In each of the three regions covered by the zone, the focus was concentrated on 2 to 3 districts.

After those initial steps an open tender was posted for the country coordination. RIU management decided that neither of the two most promising candidates - EDI (Economic Development Initiatives) and Muvek—were able to fully take on the role. Therefore, two organisations were initially selected to steer the African country Programme. Muvek, to oversee implementation and fieldwork, and EDI to manage innovation funds. Since the mechanisms for enabling innovation and funding for those activities were so interwoven this was later assessed as unmanageable by two separate organisations and EDI's contract was not renewed after the Mid-Term Review.

The RIU Tanzania programme started in earnest in June 2008 and one of its first activities was to select members for an advisory panel. The Tanzania Programme National Advisory Panel was expected to provide management and governance to the ACP and was envisaged as the think-tank and engine for the programme<sup>6</sup>. At the time it was not yet clear to the two organisations, Muvek and EDI, just what RIU would be doing precisely and as a result they did not have the proper criteria needed to select people for the advisory board. Criteria used were 1) experience in development issues in Tanzania, 2) represent interests of different stakeholders, 3) familiarity with national development processes, 4) a conscientious and committed person<sup>7</sup>. The first meeting was facilitated by Dr. Hagmann, and NIDA was also represented. This advisory panel, later renamed National Innovation Coalition, was copied from the model used in other countries rather than integrated in the intervention logic of the Tanzania Country Programme.

The strategy and implementation of the African Country Programme was based on the concept of demand-led innovation processes, while the mechanisms identified were innovation platforms and a Zonal Innovation Challenge Fund<sup>8</sup>. The Zonal innovation Challenge Fund was meant as a mechanism to stimulate innovation by supporting the activities of the innovation platforms.

On the basis of the previous steps the regional authorities were consulted and the RIU objectives were aligned with the agricultural priorities particular to that region. On this basis the following priorities were selected: in Morogoro access to draught power (mechanisation) and post-harvest losses, in Tanga fishing, dairy and fruit processing. Dairy was selected because many investments had already been made in that sector and it was thought that some re-organisation would make the value chain considerably more efficient. In Coast region the feeling was that projects often failed as a result of people's attitudes. Consequently, priority was given to building an entrepreneurial attitude.

<sup>6</sup> Minutes from the meeting to set up a National Advisory Panel for Tanzania, 26<sup>th</sup> May 2008

<sup>7</sup> Minutes from the meeting to set up a National Advisory Panel for Tanzania, 26<sup>th</sup> May 2008

<sup>8</sup> Minutes from the meeting to set up a National Advisory Panel for Tanzania, 26<sup>th</sup> May 2008.

Next, functional analysis and stakeholder mappings were conducted for each of the regions and priorities. After this mapping process, brainstorm meetings were organised with the stakeholders, during which commodities were chosen. For both mechanisation and post-harvest, rice and maize were selected. After this the stakeholders were invited to a meeting. For entrepreneurship poultry was selected, notably local chicken breeds. At these initial stakeholder meetings the platforms were established and main challenges were identified. Activities were identified for tackling the individual problems. Three priority areas were selected for each platform. This whole process was guided by the PICO team. Each platform selected thrust leaders (see Table 2 for explanation of different roles) who were responsible for coordinating the activities in one of the three priority areas and for maintaining contact with RIU. Each invitee committed her or himself to making a contribution. For the second platform meetings additional stakeholders that were identified based on the analysis undertaken during the first platform meeting were also invited. During the second platform meeting members reported on their commitments and additional issues were identified. Champions and facilitators were also selected and the need for training in order to increase the capacity of those facilitators to fulfil their roles recognised. Initially the idea was to recruit external mobilisers to work with the champions and facilitators and to spread the message and motivate local farmers to join the platform. However, it was quickly realised that insiders were better placed to play this role and so champions took this up.

**Table 2: Roles in innovation platforms**

Role	Explanation
Thrust leading	Lead in a certain topic (cluster of challenges identified during first platform meeting).
Championing	Strong supporter of the idea or theme or in general the right person in the right place who leads the way when it comes to working in a new way or achieving something significant on the topic matter
Facilitation	Facilitates the process and, in particular, the meetings, to stimulate interaction among stakeholders
Mobilising	Encourages others to join the platform/activities

The platform meetings were followed by **capacity building** activities. Facilitators received training from the PICO team on facilitating innovation in multi-stakeholder processes (Hagmann et al, 2009). It is at this meeting that the key steps in the formation of innovation platforms were presented:

1. identify a problem or opportunity with potential for impact,
2. formulate an innovation challenge,
3. identify the functions required to make the system work,
4. identify the actors,
5. invite promising actors to an initial meeting and analyse blockages and actions,
6. develop a business concept for the platform,
7. review actions and overcome new challenges and finally
8. action-reflection-adaptation.

Broadly speaking these are the steps that were followed in Tanzania. Representatives of the Ministry for Agriculture and the Research Institute conducted training in management of post-harvest losses and the use of farm implements.

In December 2008 the Zonal Innovation Challenge Fund was launched (EDI, 2009a and b), managed by EDI. The fund was reserved for activities related to the challenges identified by the innovation platforms. The process involved a call for concept notes, advertising, receiving, logging, screening, assessing and inviting concepts to write full proposals. A total of 98, 99 and 68 concept notes

were received respectively for post-harvest, draught power and dairy. From this impressive response four proposals were selected<sup>9</sup>. At the time of the first call applicants were discouraged from building on RNRRS research outputs as the approach was meant to be demand-led. The focus changed however, and, at the time of screening, integration of RNRRS products in the proposals was encouraged. The call for the poultry platform was issued in May 2009 but has not been pursued as after the Mid-Term Review the innovation challenge fund was discontinued. The funds saved were reserved for the RIU programme to use for the benefit of the programme without a formal competitive bidding process.

A specific component in the RIU programme was initially envisioned in relation to communication for innovation. The idea behind this was to make existing agriculture-related information available to those who needed it. The assumption was that the private sector would invest in it: agro-input dealers, phone companies or banks. Yet the response from the private sector was poor. Several concept notes and business plans for developing an Agricultural Information and Communication System were submitted to RIU in response to a formal call for proposals. Yet it proved impossible to select an appropriate proposal (the proposals were not sustainable and did not coincide with RIU's vision) and RIU Tanzania thus developed its own proposal. The team decided that there was an immediate need for the sharing of information on challenges related to poultry. After the Mid-Term Review this activity received less priority. To address the challenge of information on poultry-breeding the ministry was contracted to develop a guide to poultry disease management techniques.

At the start the ACP had initiated four Innovation Platforms: in dairy, in mechanisation, in post-harvest, and in entrepreneurship. It quickly became clear that post-harvest activities, focused mainly on improved storage facilities for maize and rice, would only become beneficial once access to draught power and as a result increased production could be achieved. As a result, the post-harvest platform has never really taken off and was discontinued after the MTR. Support for the activities of the dairy platform was ended after the MTR. The mechanisation platform activities were also scaled down. As for the entrepreneurship platforms, the activities had evolved towards engaging in building a new local poultry sub-sector. The activities of the ACP Tanzania concentrated on this after the reviews. Activities were extended to five more regions, in addition to Dodoma, Singida, and Coast region.

### **4.3 Critical events and decisions**

#### *Country assessments and strategies*

In Tanzania, the country assessment was carried out by a team, the members of which are no longer involved. 2 attempts were made to develop a country strategy by teams of external experts, of which the first was rejected and the second only partly implemented. Many important stakeholders were consulted on the process at this assessment stage and expectations were inevitable high. As a result the RIU team did not have the easiest of starts.

#### *Discontinuation of the national innovation coalition*

The RIU Tanzania programme decided fairly quickly not to invest any more energy in the forging of a national innovation coalition. It had participated in

<sup>9</sup> The winning proposals were 1. innovative post-harvest loss tools, 2. use of talking images and other dairy decision-making tools to increase milk yields, 3. improved animal draught power through improved yoke-bar assembly and new ox-weeder and 4. botanical and integrated post-harvest pest management. The first two had been signed in May 2009.

some initial decision-making and was then purposely discontinued. This decision has given Muvek, the main implementing organisation, quite a lot of freedom in the making of decisions. This has allowed for the development of activities in a manner that did not follow the RIU plans *avant-la-lettre*, and provided some room for learning while doing and adapting approaches intuitively.

At the same time it could be argued that embedding in the existing structures of lessons learned was not formalised and could have assumed more importance had the NIC been built into a functioning national level platform.

#### *A consultancy company as project implementer*

The Tanzania programme was implemented by Muvek, a private consultancy company. (see box 9). The owner of Muvek, Vera Muggiti, explains: "it is easier for us to access funds and support from both private sector (like banks) and other donors to replicate the work in other sectors/commodity than if we were a platform. Muvek can employ the current RIU staff and use our skills in developing another sector".

#### **Box 4: Who is Muvek?**

Muvek Development Solutions Ltd. (Muvek) is a private company specialised in providing development consultancy services to both public and non-public development actors involved in Agriculture, Health, Infrastructure and Rural development in general. We advise, collaborate in actual program implementation, conduct research, backstop processes and document and disseminate information as specified by a client. Muvek is a partner in achieving clients' objectives and mandates.

From: <http://www.muvek.co.tz/>

#### *A competitive mechanism for using available funds*

The innovation challenge fund was a competitive mechanism used to support innovation through small project grants. It was developed in a formal manner and opportunities were advertised through a call for proposals in the national media. This resulted in a large number of concept notes, of which only a very small proportion could be funded.

At the same time there were the innovation platforms that required resources to pursue the opportunities that they identified. This has a twofold objective: for exploitation of the opportunity itself, but also as a way to build better stakeholder relations. In retrospect, the open competitive bidding system did not provide for a fast and easy mechanism to support the platforms with the resources they needed to realise the joint activities that are needed to solidify their relations.

This was partly the result of the strict division in tasks between Muvek, responsible for the stakeholder interaction, and ENI, responsible for the competitive grant system. The mid-term review brought an end to this situation. The use of funds for supporting innovation activities was placed at the full discretion of the RIU programme implementation organisation, Muvek, in the form of 'flexibility funds'.

#### *Introduction and adoption of concepts and approaches*

Of the concepts and approaches that were initially introduced, some were discontinued, as they were not helpful, while others proved very useful. The

approach of using (farmer) champions to build stakeholder collaboration at local level, introduced by the PICO team, worked really well and continues to be the informal local level structure on which the interventions are built. Also, the pragmatic systems approach of solving bottlenecks within a particular system along the way was introduced at the start and is still being followed. Investing resources and efforts in forging partnerships has also proved relevant and continues to this day.

A concept that proved less useful was separating the function of mobilisation from facilitation. These were introduced as separate functions to be performed by different people in the innovation platform. However, over time it became apparent that those were roles that could be better taken on by one person. In this case the champions.

One thing that received more focus during the course of the programme was that that economic gain and business development should be seen as the main drivers of innovation. Problems can only be solved once the solution makes good business sense. As a result, the language was adapted, and scale, efficiency and rural enterprises became central concepts.

The Tanzania programme did not use a log frame but worked instead with milestones; this helped in terms of remaining flexible and sharpening the focus on emerging bottlenecks.

#### *Shift from innovation platform to more flexible network building*

Initially, the ACP in Tanzania followed the design of innovation platforms as proposed by the PICO team and NIDA. The innovation platforms were designed after taking into consideration stakeholder interaction at three levels: the national level, the middle level and local level.

The national level stakeholder interaction, later baptised National Innovation Coalition, was established with the intention to not only advise the programme but also to enable institutional change at a higher level. However, the national platform was discontinued after supporting the making of some initial choices. At the middle level, Innovation Platforms were established with stakeholders around a chosen topic. With the help of local mobilisers and champions, farmers were organised and represented by champions at the middle level. During the course of the programme the Innovation Platforms have evolved into a more flexible and informal network. Membership is ad-hoc and based on needs rather than being formal and regulated. The innovation platforms do not hold regular platform meetings but interact instead on a need-basis. At local level, interaction between stakeholders at that level, mainly farmers, continues to be coordinated by farmer champions. These farmer champions are represented in the informal innovation platform meetings.

The poultry platform, in particular, evolved into a different type of network of economic actors and supporting organisations, fully focused on the development of a local poultry chain. Rather than using a multi-stakeholder platform as the main 'engine' for innovation, MUVEK assumed the role of broker, organiser and problem-solver between stakeholders, specifically linking and connecting those stakeholders in need of each other's services.

#### *Mid-Term review*

The main consequence of the mid-term review was that the attention of the RIU Tanzania programme switched from focusing on a number of issues to focusing on the broad construction of a local chicken value chain. Muvek intensified its activities in the poultry sub-sector and prepared exit strategies for the other innovation platforms as a direct result of the reviews. Scale and impact were prioritised by RIU UK and as a result the activities in poultry were

also introduced to other regions in Tanzania. The abolishment of the Innovation challenge fund freed resources, which were then added as 'flexibility funds' to the regular project funds and lead to more room for manoeuvre, flexibility and independence for the ACP Tanzania.

#### **Local poultry chain construction**

The local poultry initiative evolved from the coast platform that was assessing opportunities for improving the entrepreneurship skills of producers. The stakeholder platform that was initially brought together did identify poultry as its entry point for seeking economic development, and the initiative evolved from there.

MUVEK played a major role in the initiative. Rather than relying on the more or less regular multi-stakeholder method of many with many, an approach was used that focused on concrete problem-solving. MUVEK assumed the role of connector, coordinator and problem-solver. This was considered to be more focussed and effective than the innovation platform approach that was initiated at the start.

After the mid-term review, the construction of a local poultry chain gained the full focus of the programme and was being scaled-out to additional regions.

A private service provider, Kukudeal, was introduced for the specific purpose of linking actors in the newly developing local poultry chain. Kukudeal's role is to organise the trade in 1-day chicks between poultry farmers and poultry buyers. Kukudeal will do this based on a margin paid for the supported transactions.

#### *Exit strategy development*

The RIU Tanzanian programme was preparing for the end of the RIU programme at the time that this study was being carried out. Because the ACP is embedded in Muvek, when RIU ends, the capacity and experience gained during the programme will remain linked, and, subsequently, the likelihood that similar activities in terms of brokering will be continued is bigger than if they were in the hands of a team of temporary RIU staff specifically recruited to execute the RIU programme, as is the case in other RIU African country programmes. In order to pursue its current activities in the poultry sector, Muvek is facilitating the creation of Kukudeal, a private company based on contract farming (see box 5). A strong feeling remains, however, that the programme needs more time to ensure continuity of the local chicken value chain, because of the risk involved in the volumes required for an independent and economically sustainable and viable local poultry sector. The local chicken chain still depends, to a large extent, on the RIU programme reducing the risks for individual entrepreneurs, and it is not yet certain that these risks can be sufficiently covered by Kukudeal, at a commercial fee.

#### 4.4 Main institutional change achievements

Institutional change can emerge at the national, the middle or the local level. The major institutional changes are listed in Table 3.

**Table 3: Institutional change resulting from platforms**

	Local level	Middle level	National level
Mechanisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Block farming</li> <li>Collaboration between rice and maize farmers and tractor owners improved</li> <li>Price system for ploughing services</li> <li>Economy of scale</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Activities on linking ploughing services to groups of farmers and related challenges integrated in district development plans</li> <li>Tractor owner associations created</li> <li>Discussion between ministry, tractor owners and spare parts owners on quality and pricing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tax exemption on tractor spare parts</li> </ul>
Dairy		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Slow increase in understanding of costs and transaction in milk value chain resulting in slow increase in willingness for collaboration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tax exemption on milk processing equipment and input used by the processing industry</li> </ul>
Poultry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Informal organisation of chicken producers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hatchery owners meet and discuss availability of local chicken breeds</li> <li>Feed producers meet;</li> <li>Linking By trade to producers and hatchery owners</li> <li>Kukudeal created (interaction producers and buyers)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tax exemption on incubators (machineries)</li> <li>Organisation of a sub-sector which was absent prior to RIU</li> <li>Expected: collaboration between Ministry of Livestock and Zonal Funds from all regions for research on characterisation of chicken breeds</li> </ul>

### **Box 5: Local poultry chain construction**

The local poultry initiative evolved from the Pwani district platform that was assessing opportunities for improving the entrepreneurship skills of producers. The stakeholder platform that was initially brought together identified local chicken breeds as an opportunity for economic development. To overcome farmer's reluctance to enter the business, the programme subsidised a first flock of 100 chicks to the tune of 40%, and ensured advice and linkage and exchange with a hatchery. Required inputs for the first month of chick rearing were provided on credit by RIU Tanzania through a voucher scheme.

MUVEK played a major role in the initiative. Rather than relying on the more or less regular multi-stakeholder interaction of many with many, an approach was used that was focused on concrete problem solving. MUVEK assumed the role of connector, coordinator and problem-solver. When bottlenecks appeared in the construction of this new value chain, tailor-made solutions were implemented by MUVEK. This was considered more focused and effective than the innovation platform approach that was initiated at the start.

Some of the challenges that RIU Tanzania is helping to overcome are:

- The availability of the required number of 1-day chicks to satisfy the demand
- Ensuring that producers can afford the initial investments needed
- Ensuring the producers have ample knowledge of chicken rearing
- Securing a market for the producers so as to reduce their risks
- Ensuring availability of quality medicine and feed
- Ensuring an acceptable quality of chicken
- Proper transport of live chicken

A private service provider, Kukudeal, was introduced by RIU for the specific purpose of continued services of advice, credit and linking actors in the newly developing local poultry chain. Kukudeal's role will be to organise the trade in 1-day chicks between poultry farmers and poultry buyers, ensuring the availability of technical advice and credit to chicken farmers.

#### *Mechanisation platform*

In the Morogoro Region synergy with the FAMOGATA programme – a government programme with the explicit objective of making Morogoro the national granary- was sought. This was also an important reason behind RIU's decision to select rice and maize as commodities. The major challenge for the mechanisation platform was that farmers wanted to be able to plough their fields but the plots they owned were very small and were also widely scattered. During the platform meetings the farmers decided to organise into block farms, and a lead farmer was chosen for each block farm. Twelve farmer groups were formed, with approximately 30 members each. Farmers managed to negotiate a better price, which has been standardised according to soil type and area. Tractor owners are now interested in providing services to smallholders, as the farmers are organised, and offer them a contract for the entire block farm. At the same time tractor owners and operators organised themselves under a tractor owner association for coordination purposes so as to be able to provide services on time.

Once better links between the farmers and tractor owners were established, and the volume of work increased, new challenges emerged:

1. not enough tractors,
2. weak support services for tractor repairs
3. access to loans for tractors at reasonable interest rates.

The tractor owners association managed to put pressure on government officials to control the quality of spare parts, abolish importation duty on

tractor spare parts, and help them negotiate better quality and better prices with the spare parts dealers.

As the RIU Tanzania programme realised that the activities were moving from organising farmers and tractor owners and establishing functional links to following up and coordinating those links, it became acceptable to withdraw from providing additional support for the mechanisation platform. Routine follow-up falls under the mandate of the mechanisation officers at the Ministry of Agriculture who were facilitators in the platform. They now interact with the stakeholders involved in the platform as part of their regular activities and as outlined in the district plans. The block farms have in many cases become involved in other group-based activities, such as Farmer Field Schools, part of the district development plan on maize and rice production.

#### *4.4.1 Dairy Platform*

One of the achievements of the platform was a proposed zero taxation on dairy processing equipment and inputs used by the processing industry, which was approved by parliament and to which the platform contributed.

There seems to be a lot of mistrust, particularly between processors and producers, in relation to milk prices due to a poor understanding of the costs and benefits for the different stakeholders. In addition, personality clashes were reported as hampering joint action by stakeholders in the interests of the value chain. In December 2009, RIU Tanzania announced that they would withdraw support for the platform. A private agro-input dealer, AgriCare, volunteered to take over the facilitation role from RIU and is now initiating and organising the platform meetings. The platform meets every three months and all members fund their participation themselves. The main bottleneck for the platform at present is a lack of funds needed to carry out some of the activities. The main achievements of the platform are the sharing of ideas and feelings and increasing the understanding of weaknesses and strengths in the dairy sector. Even though the current facilitator and managing director of AgriCare is said to be a dynamic, self-driven and motivated person, it has also been said that the platform might need professional facilitation and mediation in dealing with conflict and mistrust in order to be able to move forward.

#### *4.4.2 Innovation Platform on entrepreneurship*

The innovation platform on poultry started out with the aim of improving farmer entrepreneurship (see box 5). As has been pointed out, the poultry initiative evolved as a developing value chain with Muvek as the main organising factor.

As a result of the efforts of RIU Tanzania, hatchery owners meet to discuss how they can improve the availability of 1-day chicks from the local chicken flock. A tax exemption for hatchery equipment has been negotiated. Furthermore, feed producers have started to collaborate so that they can improve their response to demand, but improving the quality of feed, however, remains a work in progress. The availability of reliable drugs has improved as a result of the engagement of By trade, a commercial trader in pharmaceutical products. Household-level advice has been provided to the emerging chicken farmers, and was guaranteed, in some instances, through payments by the RIU programme. At present the public extension service has started to get involved as a provider of these services.

A specific company was created to provide a number of services deemed essential for the success of the local chicken chain. The major bottleneck that emerged was that chicken producers could not reinvest enough of their profit

so as to be able to continue their business after the first round. A credit scheme based on chicken delivery contracts was developed and is to be commercialised as a product by local banks. In addition, KuKudeal will have to ensure the provision of advisory services and the links to hatchery owners and marketing services. The objective is to provide these services on a non-profit basis, using contract-farming arrangements.

In spite of the continued constraints that the programme had to deal with, the intervention has been copied in other districts so as to ensure impact at a wider scale in a short period of time. This puts pressure on the availability of 1-day chicks. A certain kind of scale is thought to be required for KuKudeal to be able to become a viable and stable commercial service provider.

**Box 6: Availability of chicks: some numbers**

In January 2011 the status is as follows. In Pwani district 1527 households showed an interest and all 152700 chicks were supplied. In Dodoma district 128 wards are involved and 2560 farmers are expected to join the programme. From those farmers, 29 have already paid but are still waiting to receive the chicks, whilst 396 have paid and received delivery. In Singida 2160 farmers from 108 wards are expected to join the programme. 34000 chicks were distributed to 340 farmers and 169 are still waiting after having paid, the others are still waiting to sign up. It is evident that chick supply is a major bottleneck.

**Box 7: A hatchery owner's tale**

I live on the outskirts of Dar Es Salaam. As long as I can remember we have kept chicken at our place. Nobody cares that they wander around; it is just part of any African society. Since I like chicken I have bought a small incubator for 576 eggs. For twelve years that is what I did, people came to my house and I sold them one by one. But then came Muvek. I saw their advertisement in the newspaper and attended the hatchery owners meeting. I only realised then that it could be a business! After that meeting I started seriously raising one-day old chicks. My biggest obstacle was the market. I raised a number of parent stock but then the capacity of my hatchery was not enough. I joined forces with an old friend of mine and we rehabilitated old machinery. Now I need more parent stock to fill it. Muvek will help me raise my parent stock (rather than importing eggs from US as breeders of broilers do). Many chicks die in the eggs, due to the low quality of food for the parent stock. Where my friend who exports his eggs from the US has a loss of 15 to 20%, I have a loss of 30 to 35%. Muvek has brought a revolution to the country, he continues, farmers never thought that if you feed a chick it can make you rich!

**Box 8: Your fault or mine?**

A male farmer from Rufidji district was not able to repay his loan whilst his chickens were sold. In such situations the ACP staff goes to the field to identify the reasons. Was it disease, availability of medicines, or laziness maybe that caused this? This farmer told the project staff that all the chickens died. When they probed further however, it appeared that the farmer had sold the chicken feed RIU had given him. He needed the money and poverty drove him to sell the feeds. When the farmer then realised he could not rear the chicks he sold them to another farmer. His fellow villagers decided to reveal the truth because they were afraid the programme would not want to continue with the entire village as a result of this.

## **5 History and evolution of Rwanda Country Programme**

### **5.1 Research Into Use Rwanda and its activities**

Rwanda was one of the countries selected for the RIU country program. Currently its activities are mainly focused on the implementation of 3 innovation platforms at district level:

- A maize platform in Nyagatare district
- A cassava platform in Gatsibu district
- A potato platform in Gicumbi district

In addition, there was a fourth innovation platform called Karongi rural, which focused on ensuring access to small irrigation infrastructure. This in contrast to the other platforms, which started out with rural development in the district as their objective, as opposed to making a pre-emptive choice for a particular crop. This platform was phased out after the mid-term review.

Furthermore, there is a National Innovation Coalition (NIC). The NIC, however, has not undertaken any activities since May 2010. The National Innovation Coalition stopped functioning as the RIU Rwanda programme decided to discontinue its efforts to keep it going. The members then decided not to continue without support as, in their point of view, the relevance seemed limited, given that they did not have any practical influence on the RIU programme.

RIU also supports a community radio station in the Gatsibu district.

Other activities are funded by RIU on a needs basis. The activities funded come mainly from the 3 commodity platforms. As such the commodity platforms at district level form the basis around which the entire RIU Rwanda programme is built.

## 5.2 History of the research into use pilot Rwanda

Feb 2007	Country assessment by team of experts, resulting in an implementation report
Dec 2007-Jan 2008	Bringing together national stakeholder group: NIC as national level support group to the RIU
End 2007	MOU signed by high level representatives of NIC members
Feb 2008	Official RIU launch, together with CAADP
April-July 2008	Brainstorm meetings in Kibuye by NIC to develop action plan RIU Country office is given the mandate to implement. Sam Kanjakirike named as the RIU coordinator Decision on 2 main activities: 1. Knowledge market 2. Platforms at district level
May-June 2008	Opportunity assessment, 3 platforms chosen: 1) Maize Nyagatare, 2) Cassava Gatsibu, 3) Potato Gicumbi
Aug-Sep 2008	CAPMER (NIC member) selected as fund manager.
June 2008	Platform initiation with support by the district administration
July-Sep 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Needs and opportunity assessment by platforms</li> <li>▪ Value chain analysis</li> <li>▪ Identify missing actors and lobby for their participation</li> <li>▪ Get ideas from the platforms for action</li> <li>▪ Prioritise and plan</li> </ul>
July 2008	Practical action by platforms, focused on quick results: improved seed and post-harvest
November 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 3) Rural development Karunji initiated</li> </ul>
Feb 2009	Action plan revision
June 2009	MTR of RIU Impact on programme only after technical review
End 2009	Disruption limited as RIU facilitator turned coordinator
End 2009	Fund management changes from CAPMER to PSF
End 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Platforms are shifting focus from planting material and post-harvest to marketing issues.</li> </ul>
March 2010	Technical review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Karonji rural platform dropped.</li> <li>▪ Reduced support for the cassava platform</li> <li>▪ Knowledge market dropped.</li> <li>▪ More autonomy for the RIU team</li> <li>▪ More collaboration as a team</li> </ul>
June 2010	NIC becomes dysfunctional. Focus turns entirely to facilitating the district platforms
November 2010-present	Preparing for RIU exit: contracting local service providers (RDO, Caritas) to take over facilitation of the platforms

### 5.2.1 General

The RIU programme in Rwanda started in earnest at the end of 2007, after it was selected as a RIU country, and a study of the Rwanda innovation system was carried out by the country assessment team. This was followed by the creation of the National Innovation Coalition in early 2008, with the representatives of different stakeholders in the agricultural innovation system. The creation of the NIC was accompanied by the signing of MoUs by the different participating organisations. Subsequently, RIU was officially launched at a CAADP event.

Between April and July 2008 a country implementation plan was developed, with an active role for the NIC. The main activities proposed in the implementation plan were:

1. Functioning National Innovation Coalition (NIC) for Agriculture in Rwanda
2. Creation of a National Agricultural Innovation Network (NAIN)
3. Functioning Electronic Knowledge Market
4. Functioning Innovation Platforms
5. Innovation Facility operated by Intermediary organisations
6. MIL system generating lessons learned of use to others.
7. Effective Policy Dialogue supporting greater use of research.

The RIU country office assumed the principle mandate of implementing the Rwanda activities.

Throughout the lifespan of the programme a number of these activities did not materialise. Ultimately, the RIU programme had 2 principle activities. In the first place a number of innovation platforms were launched. The first 3 platforms were initiated in May 2008 at district level (Cassava in Gatsibo, potato in Gicumbi and maize in Nyagatare). A fourth innovation platform was added in November 2008 in Karongi district on small irrigation technology (foot pumps) for horticulture. These innovation platforms have formed the core of RIU activities throughout the programme.

The choice for intervening in these crops was made by following the district priority crops as they had been determined under the crop intensification programme (CIP) of the Rwanda government.

The programme's second main activity was the development of a knowledge market at national level. This knowledge market was intended to become the main exchange instrument of the organisations represented in the NIC, and others. It was envisioned as a means of improving the ability to respond in a coordinated fashion to needs identified at district platform level.

A fund manager was contracted for the running the reception and management of the RIU country office resources. CAPMER, a member of the NIC, was selected.

The Mid-Term Review, followed by a technical review, brought a number of significant changes to the RIU programme in Rwanda. In the first place it provided more autonomy to the national implementing team to make decisions. Secondly, the fund manager was replaced. The Private Sector Federation replaced CAPMER as fund manager. Thirdly, support to the Karongi platform was discontinued.

RIU Rwanda had assumed a lot of the responsibility for the facilitation of the innovation platforms and became, towards the end of the programme, concerned about the continuity of the platforms. Currently, the programme in Rwanda is seeking to transfer responsibilities for supporting and facilitating the 3 remaining platforms to local organisations in order to ensure continuity.

#### *5.2.2 National Innovation Coalition*

A National Innovation Coalition was formed in Rwanda at the end of 2007. It was to be the daily executive arm of a larger National Agricultural Innovation Network (NAIN), as proposed by the RIU coordination. In contrast to the idea of the NAIN, it did not contain all the organisations involved in agriculture, but rather a selection of stakeholders including private sector representation, farmer representation, research, agricultural education and extension.

The objectives of the NIC were:

1. Overseeing and supporting the RIU program
2. Coordinate and ensure the provision of technical support for the commodity platforms through NIC members
3. Policy advocacy at national level to facilitate innovation
4. Vehicle to internalise RIU lessons in the participating organisations

At its inception the NIC had 11 members:

1. Institut Scientifique Agricole de Rwanda (ISAR)
2. Rwanda Agricultural Development Agency (RADA)
3. ROPARWA (??) ??
4. Private Sector Federation (PSF/FSP)
5. Centre d'Appui pour les Petits et Mediums Entreprises du Rwanda (CAPMER)
6. Rwanda Development Organisation (RDO)
7. Association des Jeunes Emancipés de Mushubati pour l'Agriculture et le Commerce (AJEMAC)
8. Ministry of Commerce, Industry, Investment Promotion and Cooperatives (MINICOM)
9. Faculty of Agronomy of the National University of Rwanda (FACAGRO)
10. Banque Rwandaise de Développement (BRD)
11. Pro-Femmes TWESEHAMWE

The first activity of the NIC was to hold brainstorming meetings with the RIU country coordinator to develop a national action plan. Responsibility for the implementation of the national action plan was placed on the RIU country coordinator. The coalition had the role of overseeing the RIU project, although its decision-making influence was not felt to be great. Still, it did receive progress reports and endorsed budgets. One of the NIC members (CAPMER) was chosen as the RIU fund manager.

The NIC met and discussed topics on how to put Research Into Use. Furthermore, it got involved in the information market idea, which was supposed to be the main instrument for structuring the response to demands for services and knowledge from practice (the platforms).

Maintaining momentum at national level through specific NIC activities proved very difficult. The proof of the interest of the organisations participating in the NIC was their level of decision-making in their organisations. The NIC was initiated within the RIU project framework and was not an embedded part of the Rwandan administration. This made it difficult to obtain the desired leverage within government organisations and the buy-in in the RIU agenda that was envisioned.

The NIC was given a number of tasks. The task of being the channel for information from the participating organisations to the platforms was, in retrospect, not very useful. The platforms at district level can, at first through facilitators, and over time by themselves, source the services they require directly from research and other service providers. There is no need for a formal intermediate body at national level for this. The NIC worked on a virtual information market system that would improve access to agricultural development information. These efforts were discontinued, however, after the mid-term review, when it was decided to focus on fewer activities and to provide more autonomy to the country programme in deciding how to use resources.

The role of NIC in ensuring support to RIU by the different members of the NIC was well understood. The attempt to ensure buy-in by Rwandan organisations in the RIU agenda failed. Although an MOU was signed between the MINAGRI and RIU, and RIU was launched together with CAADP, it could ultimately not rally the higher-level decision makers behind its agenda. The main reason being that it was always seen as a body linked to an external project. This was further emphasised by the task of functioning as a steering committee for the RIU project. The change agenda of the RIU country programme in Rwanda was too ambitious considering its status as a project and its limited resources. To instil change much closer ties with the ministry of agriculture, at the highest level, are essential.

Most members of the NIC were active during the 1-1.5 years it was in existence and tried their best to fulfil the NIC mandate. However, along the way, when it became more apparent that, for some organisations, the benefits of participation were limited, attendance at NIC meetings dropped. A lack of clear activities other than meetings and workshops, and the cancellation of the information market system, combined with limited influence on the RIU project implementation, resulted in diminishing attendance. The NIC has not met since May 2010.

### 5.2.3 History of the commodity innovation platforms

1. Identification of districts and corresponding crops as entry points by scoping study
2. District administration approached for a first indication of district level stakeholders
3. Identification of strategic collaborating partners (NGOs) in the 3 districts
4. Selection of first participants, aiming at 30 people
5. Platform initiated
6. Participatory needs and opportunity assessment
7. Good agricultural practices, seed and post-harvest identified as first entry points
8. Training and facilitation of the platform coordination
9. Training and inputs provided for intensification of production
10. Potato mini-tuber production, certified seed multiplication and marketing initiated
11. Recruitment drive for additional members
12. Marketing put on the agenda
13. Warehouse receipt system developed under the maize platform
14. NYAMIG formed as shareholding company to manage maize storage and trade
15. Discussion on formal status of the district platforms

Three commodity platforms were initiated in Rwanda at district level by the RIU programme. They had the twofold objective of being a pilot for a new approach towards agricultural innovation, and at the same time the objective of attaining impact at scale. The history of the 3 crop specific platforms has been largely similar.

The initiation of the district platforms was started through an assessment with the district administration of stakeholders of the selected crop. Through this first selection additional important actors in the chosen crop were identified, reaching a total of 30 representatives. Specific needs and opportunity assessments were initiated with these 30 representatives. Based on these priorities, which in the 3 platforms were mainly focused on production technology and quality planting material, the first platform activities were initiated with funding by RIU.

There was a deliberate combination of activities supported by the RIU programme. There were activities directly focused on the immediate improvement of production. This was done through organising training activities. In addition, there was a strong focus on improving the availability of high quality planting materials, inputs and post-harvest handling.

When productivity increase had been achieved as a result of these activities through the platform, the need for improvement of market relations became more apparent. This moved all three platforms to also address product marketing issues (see box 9).

**Box 9: Changing focus of Rwandan innovation platforms over time**

*Maize*

In the Nyagatare maize platform technical issues were first prioritised as the main bottlenecks by the stakeholders. High quality seed, farming technology and storage were tackled. Once progress was made in these areas, maize marketing emerged as the next important constraint to be tackled to help the progress of the sector in the district. This triggered the initiation of a maize trading company, with producers and local traders as shareholders.

*Cassava*

For the cassava platform in Gatsibu, constraint number one for producers was the cassava mosaic virus. Resistant varieties were produced through joint IITA-ISAR efforts. Reliable planting material was not available, however, to producers. This was tackled by training multipliers and supporting the distribution of cuttings. Only once this problem was solved, and good harvests could be obtained, did the focus turn to the issue of marketing cassava. To improve the marketing of cassava, solutions are being sought through closer links with the existing cassava processing industry and seeking out opportunities for local processing.

At the same time the platforms were supported to develop into more formal structures with central coordination and technical committees. From the start of the platform, specific efforts have been made to include different stakeholders in the platform and to build relationships between these actors. Although the platforms were farmer-dominated, other actors such as input dealers, seed producers and credit providers were also part of the platform. In addition, research and advisory service providers were represented in the platforms. Traders and processors of the commodities chosen were not prominently represented in the platforms. There was a continuous search for and recruitment of representatives deemed important for the further development of the sector in the district who would participate in the platforms.

Since the start of the programme it can be seen that the platforms themselves are taking on more and more responsibilities over time, and that the RIU team is reducing its level of engagement somewhat. This was especially noticeable in the case of the potato and maize platforms, less so for the cassava platform.

### 5.3 Critical events and decisions

#### *Embedding of the RIU programme*

The choices made with regard to the embedding of the programme have had an impact on the direction of the programme. At national programme level the management was not embedded in existing national systems. From the point of view of having the freedom to experiment with approaches towards innovation, this was helpful. It did not do much, however, for the sustainability of the programme in terms of institutionalisation of innovation thinking and building structures to facilitate innovation within the national system.

At district level the platforms were also informally attached to the administration. The topics chosen were in full alignment with the national and district policy. This provided the opportunity to co-opt support organisations. At the same time, however, it limited the space for uninhibited decision-making, as only innovation within the district priorities was possible. In the context of Rwanda, there is a lot of discipline as well as pressure to align literally to policies and district plans. This is helpful for the purpose of coordination of development efforts. The risk is that it may stifle innovation.

#### *Establishment and demise of the NIC*

The establishment of the NIC was important in terms of the initial decision-making. Since then the NIC has worked on the development of an electronic knowledge market and functioned as a programme steering committee. The electronic knowledge market never materialised and was abandoned. In the end, the steering committee's function was merely an advisory one; the decisions were made by the programme management. This did not do much for the motivation of the participants and the NIC stopped meeting.

Consequently, it never played a role as a communicator of evidence-based policy messages. This means that there is no nationally embedded mechanism for institutionalisation of insights gained from the programme.

#### *Mid-Term Review*

The MTR has ensured more focus on the 3 well-functioning innovation platforms, and a reduction of other activities. Furthermore, as a result of the MTR, the RIU staff in Rwanda were given more autonomy to make decisions and divide tasks up within the team for supporting the commodity networks with facilitation and capacity building. This has meant that more focus has shifted towards the implementation of successful innovation platforms, at the expense of documentation and analysis.

This is regrettable in terms of opportunities for learning. It was helpful, however, in ensuring that the platforms did manage to mature and develop into real interaction for district level stakeholders.

#### *5.3.1 Functions of the district platforms*

Generally speaking, the objective of the platforms was to catalyse agricultural innovation in the broadest sense of the word. The platforms were meant as the hubs for stimulating technical, organisational and institutional innovation related primarily to the chosen commodity. In reality the platform, according to the participants, provides a multitude of functions:

**Advocacy for change**

Lobby decision makers to support their interests

**Demand articulation**

Formulate clear needs for supporting services, internal and external

**Access to financial services**

Lobby for products tailored to economic actor needs

Instilling trust by working together

**Access to research and extension services**

Improved understanding of needs

Access through visibility and organisation of stakeholders (effective service delivery)

**Access to inputs**

Credit, communication needs.

**Access to markets**

Build closer relationships between economic actors

Improve response to demand

Collective marketing

**Farmer collaboration**

Improve collaboration between farmer organisations

**Innovation**

Vehicle for co-development of new products and practices.

Risk-sharing among actors

Arena for brainstorming and trying out ideas

**Communication**

Communication of lessons learned from innovation

### 5.3.2 *Formalising the platforms*

In Rwanda, the platforms were at first not registered officially in any way, and the RIU management was taking a stand that registration was not desirable as it would hinder change and flexibility and they aimed at an informal status. Some argued that this informal status suffices for the platforms to function, and does allow for the flexibility it requires in membership and mandate.

However, the RIU experience has shown that all 3 platforms are now seeking a more formal statute. There are a number of reasons given for this:

1. Legitimacy to represent a group of people
2. Recognition by other organisations and administrations
3. The Clarification of rules, regulations and mandate

The platforms wish to register as inter professional organisations. This status recognises their multi-stakeholder character and does allow for membership of individual and cooperative economic actors, but also of organisations with a value chain support role. It solidifies the mandate of the platform as a non-profit entity, working for the public interest. It will provide the platform with additional credibility and recognition as a body legitimately representing the interests of a certain sector.

#### *Exit strategy*

A last critical moment for the programme is the exit phase. Currently the programme is preparing for its exit. This does make the programme think about how to sustain the facilitation of the platforms. It stimulates reflection on how tasks can be assumed by the platforms themselves, and how much external, more impartial, facilitation is required to make it work.

## **5.4 Institutional change achievements**

### *5.4.1 District platform achievements*

The main achievement of the district platforms has been that they have created multi-stakeholder collaboration at the level of intervention in the platforms. As a result of the platforms, different actors have started collaborating to assure innovation at grassroots level. The platforms have developed into the platforms of coordination of practical action for respectively potato, maize and cassava innovation in the three districts.

### *5.4.2 Maize platform*

The maize platform has initially focused on productivity increase, in line with the objectives of the Crop Intensification Program (CIP). Individual producers and members of maize producing cooperatives were assisted through the programme in accessing high quality maize seed and fertilizer. Furthermore, they received technical training in good crop husbandry and post-harvest practices. Through the involvement of agro-dealers the availability of these agro-inputs was ensured on a sustainable basis.

These activities resulted in yield increases and attention shifted towards the storage and marketing of maize. The storage question resulted in a pilot with a warehouse receipt system that assists individual producers and producer cooperatives in storing their produce for a longer period, while still having access to the much needed cash income at the time of harvest. The warehouse receipt system has developed into a profitable product for the financial service provider, and a well-received service for the maize producers. There is further demand in neighbouring districts for the product.

To take maximum advantage of maize marketing opportunities, the platform members initiated a maize trading company called NYAMIG. Members of the platform are shareholders in the trading company. Discussions are currently on-going in the platform on the relationship between NYAMIG and the platform itself.

### *5.4.3 Potato platform*

The most important issue the potato platform identified was the availability of high quality seed. This is done through two different types of interventions. In the first place, through positive selection - teaching producers to maintain the quality of their own planting materials. Secondly, the platform has initiated, with the support of ISAR, a commercial mini-tuber multiplication unit. The mini-tubers produced are further multiplied and marketed by individual seed multipliers, who are also members of the platform.

The platform also works on the availability and use of agro-inputs, such as fertilizer and fungicides. Furthermore, the platform was venturing into the collective marketing of potatoes.

The potato platform was very outspoken about the need to become more autonomous from RIU, more so than the maize platform. The cassava platform specifically indicated that it was not in any kind of state whereby autonomous existence would be possible.

### *5.4.4 Cassava platform*

The cassava platform had concentrated mainly on solving the problem of the cassava mosaic virus, which had devastated cassava production in Rwanda, Burundi and parts of DR Congo. Through producing cuttings of new resistant

varieties obtained through ISAR, in combination with improved crop husbandry, cassava yields increased dramatically for the participating producers.

Marketing cassava, however, is quite a challenge in the chosen district. The platform was assessing opportunities for producers to set up a cassava flour processing unit, and was looking into marketing the cassava in the south of Rwanda, where a flour processing plant is in operation.

The Mid-term review decided to phase out support to the cassava platform. RIU has been assisting the platform by linking them to other support networks, such as the IPM project run by MINAGRI and sponsored by BTC.

<b>Type of change</b>	<b>Achievements</b>
Change in relations within the same actor group (within domain)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Collaboration of producers in a maize marketing company</li> <li>▪ Potato farmers starting mini-tuber production and marketing</li> <li>▪ Cassava producers managing to produce and distribute clean cuttings</li> </ul>
Change in relations between actor groups (between domains)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Development of 3 functioning district level innovation platforms</li> <li>▪ Improved collaboration as a result between research, advisory services and producers</li> <li>▪ Warehouse receipt system for maize functioning</li> <li>▪ Improved relationship input suppliers and potato producers</li> </ul>
Changes in policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ District development plan taking marketing issues of cassava into consideration</li> <li>▪ Potato producers allowed to multiply mini-tubers</li> </ul>

Institutional change within stakeholder groups was mainly at the level of producers, who have managed to improve their collaboration as a result of the platforms and have taken on new activities in the field of collective marketing as well as clean planting material production and marketing.

Changes in relations between stakeholder groups have mainly been achieved around the 3 commodity platforms. Through the platforms there has been better collaboration with research. The platforms have managed to become the arena for identifying the problems that are hindering the further development of the selected sectors and for the innovation required to overcome these constraints. This has led to new economic activities, companies and services.

In terms of policy chains no real major achievements have been made other than that the platforms will have had some influence on district level decision-making through providing evidence of what works and what doesn't. At national level there has been no policy impact on how innovation is facilitated.

## **6 Enabling innovation in practice**

### **6.1 Introduction**

RIU is based on the premise that innovation results from interaction and learning between system actors. The underlying assumption was that improved interaction forges stronger links between stakeholders, resulting in better information exchange and more ideas and opportunities being pursued. And if research is embedded in this network of interactions then it will be used. The RIU Africa Country Programme, in essence, set out to pilot an approach that would stimulate and add quality to this interaction to catalyse or facilitate innovation.

In this chapter we compare the experiences of the three country programmes in Tanzania, Rwanda and Zambia in deliberately facilitating innovation. Zambia, Tanzania and Rwanda provide very different contexts for agricultural sector development (see Table 10 in the appendix), both in an economic and a political sense. In addition, the RIU programme management has provided guidance on the direction and design of the piloting activities. This has resulted in different approaches in the three countries. One could argue that this makes the programmes less comparable. On the other hand it does provide the divergence in experiences required for analysis.

Context analysis and demand articulation are discussed in 6.2, composing networks in 6.3 and facilitating interaction in 6.4. In 6.5 we will further explore the activities undertaken by the innovation platforms and in 6.6 we will look at what they achieved. In section 6.7 we will elaborate on the sustainability of the intervention. In 6.8 we look into a number of experiences of the RIU country programmes that may be of value to similar intervention programmes focusing on facilitating innovation as tool for development.

### **6.2 Identifying promising entry points for facilitating innovation**

It goes without saying that the process of facilitating innovation has to start somewhere and that therefore a first step has to be the identification of promising entry points.

#### *6.2.1 Initial decision-making*

In each country different processes have been applied for the initial selection of entry points.

A common feature was the execution of a country assessment by a team of consultants, followed by the elaboration of a country strategy by a follow-up team of consultants. In hindsight one can question the value of the contribution of specific missions by outside experts in identifying entry points for facilitation of innovation and whether or not this is an effective method. Whether or not it is necessary to initiate the process of identification of entry points by means of an in-depth study carried out by external consultants remains doubtful. Although it may result in a comprehensive report on opportunities and identification of the different actors in the national innovation system, it does little to create buy-in of organisations active in the country. Looking back now at the three countries, it can be seen that most of choices that were made through this first layer of studies did not lead to a narrowing down of the scope of the RIU intervention in those countries. In hindsight the main result of the studies was that a decision was made on the representation of organisations in the National Innovation Coalition in the three countries. It can be questioned

whether the involvement of teams of outside consultants was the most efficient manner in terms of time and cost of reaching this decision.

A national stakeholder group was formed in each of the three countries (called national innovation coalition or NIC). The NIC played a role in the further narrowing down of decisions by advising the RIU staff. This provided focus in terms of where to start with the programme. Choices were made regarding both subjects and geographical focus. In Tanzania, the NIC only met sporadically to advise on this decision-making process and was eventually dismantled as its mandate had become unclear. In Rwanda and Tanzania the NIC continued as a national level innovation platform.

There was a noticeable difference in the order of decision-making between the three countries (Table 4).

**Table 4: Order of decision-making in the RIU Rwanda, Zambia and Tanzania programmes**

Rwanda	Zambia	Tanzania
Geographic	Themes	Geographic
Commodity	Geographic	Theme
Themes	(Commodity)	Commodity

In Rwanda three intervention districts were chosen, and, following the district development plans, a promising commodity for both food security and cash income was selected as a focal point per district. Stakeholders were brought together in a first innovation platform meeting to discuss the commodity in this particular district. During this first meeting a process of identification of thematic priorities that needed to be addressed was started. In the fourth district smallholding irrigation was ultimately selected, with economic development identified as the general objective, horticulture as the selected district level entry point and smallholding irrigation facilities as the opportunity.

In Zambia conservation agriculture was selected at national level as an underutilised technology, holding the promise of impact through increased adoption. The RIU programme management advised the Zambia team that it should focus on a theme rather than on commodities. As a second step the intervention districts were chosen. Stakeholders were brought together to discuss the topic of conservation agriculture in the intervention districts. These stakeholders then began the process of identifying further action. Two platforms began work in the context of a maize–legume intercrop. A third platform chose rice as the production system for conservation agriculture, and from there moved on to focus on rice system improvement rather than conservation agriculture for rice.

In Tanzania regions within the Eastern Zone were first to be chosen, based on a desk and feasibility study by consultants and then on themes. The Eastern Zone was selected because it had characteristics of all the different Agro-ecological Zones in Tanzania. In other words, the first delimitation was geographical and only in a second instance were the themes defined. The RIU Tanzania country programme was then established and they consulted regional authorities on the selection of topics and priorities and on aligning with regional priorities and plans. Within the Eastern zone they specifically aimed at intervention in the less affluent districts. The themes selected were draught power, post-harvest, dairy, and 'entrepreneurship'. Around these themes stakeholders were brought together to form innovation platforms. In some cases commodities were linked to those themes: for example mechanisation was linked to rice and maize. In other cases this happened much later, for example the entrepreneurship platform recently started focusing more on

poultry. In all cases challenges and related activities were selected for each of the topics.

### 6.2.2 *Delimitation.*

The experiences of the different platforms in Zambia demonstrates that it is harder to mobilise the private sector as partners in innovation platforms around a particular theme. Although the programme did ultimately succeed in involving input suppliers and farm implement producers, it did require a considerable amount of effort. It was clearly easier to achieve private sector buy-in when a commodity was chosen as a topic. In the case of conservation agriculture, the marketing of rotation crops as pulses as well as the choice in the south to focus mainly on rice, did provide better incentives for private enterprises to participate in the programme.

Ultimately, in all three countries there was a focus on opportunities (rather than problems) and on ways in which constraints on taking advantage of those opportunities could be tackled. An example of a difficult starting point for platform formation was the selection of 'remoteness' in Zambia as a potential platform topic. With 'remoteness' what was meant was that remote areas, far from towns and cities and road infrastructure, experienced difficulties in ensuring economic development. This was undoubtedly an important problem, but it does not readily rally stakeholders into discussing joint action for learning and development. It is not only difficult to ensure the participation of private entrepreneurs around such a nondescript theme; other decision makers from public, NGO and producer organisations will not be motivated, as the specific action required in order to overcome this problem is unclear. In the end, the topic 'remoteness' was not pursued for this reason.

In all cases a geographic delimitation was made before rallying stakeholders to identify specific opportunities that could be pursued. This seems to have been mostly for pragmatic and organisational reasons. Given that opportunities are specific to geographical areas, and a lot of practical decision-making takes place at sub-national level, this kind of decision-making makes sense. It does hold the risk, however, of a choice of topic that may be very relevant on a local basis but of limited relevance on a larger regional or national scale. A clear vision on the part of a programme or supervising structure can contribute to choices of topics which match with priorities on the national level and that are of larger than local benefit. In Tanzania, this role was fulfilled by the RIU programme management. In Zambia and Rwanda the NIC, in conjunction with the RIU programme staff, steered the local decision-making process.

The RIU experience shows that there is no right or wrong choice when it comes to choosing a commodity or a theme as the starting point for platform building for innovation. What is essential, however, is the identification of a promising opportunity around which actors can be organised. From this point onwards it is the actors themselves who can make the subsequent choices, with the support of a facilitator assisting in the process. An economic opportunity based on a commodity does have the important advantage of making it easier to identify the interested stakeholders, and motivate the private sector to participate.

In hindsight, the time and effort, and hence resources, invested in the decision-making process in the three countries to arrive at a specific number of promising entry points for action seems rather excessive. Ultimately, many of the choices of topics worth pursuing were made at district level by the RIU programme, local government and the first stakeholder interaction meeting. The main choice, that essentially needs to be made at national level, is for

intervention areas. Further decision-making could have and in most cases has been done at district level.

#### *Shifting focus of the programmes and platforms*

The different platforms in each country displayed a certain level of dynamism in their main focus over time. These changes, over time, from theme to commodity (from conservation agriculture to rice in Zambia and from entrepreneurship to poultry in Tanzania) are in a way the result of deeper insights developed in the platform through coordination and interaction. The shift from one commodity-related problem to the next (for example from maize seed and production technology to marketing and warehouse receipt system development in Rwanda) is a result of solving a single issue and then focusing on the next issue or opportunity that presents itself.

Perseverance has been evident in Rwanda and Zambia in terms of the entry point, and within the chosen entry points the RIU programme has been promoting innovation. In Tanzania, there has been more opportunistic decision-making, in which the implementing organisation assumed more freedom in terms of pursuing newly emerging opportunities.

RIU Tanzania shifted the focus of the programme to constructing a local chicken value chain, with the promise of a sizeable impact, while support for other initiatives showing less promise for impact were abandoned. This was partly as a result of a decision made by the RIU Tanzania programme and partly as a result of the RIU programme management changes after the MTR.

In the two northern districts RIU Zambia persisted with its focus on conservation agriculture, in spite of the initial difficulties in rallying actors behind this topic. This did result in the end in coordination of actions by different organisations in conservation agriculture, the development of new rural services and a notable increase in the adoption of the associated technologies.

As innovation is by nature an unpredictable process, it would seem wise not to cling too tightly to pre-defined entry points, and to allow for flexibility in grasping new opportunities. At the same time, it may sometimes be advantageous to persevere in pursuing a certain topic. Evidence from RIU suggests that when there is consensus among stakeholders that a certain topic holds great opportunity for impact, then supporting the process of making the new practice or arrangement a success should be allowed the time and effort required to overcome the unavoidable set-backs and to learn from failure, an essential part of the innovation process. This suggests that some perseverance is required, which can be obtained by joint decision-making. This does slow down decision-making, but at the same time helps to prevent ad-hoc shifts in focus.

### **6.3 Composing networks**

The main intervention strategy of RIU was the initiating of Innovation Platforms. According to RIU (2010) an innovation platform consists of a broad range of stakeholders who share a common interest and come together to solve problems and develop mutually beneficial solutions. The RIU programme supported and coordinated interaction at three different levels:

1. National level
2. Middle (mainly district) level
3. Local level

### 6.3.1 *The national level*

At the inception of the RIU programme national level stakeholder platforms were formed, which were baptised National Innovation coalition (NIC). A NIC was first founded in Rwanda and was subsequently introduced in the other countries. In Tanzania, for example, an advisory panel had been established even before the country team was put in place. This was later referred to as NIC after the Rwanda example. The members of the NICs were selected to represent the main actors of importance in the national innovation system, based on the country assessment studies.

In Tanzania, the national committee did provide some initial direction to the interventions by the RIU programme. In terms of subsequent implementation, the RIU programme management decided that the NIC could not add any value to the programme. In the first place because it did not consist of actors that would be able to support the middle level innovation platforms and as such it was not worth investing efforts into the building of this national coalition. Secondly, it was considered superfluous to have a national committee with an overview function, as that would only serve to accentuate the administrative character of the programme.

Unlike Tanzania, in Zambia and Rwanda the NIC received continued support from the programme and was built into a national stakeholder platform. A number of functions were envisioned for the NIC:

#### *National level think-tank*

One of the first functions envisioned for the national innovation platforms was that of a national think-tank. As a think-tank the national platform could provide direction to the RIU programme, spot trends and, in a broad manner, guide the initiative. The identification of promising entry points in the RIU programmes, as discussed above, is where the NIC played this role.

The NIC contributed in all three countries to the process of initial decision-making. As indicated before, many decisions could have been left to the middle level innovation platforms, especially where promising entry points needed to be chosen. The engagement of the NIC at national level provided the RIU programme with the mandate, through a wide array of stakeholders, to engage in the process of lower level consultation and platform initiation. However, beyond the initial decision-making in the programme, the role of the NIC as a think-tank has been limited.

#### *Steering committee function.*

The steering committee's function was to oversee and supervise the RIU programme. In both Zambia and Rwanda, the programme showed that the steering committee function of the national committee was limited. The RIU country coordinating teams made most of the decisions themselves, which is probably justifiable from the point of view of efficiency and retaining focus. Although a steering committee may be necessary for the proper supervision of a development project, the RIU programme shows that the advantages of combining this with a function as a national innovation platform are limited.

#### *Coordinating technical support.*

A third function of the national level platforms was the coordination and guarantee of the provision of support services for middle level innovation platforms. In both Rwanda and Zambia, this function was never fulfilled by the national level platforms. The middle or district level platforms were able to source the services and support they required directly from the right organisations. No national coordination between demand and supply of

knowledge appeared to be necessary. The district platforms had enough representation within the platform and did not require a specific brokering system at national level connecting them to the right services. Any brokering between the platform and outside service providers would be ensured by the platform facilitators. The electronic knowledge market system that was under development by the national innovation coalitions in Rwanda and Zambia was to be the tool for assisting in matching demand for knowledge services and supply. This initiative was abandoned after the Mid-Term Review, as it was apparent that this system was not going to contribute to better functioning of the middle level platforms.

#### *Policy advocacy at national level.*

The fourth function of the national level platform was advocating policy to leverage support for local innovation processes and scaling-up. This was poorly developed in Rwanda. The right organisations appeared to have been represented in the NIC, but the delegated individuals lacked the decision-making power within their organisation to really make a difference. In Zambia, this function of the national platform was fulfilled much more satisfactorily, as the permanent secretary of agriculture was a prominent and active member of the NIC. The Zambia country programme shows that through a functioning national level platform, the involvement and commitment of higher-level decision makers can be secured. And that the platform can form an important hub for evidence-based policy making. A rice policy and a conservation agriculture policy were elaborated and endorsed partly as a result of the efforts by the conservation agriculture and rice platforms and the NIC.

In Rwanda, the NIC was informally attached to the CAADP meetings, with the purpose of providing the RIU programme and its NIC with leverage within the national system. However, it has not resulted in real buy-in into the Rwandan national system. The difference in scale of operation and discussion between the RIU programme and CAADP has probably prevented this. Furthermore, the departure of the RIU programme manager, and with him the most important higher-level contacts, meant a breakdown in relations between the programme and the Rwandan organisations in general, and CAADP in particular. The alignment with CAADP restrained the RIU programme in setting its own course, which hampered any exploration of the approach of platforms in facilitating innovation.

Policy change has been achieved in the RIU Tanzania programme, even though there was no national level multi-stakeholder body. The policy change has been lobbied for at regional level, with the support from Muvek as executor of the RIU programme. This has resulted, for example, in a waiver for import duties on tractor spare parts and milking equipment.

#### *Institutionalise lessons learned from middle level innovation platforms*

The fifth function envisioned for the national level platform was the internalising of lessons learned from local and middle level in the NIC members' organisations so as to ensure scaling-up, and the promotion of use outside of the pilot areas. In Rwanda it was specifically noted by the RIU facilitators that they doubted whether a national committee would be the best way to support communication of results and embedding in other organisations. Specific ad-hoc events highlighting results to policy and decision makers would, in their view, be just as effective, making a formal body such as the national innovation coalitions redundant.

*Lessons learned from the National Innovation Committees.*

In theory, a national stakeholder forum, such as RIU's NIC, could have a role to play at the beginning of a programme in assisting in the making of any initial decisions. It could provide a programme with a mandate to intervene and has the potential to create endorsement for the programme and to assure national level buy-in by relevant organisations.

However, the RIU programmes show that beyond the initial programme start-up, the functions of a national level innovation platform are limited. A function as a national think-tank on how to better support innovation processes can in theory be useful, but this was not achieved in the RUI programme. The combination with a function as steering committee for the RIU programme may have hindered any development as a think-tank. As a think-tank, high-level acceptance of the platform is required, and having a mixed mandate may in this regard hamper the gaining of recognition as an advisory body.

The Zambia programme does provide an example of effective use of the NIC as a mechanism for policy change. This was possible as a result of the high-level representation in the NIC. Tanzania shows that similar policy change can also be achieved without a national body.

*6.3.2 The middle (or sub-national) level.*

The innovation platforms around which most RIU activities were initiated were, in the case of all 3 countries, at the middle level. The innovation platforms at this level achieved coordination of activities through different intervening organisations and the interaction between stakeholders that was envisioned by the programme to support innovation.

The maize platform in Nyagatare, Rwanda is an example in which different types of service providers, as well as economic actors such as farmers, their cooperatives and banks, collaborated for the benefit of maize chain development at district level. The approach of the innovation platform resulted in a chain of improvements in the functioning of the maize sector: improved production technology being used, a warehouse receipt system initiated with a local credit provider, and the initiation of a maize trading company in response to marketing constraints.

In Tanzania, the mechanisation platform resulted in the emergence of tractor owner associations and the organisation of farmers in block farms. This made contracts more lucrative for tractor owners and ensured access to affordable land preparation services for smallholder farmers.

In Zambia, the innovation platforms on conservation agriculture had an impact on the coordination of interventions by a number of organisations intervening for the promotion of conservation agriculture in isolation, but with less-than-optimal results. Through the platform a number of constraints effecting adoption and impact of conservation farming were overcome. Commercial ripping services were introduced, which in combination with the use of herbicides, reduced labour requirements, thus making the yield benefits of conservation farming accessible to the majority of maize farmers.

In all three countries the district level innovation platforms were central to facilitating innovation. This was the level where effective and result-oriented action could be initiated between the various chain actors (producers, traders, retailers) and chain supporters (research, different advisory services, farmer organisations).

In Rwanda, the platform participants that were interviewed identified the functions of the innovation platforms as presented earlier in 5.3.1. Here the same categories are presented, with examples from the 3 countries, illustrating that these functions can be found in the innovation platforms in all 3 countries (Table 5). In addition, coordination between intervening organisations can be added to the functions of the middle level innovation platforms.

**Table 5: Functions of the middle level innovation platforms according to platform members**

	<b>Examples</b>
<b>Advocacy for change</b>	Lobbying for tax exemption for tractor spare parts by mechanisation platform in Tanzania Making conservation agriculture part of national policy in Zambia
<b>Demand articulation</b>	The identification of labour as main constraint for adoption of conservation farming by the Zamia platforms led to a change in approach by public and NGO support organisations
<b>Access to financial services</b>	The maize platform in Rwanda developed a credit scheme for maize farmers
<b>Access to research and extension services</b>	The potato platform in Rwanda developed collaboration with research to initiate commercial mini-tuber production; The local poultry network developed tailored household advisory services for new poultry farmers
<b>Access to inputs</b>	The cassava network in Rwanda ensured availability of mosaic resistant cuttings;
<b>Access to markets</b>	The rice platform in Zambia facilitated the access to branded rice marketing; The maize platform in Rwanda initiated a maize trading company with farmers and local traders as shareholders
<b>Farmer collaboration</b>	Cassava farmers are seeking market opportunities and processing jointly. Farmers in Tanzania formed block farms to gain access to tractor services
<b>Innovation</b>	Mini-tuber production by seed producers in Rwanda Construction of a local poultry sub-sector in Tanzania Development of commercial ripping services in Zambia
<b>Communication</b>	Participatory radio on conservation farming in Zambia; Local radio disseminating findings of the maize platform in Rwanda; Highlighting of the local chicken business opportunity on national TV in Tanzania
<b>Coordination of action between support organisations</b>	Different organisations in Zambia promoting conservation farming collaborating and communicating a similar message and providing coordinated services.

*Lessons learned from the middle level platforms*

This middle level can be defined as close enough to grassroots implementation to have a direct relationship with it, but of a high enough level to be of consequence. The middle level allows for a degree of system overview that avoids the pitfall of addressing only the petty problems of individuals or single stakeholder groups. It provides for some distance from the local level, which makes sure that the more systematic issues concerning joint interest can be addressed. At the same time it is not so far removed from practicalities at ground level that discussions become abstract and of little consequence.

The Zambia programme provides good examples of the middle level platform linking local level with decision-making at a national level. The middle level innovation platforms at district level were very well embedded into the District structures. The emphasis in these platforms was on coordination. Not only coordination of the different activities of the various stakeholders, but also of the harmonisation of implementation and ensuring interventions were in line with the existing policies and context. In this manner the middle level platforms were instrumental in linking national level policy to local implementation. Seen the other way around, experiences from local implementation were channeled by the middle level platforms to the national level. For example, the vertical link contributed to evidence-based policy-making, which resulted in the ministry of agriculture's national sustainable agriculture initiative.

This justifies the making of the largest investments in facilitating innovation at the middle level. When considering, for example, the building of the capacity of actors in public systems to take on the facilitation of innovation as their task, then this is best done at the middle level, as this is where the main action will be. For details on capacity building refer to Table 18 in the appendix.

### 6.3.3 *The local level*

At local level organisation of actors is essential for effective communication, service delivery and innovation. Many types of formal and informal organisation exist, especially at farmer level. Grassroots forms of organisation may also exist at the level of local traders or processors. In the RIU intervention representatives from these local organisations were selected as entry points to grassroots level for the innovation platforms at the middle level. Most of the activities that were initiated by the middle level innovation platforms were implemented through the local level organisations. A potato cooperative formed the starting organisation for the commercial multiplication of mini-tubers in Rwanda. The learning sites in Zambia formed the structure used for experimentation and capacity building in conservation agriculture.

In Rwanda, existing cooperatives of producers were used as the main local level organisations to link with. In Tanzania, new local structures were developed deliberately by the mechanisation platform. Farmers were assisted to organise into 'block farms' and tractor owners into tractor owner associations, both examples of local 'platforms' or rather, local forms of organisation. In Zambia, the local level organisation was created around the local learning sites.

For representation in the middle level innovation platforms, local level 'champions' were identified from these local organisations as the representatives of producers. The term 'champion' is appreciated as it reflects the diversity of forms of organisation. A champion is a person that does not represent him or herself alone, but a larger stakeholder group.

#### *Lessons learned from the local level*

Local groups are an essential entry point for action. At the local level there often are links between the producers and service providers and local authorities. It is noticeable that these local organisations exist mostly for producers. This presents a problem for multi-stakeholder interaction at the middle level. Other stakeholder groups, such as landless labourers, petty traders, processors or transporters often lack such organisation and are thus not represented by a champion, but rather at best by the presence of an individual, participating primarily for his or her own benefit. If there are

insufficient useful existing forms of local organisation, it may be considered helpful to support the building of such structures, as was the case with the local learning sites in Zambia and the block farms in Tanzania.

#### 6.3.4 Functions of the three levels of platforms

Based on the experiences in the 3 countries, an overview of the platform functions encountered at different levels was drawn up (Table 6). This should not be interpreted as an exhaustive and complete list, but as an indication of what type of action would be most suited to which type of platform. The levels of decision-making in a country, and the decentralisation of decision-making, have a major influence on which action should take place at which level. For example, in a country where most responsibilities for policy-making are at state or regional rather than at national level, the function that we classify here under 'national' level may actually be better placed at state or region level.

**Table 6: Rough division of functions across different levels**

Level	Function
National	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Signalling need for outside support</li> <li>▪ Signalling broad economic opportunities and constraints</li> <li>▪ Signalling promising pilot experiences worthy of national level support campaigns</li> <li>▪ Coordinate joint action and avoid duplication of mandates</li> <li>▪ Voicing local and middle level concerns to national decision makers</li> <li>▪ Address systematic constraints to effective interaction</li> </ul>
Middle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Identify opportunities and constraints requiring action</li> <li>▪ Provide arena for planning of joint action</li> <li>▪ Matchmaking between service demand and supply</li> <li>▪ Articulate demands for systematic change</li> <li>▪ Articulate policy change needs</li> <li>▪ Provide space for improving interaction between input suppliers, producers and buyers</li> </ul>
Local	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Capacity building of local actors</li> <li>▪ Organising producers for bulking products</li> <li>▪ Organising producers for access to inputs and other services</li> </ul>

For more details refer to Table 13 in Appendix 1.

A wide range of objectives and activities was observed, especially at the middle level. In the Rwandan platforms these activities were quite diverse. The RIU Rwanda team strongly emphasised the innovation objective of the platforms and supported activities of joint learning, but at the same time activities were funded that were of direct benefit to the platform members, such as training and support in purchasing inputs and equipment. The right balance needs to be found in this between incentives for participation. The innovation platforms piloted and adapted new practices and stakeholder arrangements, and, at the same time, the Rwandan platforms also took on more routine tasks, to the benefit of the participants, ones that would not normally be considered as activities aimed at innovation. In Zambia, the district level platforms were instrumental in achieving better coordination of conservation agriculture related activities, but further innovation was not high on the agenda, and local level activities were not tailored to spark innovation through joint learning. In Tanzania, the ACP took on more autonomy than it did in Rwanda and Zambia, and determined the innovation agenda itself. This provided more opportunities for steering activities specifically towards innovation.

It is understandable that a participant-driven network may take on tasks other than those strictly related to innovation, as they can benefit the platform members. It can also, however, divert the focus away from innovation, as can be observed to some extent in the platforms in Zambia. Resources are limited and the facilitation of the platform is resource intensive. As such, the diversion of the platform's attention towards direct benefits for its participants is a risk. The investments made in platform facilitation can be justified by the assumption that the innovation resulting from this platform is vital, not only to those interacting directly with the platform, but also to similar stakeholders far removed from the platform.

At the local and middle level the approach of using existing forms of local organisation, and selecting champions from these organisations to ensure the link between the local level and middle level innovation platforms, proved effective.

#### 6.3.5 *Participants in platforms*

In the majority of cases there were four important groups of stakeholders represented in the platforms: knowledge service providers, market actors (input dealers, traders, financial services), producers and their organisations and (local) government representatives. Sometimes market actors also take on the role as service provider (e.g. explaining to farmers how to use herbicides or medicines, quality advice for producers). Other stakeholder groups include government authorities at different levels, research organisations and local media. In RIU there was the assumption that in order to achieve a well-functioning innovation platform, the involvement of the private sector was needed. Getting this private sector involved, however, turned out to be difficult, and only possible when activities were of direct benefit to them.

The role of research appears crucial. Research organisations were invited from the start and were sometimes involved in facilitation and capacity development. In a number of cases, research gradually became less interesting, often due to a lack of joint activities, and was phased out (Zambia). In other cases, research has played an important role, such as in the case of dairy in Tanzania, or in Zambia where rice research was contracted in. In Rwanda, research was an instrumental and active partner in all three platforms. An example is the support to the potato platform by providing training and technical support for mini-tuber multiplication.

The private sector was involved in all of the platforms in Tanzania. In the case of the dairy platform the private sector (an agro-input dealer) has taken on the role of facilitator (bringing the relevant stakeholders together during meetings to discuss progress and improve understanding and knowledge on each other's activities). In the mechanisation platform the private sector was essential for service provision (tractor owners offering ploughing services to farmers and spare parts traders providing services to tractor owners). In the case of poultry the private sector was both essential for service delivery (Agro vets, ByTrade, feed producers etc.) as well as for a well-functioning value chain (buyers of the chicken, transporters, hatcheries, etc.). A private company, Kukudeal, has been created to enable continuation of the activities as well as more permanent links between chicken producers and buyers. Additional advantages include access to loans, services and a coordination platform.

In Rwanda, the platforms were farmer-dominated, but specific efforts were made to include other stakeholders. The private sector was less prominently present in the innovation platforms. Local input suppliers, local traders and credit service providers were involved, but it proved more difficult to get large

traders and processors involved. Also, in Zambia, motivating private entrepreneurs to join the platforms was complicated, as they did not recognise the immediate value of discussing conservation agriculture.

In all cases the local authorities were involved in the platforms. The participation of local government representatives assisted in both Zambia and Rwanda in the alignment of activities with other development activities in the district. It provided the platforms with legitimacy within the district and was instrumental in assuring embedding of the platforms and its activities within the system. In Rwanda the platforms were informally attached to the Joint Action Forums, in which different implementing organisations are coordinating their development action.

In Zambia, the first two conservation agriculture platforms started out independently but then sought a link with the District Development Coordination Committee. The platforms that followed were embedded immediately in the district coordination structure. This stronger link to the district did reduce, to a degree, the flexibility and freedom of decision-making, as well as the balance between a focus on coordination and innovation as a trade-off against better embedding. The embedding of innovation platforms into district structures contributed to the sustainability of the platforms, but the contribution to the innovation process is less clear. In Tanzania, the local authorities were involved in the innovation platforms. In the case of the mechanisation innovation platform, the activities were even taken over by the local district authorities as they came to realise that the type of activities needed to enable innovation were also activities that were part of the programme usually used by the mechanisation officers.

Importantly, it can be observed that the various platforms developed mechanisms to make sure that, for different activities, only those relevant and interested would be involved. In Tanzania, this was organised through Muvek. In the platforms in Rwanda and Zambia sub-committees were formed who worked on topics of interest.

#### 6.3.6 *Formalisation of organisation*

An important question that often arises is how much formality is required in organising stakeholders at these different levels.

At the middle level in Zambia and Rwanda, innovation platforms were set up as fairly formal organisations, having regular meetings and pursuing a jointly identified agenda. This seemed to work and resulted in both innovation and the coordinated action due to new collaborative arrangements.

In Tanzania, the programme shifted over time from the same model as in Rwanda and Zambia - an innovation platform as an entity in which one can be a participant - to a more informal type of model. For the local chicken network, interaction was not organised around a multi-stakeholder platform meeting on a regular basis. Instead, result-oriented exchanges between specific stakeholders were facilitated when necessary by Muvek. Action was taken based on the assessment of bottlenecks by Muvek. Often not in the form of a meeting, but rather by ensuring interaction between essential stakeholders, for example between market partners and service providers.

These are clearly two quite different models, both with advantages and disadvantages. The first model builds a multi-stakeholder platform with the objective of that platform becoming the arena in which different actors in the system find each other and come to joint action. It is based on the assumption that after a certain period of time this platform will continue to exist without much outside support, and continue to fulfil its function as an arena for

matchmaking between actors aiming at innovation. To ensure its continuity and provide opportunities for matchmaking leading to joint action, a platform will have to meet regularly, and also have to have some sort of management. So a certain level of formality is required in order to have a chance of sustained existence.

A risk inherent in a semi-formal organisation is that it will create barriers for membership, when innovation would be best served by an informal platform with free entry and exit of 'members'. The platforms in both Rwanda and Zambia have been able to avoid this pitfall. Although the middle platforms do register members, it is easy and free for individuals or organisations to join and participate, even before being recognised as member. The role of RIU as facilitator in these platforms has helped to maintain this open character, as the RIU programmes had a clear vision on innovation as the major objective of the platforms. Once RIU withdraws it is not unthinkable that the platforms will become more exclusive and focus more on development activities rather than on maintaining their status as an open network aimed at innovation.

The final approach used for the local poultry chain development relies much more on a brokering organisation actively making links between stakeholders based on specific needs and opportunities. It has the advantage of not requiring the building of a (semi-)formal multi-stakeholder platform with its own coordination, officials and rules and regular meetings, which is resource intensive. A disadvantage, however, is that this approach depends entirely on the brokering organisation to build relationships. The links made are needs based, but rely fully on the perception of the brokering organisation to which these links would be beneficial and necessary. On the one hand this provides focus of effort and avoids a culture of formal meetings and workshops. On the other hand it does not create ownership of the process for the stakeholders involved. In addition, the emergence of new ideas and identification of new opportunities depends to a large extent on the brokering organisation, as there is no specific regular meeting platform in which unexpected or unintentional links leading to joint action can be stimulated.

The innovation platforms in Rwanda are all currently seeking to obtain a formally recognised status through registration. Although the RIU programme management questions whether this is prudent, the Rwandan actors involved stand by their decision. They justify their choice by pointing to the high degree of organisation in society and the non-consideration of informal structures. They will seek to register as district level inter professional organisations.

In Zambia, the innovation platforms that were first formed were independent, but did seek recognition later on by attaching themselves as a sub-committee to the District development Coordination Committees (DDCC). The new innovation platforms were setup that way from the very start. The advantage is that continuity of the platform is secured, and that policy messages are channeled more easily as a result of its official status. A disadvantage, as observed in Zambia, is that coordination of development activities, the mandate of the DDCC, will compete with innovation for attention.

In conclusion, formalisation is sometimes a requirement (Rwanda) and contributes to institutionalisation (Zambia), but it may hinder the focus on innovation. Where platforms are less formalised networks, members feel less responsible and a brokering organisation has more responsibility, but also most of the decision-making power and initiative (Tanzania, poultry).

## 6.4 Facilitation of interaction

Networks, platforms or other forms of interaction between stakeholders do not happen all by themselves in most circumstances. Even though there can be substantial mutual benefits attached to such interaction, specific action is required in order to make it happen. Together the various possible actions or roles that can be taken up by individuals or organisations are defined here as ‘facilitating innovation’.

When assessing the processes in all three countries a number of roles that facilitate innovation can be distinguished (Table 7). Different facilitation roles were played by either the RIU ACP team or by a representative of a member stakeholder group in the platform.

**Table 7: Different roles in facilitating innovation**

Championing	Representing local stakeholders at a higher level by virtue of a leading role in a local organisation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Zambia’s Conservation Farming Unit leaders</li> <li>▪ Ward and district champions in Tanzania’s poultry Network</li> <li>▪ Cooperative leaders and progressive farmers in the Rwanda innovation platforms</li> </ul>
Brokering	Make connections between actors that can benefit from each other’s services or roles. Brokering can be done between multiple actors by bringing them together in a network, either informally or more formally. Brokering can also be done between two actors, to ensure they start working together: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ensuring that ISAR (Rwanda research) starts working with the potato platform out of mutual interest.</li> <li>▪ Introducing cassava-producing cooperatives to a cassava processor in another province.</li> </ul>
Facilitation	Stimulating and assisting the interactive process between stakeholders with the objective of improved quality of interaction: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Assisting in the organisation and guiding the process in innovation platform meetings and other moments of stakeholder interaction</li> <li>▪</li> </ul>
Thematic leadership (thrust leadership in RIU)	Taking initiative on a certain topic (cluster of challenges identified during first platform meeting): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ In Tanzania’s dairy IP different clusters of activities had thrust leaders.</li> <li>▪ In Rwanda subcommittees were formed per topic, chaired by a thematic leader</li> </ul>
Mobilisation	Lobbying essential stakeholders to join a platform or local level organisation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Formation of farmer learning groups/circles by CFU facilitators in Zambia</li> <li>▪ Identification of farmers who want to join in the poultry activities by ward champion in Tanzania</li> <li>▪ Convincing local input dealers to join the potato innovation platform in Rwanda</li> </ul>
Mediation	Conflict resolution: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Occasional role of the RIU team in IP conflict situations in Zambia.</li> <li>▪ Guiding the discussion between input suppliers and producers in Rwanda over the price and quality of</li> </ul>

	inputs
Advocacy	<p>Promoting the network and assuring support of and buy-in into the network by those individuals and organisations that matter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Local radios play this role to some extent e.g. through the discussion of the role of traditional and civic leaders in conservation agriculture in Zambia.</li> <li>▪ Platform members play this role by communicating to peers their achievements</li> </ul>
Problem solving	<p>Identifying, proposing and providing practical solutions for bottlenecks hindering progress of multi-stakeholder action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Promoting the importation of rippers by Zambian traders and connecting them to ripping service providers</li> <li>▪ Suggesting piloting the use of cocoons for maize storage by the maize platform in Rwanda</li> <li>▪ Finding suitable crates for the transport of live chicken</li> </ul>
Technical backstopping	<p>Providing technical advice and training to ensure that opportunities discussed are economically, technically and socially viable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide assistance with the development of a voucher scheme for inputs on credit for local chicken farmers</li> <li>▪ Support local credit for providers and producers of maize in Rwanda in the development of a warehouse receipt system</li> </ul>

For more details refer to Table 14 in Appendix 1.

#### 6.4.1 *Who facilitates innovation?*

At the start of the RIU programme different actors were foreseen for some of the different facilitation roles identified above. Experience in the three countries demonstrates that many of these roles are often taken on by the same person or organisation.

For example, in Tanzania, it was initially thought that champions would be prominent farmers from the community and that mobilisers would be recruited externally, whereas thrust leaders would ideally be technical experts. In the end, one person in most cases played all of those roles.

The main facilitator of the innovation platforms, in particular, was found to play a large number of roles. In all three countries the main platform facilitators were RIU staff or, in the case of Tanzania, Muvek staff. It was only towards the end of support to the platforms that more responsibilities were being transferred to other platforms members, either because of the withdrawal of support after the MTR, or the approaching end of the RIU programme.

After the withdrawal of RIU staff as main facilitators, the task of main facilitator was taken over by another person or organisation, who again took on most of the above-mentioned roles. For example, in Rwanda platform facilitation was taken on by the staff of local NGOs. The Dairy platform facilitation was taken on by an input supplier. In the Rwanda innovation platforms a development was seen in which innovation platform participants were, over time, taking on more responsibilities for facilitation functions, despite the existence of a main facilitator for the platform.

The RIU Tanzania programme brought different parties together for different reasons. Here are some examples:

- Farmers were brought to the hatcheries so that they could understand the different costs involved in hatching and also to provide proof that local chicken can really come from hatcheries.
- Hatcheries were invited to a meeting to share their experiences and discuss their needs in terms of parent stock, feed and other challenges that they face
- ByTrade visited the farmers in their fields to assess their situation and give them appropriate advice on chicken rearing
- Hatcheries and the Ministry of Agriculture met to discuss the possibilities for tax exemption on machineries

The type of organisation with the main responsibility for initiating and facilitating the stakeholder interaction was different for each platform. The platforms in Rwanda had all been properly coordinated and initiated by the RIU Rwanda programme itself. The Rwanda RIU programme can be viewed as an independent organisation. The platform participants were of the opinion that it would not matter much which organisation ultimately took on the main facilitation task provided it possessed the required skills. In view of those skills, they decided that NGOs could fulfil this role, rather than a public organisation, a farmer organisation or a private entrepreneur.

In Zambia, the district authorities took on the future management of the innovation platforms, whereas the first platforms had been initiated and coordinated by the RIU Zambia staff.

In Tanzania, the situation was, at first glance, similar; at the start it was Muvek that assumed most of the responsibilities for initiation and facilitation of the innovation platforms. However, apart from its job of hosting RIU's Tanzania programme, Muvek is also a private enterprise, or, more specifically, a private consultancy firm. Muvek claims this provides the RIU programme with a more entrepreneurial attitude and planning of its interventions from a private sector perspective.

## **6.5 Activities needed for enabling innovation**

### *6.5.1 Joint stakeholder activities*

The facilitation of interaction with which the RIU programme has experimented aimed at going beyond the obvious enhancement of coordination and harmonisation between actors. It aimed at deliberate improvement of interaction so that joint learning and innovation could be stimulated.

The initiation of platform meetings brought actors together in a first step towards facilitating innovation. Organising meetings would not, however, stimulate innovation in itself. One of the specific strengths of the RIU programme was that, beyond organising meetings, resources were also made available for joint stakeholder action.

In Zambia, the programme supported the local learning groups and the initiation of commercial rural ripping services. In Rwanda the programme was able, for example, to provide technical and material support for the development of commercial potato mini-tuber multiplication and the development of a production and distribution system for mosaic resistant cassava cuttings. In Tanzania, RIU initiated a voucher scheme for input supply for start-up chicken producers.

These joint activities had a twofold effect. In the first place they contributed directly to innovation, for example by training end users or by piloting new technologies or market arrangements. Secondly, these joint stakeholder activities provided the glue that kept actors together and interacting to create the environment in which additional joint action for innovation in a different direction or on a different topic could emerge. In Rwanda, farmers may have at first appreciated the innovation platform because it assisted in solving problems of availability of high quality seed and fertiliser. Once established however, the innovation platform provided the arena for a maize marketing company with local traders and farmers as shareholders. In addition, a warehouse receipt system emerged from the stakeholder interaction that had started with production constraints as the main topic.

There is a danger, however, that participants may perceive the platform solely as just another project, in a somewhat different form; one that can provide them with direct benefits. In the case of Rwanda, there was a contrast between the potato platform and the cassava platform. The potato platform participants appreciated their organisation because of the opportunities it presented for joint learning and action, and were deliberately seeking independence from RIU so they secure their sustainability. The cassava platform participants, however, stressed the point that they could not be left to their own defences and required further assistance in the facilitation of the platform and, more importantly, grant funds for the refurbishing of a cassava processing plant. The potato case shows a platform focussed on innovation, the cassava platform shows a platform seeking project benefits. It can be debated why the two platforms developed differently, but it is likely that the clearer cash income opportunities with the potato compared to the cassava provided the potato platform with a much stronger incentive for continued self-motivated interaction.

If Actors cannot see any benefit or role in such concrete activities, then they may drop out of the interaction and be lost to the platform. For some actors this may be part of a natural filtering process. However, other actors, for example certain private sector or research partners, are essential for innovation because of their unique skills and role. In considering which activities to support with external funding, direct poverty impact is often considered to be the most important criterion. However, when innovation is the objective, keeping essential actors interested and involved should also be considered when making decisions.

RIU experiences show that there is a thin line between making resources available for joint action aimed at stimulating learning and innovation, and those actions that could be classified as development activities. The financing of platform activities creates dependency and provides an incentive to join platform activities simply for the sake of direct benefits rather than for innovation. In the RIU programme this can be seen in the fact that most of the activities financed were not jointly implemented between stakeholders and contributed little to learning.

This can be overcome by the clearer earmarking of the conditions for use of available resources by those providing the resources, but also by the platform management itself in those cases where there is a more formal platform. This does require a platform management that has unambiguously joint learning and innovation, in the broadest possible definition, as its major objective. Once activities have gone beyond piloting new practices and building new relationships and have become routine practices, they should no longer be supported by resources earmarked for facilitation of innovation.

The decision by RIU Tanzania to no longer support the mechanisation platform is a good example of this line of thinking. The innovation developed was organising farmers in block farms and linking these through contracts with tractor owners. Once this had proven successful, sustaining the system and further replication of the approach could be considered a more routine activity, rather than innovation. It became the regular mandate of the mechanisation officers in the district agricultural offices. Dismantling the platform may not have been necessary if a different innovation opportunity could have been identified.

The Rwanda maize platform created NYAMIG, a maize trading company with farmer shareholders. At the time of this study the platform was discussing how to continue with NYAMIG now that it was up and running and successful. There was a feeling that it had become a functioning organisation and, as such, a routine operation. It was felt on the one hand that NYAMIG required independence from the platform, but at the same time the participants did not want to lose control over the company and sever the link between platform and company. When considering 'facilitating innovation' to be the key role of the platform, it would make sense for the platform to disengage from NYAMIG and let it be run by its shareholders. The platform could then focus on identifying opportunities that are worth pursuing..

#### 6.5.2 *Capacity to participate in innovation*

Quality interaction between stakeholders was not taken for granted by the RIU programme. Efforts were made to ensure a certain level of understanding of the purpose of the platforms and the need for interaction in order to achieve progress. Capacity building was focused on two levels. At the level of the innovation platform itself, capacity building focused on improving the understanding of innovation as a process and the contribution of different partners in this process. An effort was made to create a mind-set among the participating partners in any given innovation platform that they should all contribute to the process of innovation. This also requires a change of mind-set among researchers, extension staff and government representatives participating in the platform. In Rwanda, this was successfully achieved in the maize and potato platforms, and less successfully in the cassava platform. In Zambia, a slight improvement in coordination between stakeholders in conservation agriculture was achieved, as well as improved articulation of needs and coordination of services.

The capacity to participate in innovation also depends on the organisation of stakeholders. When forms of organisation exist at local level, representatives have a mandate to engage in discussions on behalf of a larger group and defend their interests, which provides for higher-level and more strategic decision-making and discussion. For example, in Tanzania the tractor owners were assisted in organising themselves into an association to allow them to fulfil their role as service provider to small-scale farmers.

Over the course of one month, poultry farmers were given advice on poultry keeping. This was paid for by RIU Tanzania. In Zambia, small-scale rippling service providers were trained in business skills. Capacity development of producers in Zambia was focused on the local platforms (learning groups, study circles, radio farmer forums, Farmer Field Schools) and interaction with the district level platforms. These training activities may have contributed to producers recognising their farming as a business enterprise in which innovation is needed in order to achieve progress.

## **6.6 Achievements**

The main objective of building platforms was to improve the quality of interaction between stakeholders in innovation. The aim was not a once-off guarantee of improved interaction, but to ensure that improved interaction would be continuous, as a result of changed relationships and the establishment of new forms and modes of collaboration. We can speak of real institutional change once this has been achieved.

In Table 8 some of the key institutional change outcomes of the different types of innovation platforms are presented for the three countries. The main outcome has been enhanced collaboration leading, in some cases, to joint activities. Progress is illustrated by the fact that most middle level platforms are likely to continue as either an informal network embedded in the district administration structure or as part of the private sector.

**Table 8: Main institutional changes resulting from the various types of platforms (see also Table in appendix 1**

<b>Level</b>	<b>Zambia</b>	<b>Rwanda</b>	<b>Tanzania</b>
National	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ NIC influence on National Agricultural development Strategy and Rice Development Strategy</li> <li>▪ Integration of this role into national networks (Conservation Agriculture Association, Zambia Rice Federation and Rice Task Force).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ No national level innovation after the demise of the NIC</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ NIC has only met once and no institutional change can be attributed to NIC.</li> <li>▪ Tax exemption and policy change (milking and hatchery equipment) at national level attributed to regional platform</li> </ul>
Regional or sub-national	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Gradually integrated in District multi-stakeholder coordination structure. Enhanced coordination outcome on effectiveness and efficiency; Small-scale ripping services; Rice Trading Centres;</li> <li>▪ Communication of results through local radio resulting in wider interest and interaction.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Improved chain collaboration (between economic actors)</li> <li>▪ Improved service provision to the chain actors (research, financial, extension)</li> <li>▪ Joint problem and opportunity identification</li> <li>▪ Communication of results through local radio resulting in wider interest</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Mechanisation activities integrated in district plans;</li> <li>▪ Tractor owners association;</li> <li>▪ Hatchery owners meet and discuss issue of availability of local breed chicks;</li> <li>▪ Feed producers meet;</li> <li>▪ Linking Bytrade to producers and hatchery owners</li> <li>▪ RIU plays the role of matchmaker/broker between stakeholders. Kukudeal created.</li> </ul>
Local	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Indirectly attributed to RIU, but left to extension (FFS) and radio stations (RFF), and the Conservation Farming Unit (Study Circles).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Improved production and post-harvest practices</li> <li>▪ Improved availability and use of quality seed</li> <li>▪ Improved collaboration between producers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Informal organisation of chicken producers</li> <li>▪ Block farming. Rice and maize farmers and tractor owners collaboration improved</li> </ul>

At national level institutional change was achieved in Zambia in the form of the NIC having an influence on policy at national level. Through the recognition of the NIC role in national networks, it will have a longer lasting effect on national level decision-making. In Tanzania, some proof of effect at national level can be found in the successful plea for tax exemption for milking and hatchery equipment. This result was achieved by the middle level platform, rather than through a national level platform. In Rwanda, national level institutional change was envisioned through the NIC. Its objective was to feed national organisations through the NIC with proof of the functionality of the middle level innovation platforms. And the NIC would also better coordinate national level response to the needs of middle and local level actors. This, however, was never realised, as those representing their organisations in the NIC ultimately did not have the clout required to bring about institutional change.

The main institutional change results can be identified at the middle level. The three commodity platforms in Rwanda are new and functioning forms of interaction between actors with as an important objective, among others, the facilitation of innovation. So, in themselves, the platforms are an institutional innovation. As a result of the platforms other innovation has occurred. Cassava farmers have access to improved cassava planting material and possess the knowledge necessary to attain higher production. Maize farmers have improved production practices and have access to inputs, including quality seed. In addition, they have better access to finance through a warehouse receipt system, and access to the market through the maize trading company that evolved as a result of the multi-stakeholder interaction. The potato platform has resulted in farmers multiplying potato mini-tubers into certified seed and marketing it, thus answering a major need in the potato sector in Rwanda. Whether they will continue to facilitate innovation depends on the type of continuous support they receive, either through RIU or other organisations, or through a joint effort by the platform members themselves.

Also, in Zambia, the interaction between different actors, both direct chain actors and service providers, has been improved as a result of the platform building efforts of RIU. The results of the conservation agriculture platforms were studied in detail. The platforms led to improved interaction between service providers and organisations representing producers. This improved interaction has led to the development of commercial ripping services. This new service both provides a job opportunity and answers a need. In addition, the training in conservation agriculture has become more coordinated, and the subject now has improved representation at both district and national decision-making levels. Finally, an important link was created between local radio stations and the conservation agriculture interventions.

In Tanzania, the different platforms also resulted in better interaction between actors at middle level. The mechanisation platform has resulted in a tractor owners association and the better integration of mechanisation in the district development plans. The chicken platform is instrumental in the pursuing of local chicken breeds as a distinct economic opportunity. As this is a new chain that is being built, the purposeful interaction and problem solving approach by the RIU programme has been instrumental. Kukudeal, a specific service provider facilitating the trade in the chain, has been created with the objective of ensuring the dynamic functioning of this new market.

When considering the institutional change results observed in the three countries, different types of results can be distinguished (see Table 9):

**Table 9: Examples of institutional change classified by type**

<b>Type of change</b>	<b>Example</b>
<b>Within actor group</b> Change in relations between peers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Block farming for mechanisation;</li> <li>▪ Better collaboration and harmonisation of approach between organisations promoting conservation farming in Rwanda</li> <li>▪ Potato farmers starting mini-tuber production and marketing</li> </ul>
<b>Between actor groups</b> Change in relations between different types of actors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Development of district level innovation platforms</li> <li>▪ Development of commercial ripping services</li> <li>▪ Relationship between producers and buyers of locally bred chicken</li> <li>▪ Private sector Zambia taking up the manufacturing of the Magoye Ripper, now imported from Zimbabwe.</li> <li>▪ New relationship between maize producers, financial services and traders</li> </ul>
<b>Enabling environment</b> Changes in policies and institutionalisation of innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Tax exemptions for milking and hatchery equipment in Tanzania</li> <li>▪ Conservation Agriculture becoming part of national policy in Zambia</li> <li>▪ The local Supa rice variety being promoted officially in Zambia</li> </ul>

The first level concerns changes in relations between peers. The strategy used by the RIU programme was to build on existing forms of organisations of actors at grassroots level. Examples of this type of institutional change are the initiation of a tractor owners association in Tanzania and starting cooperative production of potato mini-tubers in Rwanda. Also, better collaboration between different organisations promoting conservation farming is an example of institutional change within the same stakeholder group, in this case the support organisations.

The change in relations between actor groups has received a lot of attention in the RIU programme, as the objective of innovation platforms was to improve stakeholder interaction for innovation. The establishment of innovation platforms at district level is in itself an institutional change in this category.

The third category is labelled 'enabling environment' and groups those changes that impact on the environment in which the actors operate. This can be improved policies, but also changed practices and habits that lead to new opportunities. Change in policy usually aims at improving the enabling environment. Policy change should not be assessed in terms of the change in the policy itself, but rather in terms of the change in the enabling environment. Tax exemptions on milking and hatchery equipment only produce a result if that equipment actually becomes more affordable. And neither can conservation agriculture becoming part of national policy be called a result as such. It becomes a result if as a consequence extension services to producers change, for example.

## **6.7 Sustainability**

### **6.7.1 Resources for platform-building and maintenance**

The RIU programme used innovation platforms as a deliberate intervention to facilitate innovation. Based on the opinions of the participants in RIU activities, it becomes clear that the facilitation role, played pre-dominantly by RIU funded staff one way or another, is essential in the long term, thus costing substantial resources. In Rwanda, it was estimated that a district level commodity platform required roughly 50% of a fulltime job equivalent in terms of outside support for the initiation and facilitation of the platform to function for a period of at least three years.

A major question emerging from the RIU programme is how the service of initiating and maintaining interaction for innovation can be sustained over time. Who can provide these services, and who is ultimately willing to pay for them? In all three countries substantial resources were invested by the RIU programmes in both facilitating interaction between actors and in direct joint training and development activities for these actors.

The RIU programme shows some evidence of services being continued in an embedded manner by economic actors. An example is agro-dealers in Zambia investing efforts in promoting conservation farming and ensuring links to traders. Also, some options may exist for services paid for by the stakeholders in the platform. The potato platform in Rwanda initiated a membership fee in order to generate its own revenue with a view to independence from RIU funding. In the case of Tanzania the dairy innovation platform, by virtue of a private entrepreneur in dairy related inputs, has taken on the brokering role. For the purpose of continued brokering in the local chicken chain a private company (Kukudeal) has been created to ensure the continuity of a number of chain services.

For the specific initiation and facilitation of interaction, with as prime purpose the promotion of innovation, external funding of a public origin will most likely still be required. For economic actors it is difficult to pay for such services directly. As the service is aimed at innovation, of which outcomes are by definition unpredictable, actors will be naturally hesitant to invest their own resources. This is especially so in the case of the establishment of innovation platforms, where actors will not yet be convinced of their usefulness. The required resources, including the time needed for facilitation tasks as well as for joint stakeholder activities for continuation of the platform, may possibly be found at some stage among the stakeholders represented in the platform. Even in that case part of these resources will still be of public origin, through NGOs and government bodies contributing as participants to the platform.

Ensuring this role, by district structures in Zambia for example, shows that the brokering role can be taken on by public structures. In Rwanda, the RIU programme seeks continuous support for the three platforms through local non-governmental development organisations, which are ultimately also funded through public resources.

The transfer of brokering responsibilities from the RIU programme to other structures was not at all easy. In all cases the Country Offices functioned as project implementation offices, which were independent from the public system and its organisations. As such, its embedding in the national administration was limited. In Zambia and Rwanda, the RIU team was hired directly by RIU for project implementation, which makes their presence as a team temporary. In Tanzania, the programme implementation is contracted out to a private consultancy firm, which makes it more likely, albeit not certain, that the activities will at least contribute to some institutional memory and capacity and can be pursued as part of the portfolio of this company. Still, in a consultancy firm activities have a tendency to cease once their funding has been discontinued. It can be assumed that Muvek will cease playing its role as broker for innovation in the emerging local chicken value chain once the resources are no longer available.

For this reason Kukudeal, a contract farming company linking chicken producers and buyers, is currently being established. Kukudeal will have a mandate to manage the routine trade relations between producers and buyers, as well as credit and advisory services, and make a profit out of delivering this service. Its mandate will not include the promotion of further innovation of the local chicken chain by promoting joint learning, trying out new practices or building new relationships, as there is no direct benefit for Kukudeal as a commercial entity. Also, the programme needs more time to actually build a solid basis for Kukudeal so that it can continue after RIU ends.

In all cases, however, no other organisations beyond those currently involved are likely to do anything similar in terms of facilitating interactions amongst stakeholders on another topic. Ultimately such networking and platform building services should be paid for by those

who stand to benefit from these services, or otherwise with public money. This means that public decision makers, or funders who can be seen as a specific type of decision maker for a specific type of public funds, should be convinced of the need to invest in such services. The best way to convince someone of an approach is to make them part of its development. As such, government ministries, research organisations and donors should be taken on board during the piloting stage of any new approach using innovation platforms as a way to catalyse innovation for the public benefit.

### 6.7.2 *Scaling-up*

The question of scaling-up is pertinent one when aiming for development at scale. The resources required however, for middle level platform creation inhibits rolling out an innovation platform strategy as a mainstream development activity.

All three RIU country programmes have proven that deliberate efforts to facilitate innovation can result in a new, faster dynamic around a topic. Conservation agriculture received a boost in Zambia through adjustment of the approach and breaking the bottleneck of labour constraints. In Rwanda, the potato platform developed a lasting solution to the poor availability of high quality seed. In Tanzania, the mechanisation platform ensured a larger volume of contracts for tractor owners and access to their services for smallholders, while the local chicken chain, emerging by the virtue of the RIU brokering efforts, holds the promise of lasting rural economic development.

The Rwanda maize platform contributed, through a series of actions, to the improvement of commercial maize production in the district. It is an example in which investing in the longer term brokering of interaction between actors, after the rallying of stakeholders behind a first promising entry point, resulted in a better functioning commodity system, with improved collaboration and the capacity to continue innovating.

This does not mean that this can easily become a standard mode of development intervention. The Rwanda maize platform, for example, has resulted in the development of a warehouse receipt system for maize. Further scaling-up of this innovation does not necessarily require more maize stakeholder platforms, but rather the further promotion of the successfully piloted financial product. The platform provided a perfect learning ground, but to scale-up the results and lessons learned, different types of action may be more effective than simply multiplying the number of platforms. What would be required is the analysis of the processes that led to the initiation of the warehouse receipt system, and the identification of a manner by which this process can be repeated cost-effectively in other areas where a similar warehouse receipt system could be useful.

In Zambia, however, the approach used for scaling-up the results of the innovation agriculture platforms has been to start more platforms in other districts. Apparently the RIU programme in Zambia has identified the innovation platform itself as essential for the successful adoption of the technology. The coordination of action, in particular, which resulted in a breakthrough in adoption, seems to have been instrumental, which justifies initiating platforms elsewhere in order to replicate the success.

In Tanzania, a clearly different approach has been chosen for scaling-out the local chicken production success. An innovation platform was only used in the initial stage, to identify economic opportunities and create a degree of consensus and awareness among stakeholders. From that point on the innovation platform was not considered essential for scaling-up the intervention.

Thinking through the opportunities and needs for the scaling-up of pilot results in the middle level innovation platforms does requires both a system overview as well as an understanding of the part of the process that led to the pilot's success that ought to be replicated. This means that the main facilitator of the innovation process, the RIU office in the case of Rwanda and Zambia and Muvek in the case of Tanzania, must analyse in hindsight the process that led to successful innovation. From this process the essential core

would have to be replicated in order to achieve success elsewhere. Parts of the process followed that did not work out well can be dropped. As such, with experience, the process can be perfected and be made more efficient. Simply disseminating a successful technology may not be that effective, as the process of developing the technology is likely to hold part of the key to successful adoption.

## **6.8 Insights from the country programme design and implementation**

Besides experiences at the level of facilitation interaction for innovation, the RIU Africa Country Programme also offers experiences of use for similar future programmes. Experience that may assist future programme managers in answering questions related to programme design and implementation.

### *6.8.1 Wider ambitions of the programme*

The RIU programme combined a number of ambitions. First of all it had a research agenda - investigating practical approaches to the facilitation of innovation. Secondly, it had the ambition of ensuring a significant impact on poverty. Thirdly, there was the underlying ambition of strengthening the agricultural innovation capacity in all 3 countries.

As such, the programme had an agenda that was ambitious enough for a comprehensive 10-year programme. At the same time, the realistic lifespan of the RIU programme was only slightly more than 2 years, considering the long inception phase, the stalling of activities as a result of the Mid-Term review, and the implementation of substantial changes. Much of the system innovation ambitions at national level could not be achieved through a programme with limited time and, ultimately, modest resources.

### *6.8.2 Theory-based approach rather than a practice-oriented approach*

The RIU country programme basically combined the desire to pilot and develop a new approach towards promoting agricultural innovation with a development objective. The programme was characterised by a strong drive by the RIU management to engineer the programme into a uniform programme across countries, all using the same approach. The approach to be used was largely guided by outside experts who had a focus on what was theoretically the right set-up of activities, rather than organically assessing and adapting to locally developing needs. A lot of emphasis was placed on theoretically sound approaches, in line with innovation system thinking. Sizeable support teams, with confusing and sometimes conflicting demands and messages with regard to the approaches to be applied, supported the country programmes. The result was a long and inefficient process of decision-making.

This has resulted, in the first place, in country programmes that did not develop organically and that had limited room to manoeuvre in order to get the best out of the available resources and opportunities. This did change after the MTR, but the programme had already been started in all 3 countries, and most of the essential decisions had already been made. The remaining time allotted to the programme did not allow for a full restart from a more practical perspective.

A second specific consequence of the emphasis on engineering and social experiment has been the division of resources between practical action in the countries and advice, overview, monitoring and evaluation, analysis and documentation by outsiders. This has resulted in a situation where many experts had to rely on a relatively low volume of field activities in the countries. Substantial resources were invested in a number of assessments and in strategy development, which ultimately was of little consequence for the decision-making process in the countries. The few decisions resulting from these studies could have been made quicker and less cost-intensively by the country programme management if they had had a little more external support.

The lack of a consistent direction and focus in the activities in the countries from the very start has contributed to the low volume of practical work from which lessons can be drawn.

The number of innovation platforms in the countries was not particularly large. A larger volume of work with less outside direction in terms of implementation would have allowed for a more realistic assessment of the merits of an innovation platform approach for development. The innovation platforms could have developed in a more organic manner, possibly providing more significant lessons for development practice.

#### 6.8.3 *Was it worth the money?*

The experiences in Rwanda, Zambia and Tanzania clearly demonstrate that an approach that aims at investing in improvement of actor interaction for the sake of facilitating innovation does work. It is tempting to make a cost-benefit analysis based on the resources invested in the country programmes and the results obtained. The funds invested in the country programmes- £938,132 for Zambia, £1,109,165 for Rwanda and £2,048,378 for Tanzania - can be compared with the results obtained. Unfortunately, the cost-effectiveness is difficult to assess. In the first place it is difficult to identify which part of an innovation is the result of the improved interaction resulting from a platform. Measuring the value of the innovation itself is only possible once it has reached its potential, something that requires time. Adding in the fact that it is impossible to imagine a way in which other pathways could have led to the same result, makes this essentially impossible.

In addition, comparing the result obtained with the resources invested merely gives an insight into the effectiveness of the RIU country programmes themselves, and says little about the cost-effectiveness of innovation platforms as an approach for the supporting of economic development. The RIU country programmes have been implemented in a particular manner, one which did not focus on maximising impact per pound invested. The programme had many features that did not contribute to cost efficiency. As such, the overall cost of the programmes per country, compared to the practical results obtained, is a poor measure in judging the cost-effectiveness of the innovation platform approach.

#### 6.8.4 *Capacity building for future facilitation of innovation*

The RIU programme has, in spite of the above observations, led to a better understanding of the process of deliberate facilitation of innovation. A major lesson from the programme is that the main facilitator plays a number of roles. The capacity to do this will be a major constraint for any larger effort to deliberately facilitate innovation for development.

In the RIU country programmes, it is the RIU staff, and the Muvek staff in the case of Tanzania, that have gained experience with facilitating innovation. The programme has not deliberately invested in the establishment of a larger number of professionals with these experiences and skills, which could have been combined with the programme. It is certainly a component that would be required in any similar future programme.

The decision to have the RIU programmes as separate entities rather than integrated in a public structure or an NGO with a longer-lasting and wider mandate did have as a major advantage the freedom to experiment. Embedding in a larger structure reduces the freedom of experimentation. One drawback, however, is that at the end of the programme the expertise gained and capacity built at the level of the RIU staff does not remain within an organisation with a continuing mandate to facilitate innovation. In Tanzania, the experience gained will remain within Muvek, but will only be used if there is a willingness on the part of a development partner to source this experience.

## **7 Guidelines for practical intervention to facilitate innovation**

### **Platform characteristics**

Providing a guideline for which type of network would work under which circumstances is not possible. There are, however, a number of lessons that can be drawn from the RIU experience that can assist decision makers aiming to facilitate innovation through innovation platforms or networks.

### ***Level of intervention***

#### *Middle level*

For the facilitation of innovation, the establishment of platforms at middle or meso-level appears to be most effective. In the 3 countries studied this corresponded to the level of districts. This is where the optimum level of opportunity for interaction between stakeholders is to be found. At this level it is possible to ensure the participation of direct representatives of grassroots actors such as producers and small processors. At the same time, service providers with direct links to local intervention can also participate.

#### *National level*

With regard to national level platforms the RIU programme provides mixed experiences. In Rwanda, the national level platform did not add any value to the middle level platforms or the RIU programme as a whole. In Tanzania, no national platform was ever established. In Zambia, the national platform functioned as a hub for policy advocacy and national level coordination. The facilitation of innovation at the middle level does not seem to benefit directly from the existence of a national platform.

If a programme on facilitating innovation has ambitions to improve the functioning of the national level innovation system through improved collaboration between support organisations, then a national level platform can be considered. This national platform could function mainly as a think-tank for advising national level decision makers on improving the efficiency of the innovation system.

The RIU experience points out that such a national platform will only function properly if higher-level decision makers can be convinced to contribute and participate. In this light it could be helpful to attach a national platform to an existing decision-making body, or even to entrust the envisioned tasks of the national platform to an existing national stakeholder forum.

#### *Local level*

Local level organisation and collaboration is essential for the functioning of innovation platforms at middle level. The local forms of organisation ensure that participants, provided they are properly selected, do represent a larger group of stakeholders. Furthermore, such local forms of organisation of stakeholders provide the entry point for practical action for innovation, decided on by the platform.

### ***Formality and autonomy***

For a programme facilitating innovation through platforms it would be best, in principle, to avoid developing an innovation platform into a formal body in such a way that it creates barriers to participation. Furthermore, formalisation may reduce the ability of the platform to adjust to changing needs, circumstances and opportunities.

In the practice of RIU however, it was observed that platform participants almost invariably demand a level of formalisation. A level of formalisation may assist the platform in gaining the outside recognition that is needed to develop clout and to achieve more than just local

innovation. Also, participants representing an organisation in a platform may require a certain level of formality.

It should be recognised that levels of formality may help in establishing a platform as an autonomous entity that can continue to function with less external facilitation support. Membership with associated fees is, for example, a type of formalisation of the platform. It also contributes, however, to the autonomy of the platform, as it creates a pot of funds for governing the platform, and it assures a selection of members with a level of commitment to the platform.

An entirely non-formal network is also an option, as was demonstrated in Tanzania in the case of the local chicken network. When making a choice for such an informal network it should be realised that the functioning of the network depends entirely on the main brokering agent. This means that longer-term engagement of the main facilitator must be ensured. In the specific case of the local chicken network in Tanzania, an attempt is being made to ensure this longer-term engagement to facilitate by coupling it with profit-making activities in the chain.

### ***Innovation platform participants***

In middle level platforms, which are the main engines of innovation as explained above, participation would be the most diverse. The RIU platforms did not restrict membership, whether formal or informal. Individuals and representatives of larger groups such as cooperative representatives, as well as representatives of service providers (research, extension, local government, financial service providers) were represented.

Representation of the private sector, especially the higher-end chain actors such as transporters, wholesalers and retailers, were barely represented. Most platforms were farmer-dominated, and as a result also largely focused on farmer interests.

The selection and recruitment of participants is a dynamic and continuous process, one that can be considered part of the package of tasks related to facilitating innovation (see below).

### ***Capacity to participate***

To allow for the effective participation of the selected stakeholders, some building of their capacity in terms of improved understanding of innovation, and especially the idea of joint learning, would be needed. A change in the mind-set of the platform participants with regard to their individual roles may well be needed in order to create an environment in which stakeholders understand and respect each other as partners in innovation.

## **Steps in a process of building an innovation network**

### ***1. Delimitation of the innovation platform***

Delimitation of the mandate of an envisioned innovation platform is required. The RIU programme made this a time and resource consuming process. It does not, however, need to be like this. Considering that it is at middle level that innovation through multi-stakeholder interaction is most likely to take place, it would make sense to quickly decide on which topographic areas to intervene in, and to decide on further delimitation of the platform mandate at decentralised level, with local resource persons. Alternatively, priority commodities could be identified in advance at national level, thus guiding the choice for a geographic location based on the agro-ecological and economic potential of that commodity.

### ***2. Initial local stakeholder mapping and selection***

As a next step, collaboration needs to be sought with a local resource person. A further delimitation of the subject then needs to be made with this person. After this, a stakeholder mapping can be carried out and representatives of stakeholders approached to participate in the establishment of an innovation platform or network.

### ***3. Joint innovation system analysis and identification of promising entry points for action***

After having convinced different stakeholders to participate, a first step can be taken by analysing the innovation system related to the chosen subject of the platform. Needs and opportunities need to be identified, leading to a list of promising entry points for action. In addition, essential missing stakeholders need to be identified and efforts made to convince them to join the initiative.

### ***4. Development of a joint action plan and agreement on division of tasks***

The next step would be the elaboration of a plan for joint action and the establishment of a division of roles within the platform. Specifically, the role of the facilitator of the platform must be discussed. It is essential to arrive at an understanding among the platform participants with regard to the mandate and tasks of the organisation providing the main facilitation services.

A joint action plan would include a component on progress monitoring, assessment of the need for change of direction and the documenting of lessons learned from initiatives taken by the platform.

### ***5. Sustainability and scaling-up***

Within the platform the question of how to sustain its efforts needs to be discussed and addressed at an early stage. Furthermore, the platform's ambitions and strategies for the scaling-up its impact beyond the direct surroundings of the platform itself need to be clarified.

## **Facilitating innovation**

### ***Roles to be fulfilled to effectively facilitate innovation through a network***

Based on the RIU experience, a number of facilitation roles were identified. When considering the use of platforms to facilitate innovation, this list can be used to consider whether the programme in question has ensured that these roles will be fulfilled.

Championing	Representing local stakeholders at a higher level by virtue of a leading role in a local organisation
Brokering	Make connections between actors that can benefit from each other's services or roles. Brokering can be between multiple actors by bringing them together in a network, informally or more formally. Brokering can also be between two actors, to ensure that they start working together
Facilitation	Stimulating and assisting the interactive process between stakeholders with the objective of improved quality of interaction
Thematic leadership	Taking initiative on a certain topic (cluster of challenges identified during first platform meeting)
Mobilisation	Lobbying essential stakeholders to join a platform or local level organisation
Mediation	Conflict resolution
Advocacy	Promoting the network and ensuring support of and buy-in into the network by those individuals and organisations that matter
Problem solving	Identifying, proposing and providing practical solutions for bottlenecks hindering progress of multi-stakeholder action
Technical backstopping	Providing technical advice and training to ensure that opportunities discussed are economically, technically and socially viable

### ***Who facilitates?***

In the case of the RIU platform, the majority of the above tasks were taken on by an external organisation. In Rwanda and Zambia RIU by a separate organisation, in Tanzania Muvek by a contracted organisation.

Once a platform is established it may be possible for the participants in the platform to take on a number of the above roles. This is not possible, however, in the case of an informal network of actors held together entirely by the facilitator making connections.

### ***Capacity to facilitate***

When considering the different roles involved, facilitating the initiation and functioning of an innovation platform requires a wide-ranging set of skills. A staff with a combination of all of these skills will be rare. For any programme embarking on the initiation of innovation platforms, the capacities required by staff, compared to the existing skills, needs to be considered.

Specific efforts are needed to build these skills. As these skills are soft skills rather than hard skills, learning by doing and learning from peers are very important. Building the required skills for facilitating innovation during an intervention deserves specific focused attention.

A second consideration is the organisational capacity to facilitate. Which type of organisation would have the capacity to sustain the facilitating role over time, and initiate new innovation platforms where needed? The RIU programme did not pay much attention to this point. In Zambia and Rwanda, the personal innovation capacity was built within a temporary organisation that had ceased to exist by the end of the programme. In Tanzania,

the organisation will continue to exist, but it requires resources in order to maintain its role as facilitator of platforms or networks.

Building the capacity to facilitate innovation within an organisation with along-term mandate and presence would be preferable. This could be a public sector organisation, such as a local government, extension service or research organisation, with all the associated limitations. Or it could be an NGO with a guaranteed long-term presence. Or, as in Tanzania, it could be a consultancy firm that can see a market for providing the specific service of facilitating innovation.

### ***Joint stakeholder activities***

To forge new partnerships that can engage in joint learning and innovating, simply selecting stakeholders and bringing them together is not enough. Besides meeting and discussing, these stakeholders also require joint action. Through this joint action, trust is built between stakeholders and the collaborative environment can be created in which innovation through joint learning can occur.

To ensure that this joint action will take place, seed money for platform activities is needed. In the case of the RIU platforms, funds were available for joint stakeholder activities. Such activities would serve a twofold purpose. In the first place they would be aimed at immediate problem solving or pursuing a concrete opportunity identified by the platform as a priority. Secondly, however, there is a secondary objective, independent of the direct purpose, of creating the relationships between stakeholders that are required as a breeding ground for future innovation.

### ***Who pays what?***

Resources are needed to ensure the initiation and facilitation of an innovation platform. Someone has to ensure this facilitation for a substantial length of time in order to firmly establish the platform. This is labour intensive, especially at the start. After having established a working platform, with participants taking on the responsibilities for further platform continuation, the time invested in facilitation can be gradually reduced. In addition, resources are required for capacity building, joint activities and meetings. Who it is that will make the required resources available for the duration of a programme, and beyond, needs to be thought through.

### ***Keeping focus on innovation***

Participants in an innovation platform will have their own personal motivation for this. This personal motivation is likely to be oriented towards direct own benefit. The objective of the innovation network does, however, go beyond local benefits for participants. Poverty impact beyond the platform participants would be the ultimate aim, justifying the investment of resources in building innovation networks.

To keep the focus of an innovation network on the combination of direct own interests and the wider public benefit will require active facilitation. Specific efforts will have to be made to translate the lessons learned into more generic insights and to consider opportunities for wider dissemination that have proven effective at local level through mechanisms other than the repeating of the resource intensive initiation of platforms.

## 8 References

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**Table 10: General characteristics of the ACPs**

Characteristics	Zambia	Rwanda	Tanzania
Type of economy	Zambia's economy is booming (also due to copper export) and in 2009/2010 the agricultural sector produced the highest maize production ever.	Rwanda's economy is growing quickly. The economy is however still very much centrally led. Agriculture is by large the most important segment of the economy.	From the mid-1980s Tanzania's GDP per capita has grown and poverty has been reduced. Yet, Tanzania belongs to the group of Least Developed countries. Agriculture is the foundation of Tanzania's economy
Origin Country Programme	New office created in the regional Pelum headquarters. PELUM. responsible for overseeing financial management	Specific new office created, hosted by Private Sector Federation (PSF). PSF responsible for financial management	Led by a private consultancy firm Programme activities and funding in one organisation
Start date	NIC informally in august 2008. Districts IPs in May 2009.	November 2007	June 2008
Role of the National Innovation Council	Steering committee Lobbying and advocacy	Steering committee Advocacy Institutionalisation Managing service need of platforms (All in theory, during the first 2 years. Now defunct)	None (vanished after having met few times as an advisory panel)
Number of platforms at start	3 District (two on CA and one rice), One NIC and many local learning sites	4 district level, One NIC	5 platforms
Current number of platforms and reasons	6 District and no local learning sites, plus	3, plus non-functioning NIC. Other district platform stopped for better concentration of efforts	1 network. Reason: focus, scale and because other platforms undertook activities that could be taken over by others
Main focus	Developing use of CA practices and sustainable rice production	Commodity development, with a farmer bias (maize, cassava, potato)	Developing poultry sub-sector from scratch.
Main approach	Animal draught power for rippling service delivery, rice marketing (branded also for export). Communication through participatory radio	Stakeholder platform to improve economic interaction, services and coordination of development initiatives. Combined with specific capacity building and other development activities funded by RIU.	Brokering to address constraints that prevent producers to take advantage of this opportunity
Main exit strategy/vision	NIC phase out and lobby function top CA Association (CAA) and National Rice Task Force (RTF). Rest to District Development Coordination Councils	Weaning the platforms off RIU support. Plat taking over some tasks, and local facilitator other tasks (NGO based)	Private sector will take over remunerative activities once conditions have been created through public money

**Table 11: Outcome of critical events on the African Country Programmes**

Critical event	Zambia	Rwanda	Tanzania
RIU-UK /NIDA Influence on: - Country Choice - Subject choice (later added)	Zambia selected as the last of the six countries; Suggestion to Zambia to select thematic issues, rather than commodities for the IPs.	Choice for country considered a given.	Choice for country considered a given.
Country Assessment and Strategy	Study not directly leading to the RIU programme (2008)	Composition of the NIC	Created a difficult start because many stakeholders had been consulted prior to selecting the approach, topics and regions and created expectations.
Design of innovation platforms (national, regional, local)	NIC was established in 2008 and proved to be important as steering committee and lobby agency.	NIC was instrumental in commodity and district choices.	Local level farmer groups and regional level platforms still exist. The National Innovation Coalition has dissolved
Communication replacing emphasis on M&E	Major emphasis through local and national radio and TV (from the start); Participatory radio very effective.	M&E staff becomes an important facilitator of the platforms	Communication officer assigned. Learning part of daily strategy through ACP team discussions
Mid-Term Review	Introduced focus (CA and rice); Reduced programme: Internal M&E emphasis dropped in favour of emphasis on communication; Learning sites support left. Change of RIU team TOR.	Dropping 1 platform (small pumps for irrigating horticultural crops). More autonomy in decision-making; RIU Rwanda becomes answerable as a team. Dropping of agricultural information system as a major topic of the NIC	Focus on poultry; Closing (dairy, post-harvest) or scaling down (mechanisation) activities for other innovation platforms; Impact at scale (adding other regions for poultry activities); EDI contract not renewed Increased autonomy in decision-making
Flexibility Fund	Used for project activities (2010), mainly in the rice value chain (marketing revolving fund, and rice research)	Provides additional funds for support of innovation platform initiated activities	Flexibility funds introduced after MTR. Added to regular project funds
Best Bets	Two submitted proposals were rejected (one for administrative/ ethical reasons and one for quality reasons)	No clear link yet to the RIU Rwanda program	Not relevant.
Preparation of an exit strategy	Emphasis on embedding of District Innovation Platforms into the District Development Consultative Committees.	More formal role for local NGOs involved in the platform; Thinking about sustainability and cost implications of the work by the RIU team	Creation of Kukudeal (private company, initially under Muvek, based on contract farming). Mechanisation activities handed over to district and integrated in district development plans Dairy platform transferred to private sector (agrodealer)

**Table 12: Main institutional changes resulting from the various types of platforms**

<b>Change domain</b>	<b>Zambia</b>	<b>Rwanda</b>	<b>Tanzania</b>
National platforms	NIC influence on National Agricultural development Strategy and Rice Development Strategy; Integration of this role into national networks (Conservation Agriculture Association, Zambia Rice Federation and Rice Task Force).	No national level innovation after the demise of the NIC	NIC has only met once and no institutional change can be attributed to NIC. Tax exemption and policy change (milking and hatchery equipment) at national level.
Middle (Regional or sub-national) platforms	Gradually integrated in District multi-stakeholder coordination structure. Enhanced coordination outcome on effectiveness and efficiency; Small-scale rippling services; Rice Trading Centres; Communication of results through local radio resulting in wide interest and interaction.	Improved chain collaboration (between economic actors); Improved service provision to the chain actors (research, financial, extension); Joined problem and opportunity identification; Communication of results through local radio resulting in wide interest	Mechanisation activities integrated in district plans; Tractor owners association; Hatchery owners meet and discuss issue of availability of local breed chicks; Feed producers meet; Linking Bytrade to producers and hatchery owners RIU plays the role of matchmaker/broker between stakeholders. Kukudeal created.
Local platforms	Indirectly attributed to RIU, but left to extension (FFS) and radio stations (RFF), and the Conservation Farming Unit (Study Circles).	Improved production and post-harvest practices; Improved availability and use of quality seed; Improved collaboration between producers	Informal organisation of chicken producers; Block farming. Rice and maize farmers and tractor owners collaboration improved

**Table 13: Functions of innovation networks at different levels**

<b>Functions/ level</b>	<b>Zambia</b>	<b>Rwanda</b>	<b>Tanzania</b>
<b>National (NIC)</b>	Advocacy, lobbying, awareness, Mainly RIU steering committee (oversight function). Some policy influence	RIU steering committee Providing direction to efforts of the RIU programme Communicating RIU achievements and lessons to own organisations Technical support to innovation platforms	Not functioning
<b>District</b>	Coordination of all CA activities Dissemination of CA knowledge Information sharing and getting feedback More efficient resource utilisation (e.g. equipment for farmers) Very few joint activities and hence limited learning and innovation	Commodity specific innovation (economic, technical and organisational). Bringing together service supply and demand Testing new technology (potato mini-tuber production, maize warranty)	Flexible network functions addressing constraints as they come (poultry) Innovation platforms in mechanisation, dairy-facilitating activities, coordination, information exchange
<b>Local</b>	Learning based in dissemination (FFS, Farmer Circles), knowledge sharing (Learning sites, Radio Listening Groups)	Training of producers on production technology, seed quality.	Role in demand orientation (plus identifying issues in poultry keeping, needs for medicines, advice etc.) Coordination (poultry) Mobilisation of farmers to join poultry

**Table 14: Different facilitation roles and examples per country**

<b>What is?</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Zambia</b>	<b>Rwanda</b>	<b>Tanzania</b>
Championing	Strong supporter of the idea or theme or in general the right person in the right place who runs in front when it comes to working in a new way or achieving something significant on the topic matter	District Agricultural Coordinators and Conservation Farming Unit staff of the Zambia National Farmers Union at the District level IPs. Both representing producers at a middle level and coordination and organisation at the local level.	Advocating for and piloting potato mini-tuber production; advocating for and piloting maize warehouse receipt system.	Ward and district champions in Tanzania's poultry Network District officers mechanisation-champions in mechanisation platform
Brokering	Brings main actors on theme or commodity together in platform. Brokering can be between multiple actors by bringing them together in a network, informally or more formally. Brokering can also be between two actors, to assure they start working together.	Role of the RIU-Z Country Team both at National and District level, not at local level. Also bringing together different platforms	Assuring that ISAR (Rwanda research) starts working with the potato platform out of mutual interest.	Bottleneck approach-addressing constraints (bringing relevant actors together, research, advice, etc.)
Facilitation	Facilitates the interactive process in the stakeholder configuration with the objective of learning and coordination and stimulating interaction and innovation.	Internal facilitation of the chair of the IPs. External facilitation not well developed	Initiating, building and assisting in meetings of the innovation platforms	Sub function of brokering- enhancing interaction. During platform meetings.
Thrust leadership	Leading person in a certain topic (cluster of challenges identified during first platform meeting).	Conservation Farming Unit of the Zambia National Farmers Union	Sub-group discussing maize trade in maize platform;	Tanzania's dairy IP (clusters of activities each with a thrust leader). For each innovation platform thrusts of activities needed to tackle constraints defined.
Mobilisation	Formation of farmer learning groups/circles as well as strengthening of existing farmer groups.	CFU facilitators in Zambia, lead farmers in farmer circles	An important role in the Rwanda platforms is mobilising platform members, specifically those that do not yet interact, but that are needed.	Motivating farmers or other actors to join. In Tanzania champions also mobilise (e.g. farmers who want to join in the poultry activities).
Mediation	Conflict resolution.	Occasional role of the RIU team in IP conflict situations in Zambia.	Conflict resolution in the Rwanda platforms is handled by the platform leadership, supported by outside facilitator if the need arises.	n.a.
Advocacy	Promoting the network and assuring support to and buy-in into the network by those individuals and organisations that matter.	Local radios play this role to some extent e.g. through the discussion on the role of traditional and civic leaders in conservation agriculture in Zambia.	Assure that the platform gets embedded in and is recognised by the district authorities as well as national authorities.	In Tanzania policy change is part of brokering

**Table 15: Major institutional changes across countries**

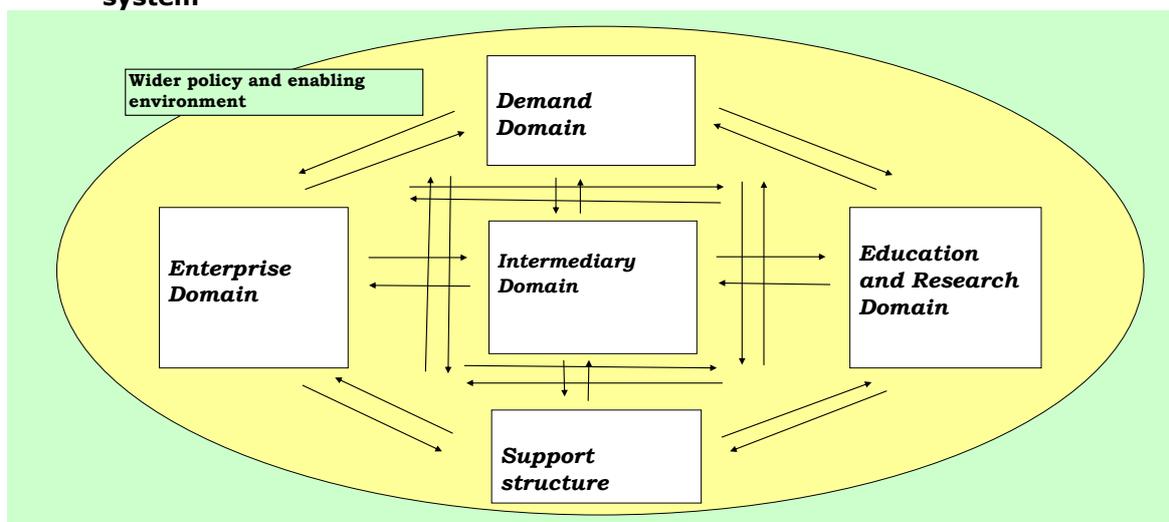
<b>Change</b>	<b>Zambia</b>	<b>Rwanda</b>	<b>Tanzania</b>
<b>Policy influence</b>			
Innovation policy/context change as a result of IPs	No change in role of research. CA part of MACO strategy.	District level only, limited to the platform topic.	Formal policy change In the case of Tanzania all institutional changes at a national level relate to tax exemption.
Institutionalisation	Integration in the District Development Coordinating Committee	The platforms are being linked to the district Joint Action Forums in which development stakeholders coordinate. The platforms seek recognition as inter professional organisations, which will help in recognition at national level.	In the case of mechanisation activities have been integrated in the district development plan.
<b>Between stakeholder groups</b>			
Links between domains	Interaction resulted in sharing information, but little joint action. Produce marketing only involved in rice platforms	The 3 district level networks have specifically the function to promote links between domains. They have been effective in improving these interactions, with the exception of the end users of products	Examples include collaboration between rice and maize farmers and tractor owners as well as links between spare part owners and tractor owners
New network configuration	Strengthening of the Conservation Agricultural Association (CAA) and the Rice Task Force	The 3 platforms are new network configurations Nyamig is a new maize trading company with producers as shareholders	In the case of Tanzania Kukudeal was created which creates new links between all relevant actors in the Value Chain.
Capacity to support/facilitate learning and trust-building	Mainly local platform building capacity with CFU. RIU facilitation skills internalised in platforms	Local NGOs taking over platforms facilitation tasks.; Platforms taking over facilitation tasks	See new network configuration
<b>Within stakeholder groups</b>			
Organisation within a domain	Major role at all levels of the ZNFU. Zambia National Business Association at two levels. Apart from that only the Ministry of Agriculture. In	Not much focus has been on organisation within domains. In the case of potatoes the existing potato growers association got strengthened through the RIU	In the case of Tanzania new informal organisations were created with new roles. Examples include the tractor owners association, the informal organisation of chicken producers

	practice research only at national level. New organisation of ripping service providers planned.	activities. The NYAMIG maize trade company can be considered to be within the domain of producers.	and the block farming.
Capacity of farmers to demand services	Local learning sites and ZNFU key. RIU facilitated.	Clearly visible in potato and maize platforms.	Informal poultry networks, block farming
Strengthening knowledge market mechanisms and services	Small-scale ripping services with embedded CA knowledge	Maize warehouse receipt system developed; High quality seed potatoes becoming better available	
Research mind-set change	Position on local rice varieties changed (ZARI and JICA)	Restricted to those researchers directly involved in the maize, potato and cassava platforms.	

**Table 16: Criteria for the differentiation of innovation platform and networks**

<b>Criteria for differentiating Innovation Platforms</b>	<b>Variety of platforms</b>	<b>Zambia</b>	<b>Rwanda</b>	<b>Tanzania</b>
Level	Local, middle (district or regional) and national	National; Middle-level at district level (5 districts on CA, one on rice); Local learning sites (many CA groups, rice groups)	National and District level	Mainly regional (i.e. middle) and moving to either local (district) or open at national level (poultry)
Subject	Starting off as a commodity or thematic platform	Thematic and commodity in later phase Emphasis on theme conservation agriculture in one case combined with rice	Commodity	First themes (mechanisation, post-harvest, entrepreneurship) then commodity to align with regional priorities (rice, maize, poultry, dairy).
Functions	Coordination, dissemination, learning and innovation	Main emphasis has been on coordination and dissemination (media sub-committee)	Coordination of innovative efforts related to the commodities; Providing capacity building	Coordination, information exchange, brokering
Formality	Formalised (membership, registered) or informal network	New IPs very formal as part of the DDCC. Proposed by MACO, changing slightly over time. Formalised at District level	Semi-formal at district level	Developing into an open network (poultry), very informal. Strong focus on informality (to avoid focusing on procedures instead of contents)
Delimitation	Membership/Geographic/Issue	Maintaining broad issue (CA)	Membership of individuals and organisations; District delimitation; Commodity delimitation	Geographic/ themes/ commodities/ challenges and related activity needs
Origin	Existing or newly constituted	3 existing DDCCs and three new networks	Newly constituted and informally connected to the district JAFs (Joint Action Forums)	New

**Table 17: Involvement of different stakeholder domains in an innovation system**



Stakeholder domain based on AIS	Stakeholders categories	Zambia	Rwanda	Tanzania
Enterprise domain	Small-scale farmers	ZNFU, CAZ, local learning groups	Farmer cooperatives and individual farmers	Farmers and district champions
	Local input supply	Agro-dealers involved, no credit and no trading/processing	Agro dealers Financial institutes (local branches) Traders sporadically	Agro-vets, agro-dealers hatcheries, buyers (through Kukudeal), feed producers, Bytrade, transporters , tractor owners, spare part dealers,
Research and education domain	Research organisations and Universities	GART dropped out early; ZARI not involved; UNZA not very active	ISAR closely involved	Veterinary Investigation Centre, household advisors, different national research organisations, Vocational Training centre,
Intermediary domain	Extension and advisory services	DACO' services, many NGOs, CFU (by ZNFU)	NGOs and Local Government extension	District office services, extension officers, NGOs,
	Communication sub-domain: Radio stations, NAIS	Three non-public radio stations active. ZANIS/NAIS	Local radio	Cloud FM, ITV
Demand domain	Produce demand from industry to exporters and consumers	Not involved	Not Involved	Consumers informed about advantages of local chicken e.g. through Cloud FM
Support actors domain	Infrastructure actors; Financial institutions	Not involved	Local financial institutes	Banks
Wider policy and enabling environment	Framework conditions	NIC influences policy of MACO	NIC dysfunctional National policy influenced directly District policy/ regulations influenced through Joint Action Forums	Issues addressed on ad-hoc networks involved required actors at the time. Ministries

**Table 18: Examples of capacity development in the different ACPs**

<b>Capacity development</b>	<b>Zambia</b>	<b>Rwanda</b>	<b>Tanzania</b>
Training on innovation systems concepts;	Innovation systems understanding	Impact on current activities unclear. Those trained were at NIC level	Training by PICO team
Community facilitators;	Sub-district facilitators (CFU facilitators)	Platform management trained	Learning workshop on facilitating innovation in Multi Stakeholder Processes for champions and mobilisers. Champions very successful.
Traditional and civic leaders)	Traditional leaders and area councillors trained, also in support for local champions/lead farmers and local agrodealers		
Technical issues related to Innovation platforms	Understanding on technical issues (CA, rice). CA by ZNFU's Conservation farming Unit.	Producers trained on seed production and good agricultural practices	Understanding on technical know-how (e.g. post-harvest, mechanisation, household advice on poultry keeping, training hatchery owners by Agrodealers etc.)

**Table 19: Organisation and interaction of actors within stakeholder domain**

<b>Stakeholder domain</b>	<b>Zambia</b>	<b>Rwanda</b>	<b>Tanzania</b>
Enterprise domain Producers sub-domain	ZNFU and Cooperatives Role of local learning sites Farmer representatives	Improved collaboration between farmers. Maize: started trading company Potato: started mini-tuber production Cassava jointly addressing problems	Organisation on ward and district level, with champions as leaders (poultry) Block farming organised (mechanisation) In dairy producers already were well organised.
Private sector sub-domain	Zambia National Business Federation, also at District level Options for small-scale service provider organisations (ripping services)	No	Hatcheries for local chicken breeds established and exchanging, Kukudeal – contract farming company created (poultry) Tractor owner association created (mechanisation)
Research and education domain	Interaction between research and education limited	No collaboration research –education related to platform	Kibaha Education Centre on poultry graduates involvement in house hold advising (poultry) Proposal for pooled resources of all zones on chicken breed characterisation
Intermediary domain  Communication sub-domain: Radio stations, NAIS	Coordination of districts in service provision at ministerial level. Limited horizontal interaction	Not really	-
	PANOS coordinates the learning between local radios	No, only 1 station involved	-
Policy actors	Interaction between Ministries on CA	No	Integration of mechanisation in district plans involved in training material (poultry) Tax exemption and policy change (dairy and poultry)

**Table 20: Sustainability and scaling-up experiences**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Zambia</b>	<b>Rwanda</b>	<b>Tanzania</b>
Innovation Platforms and networks	More platforms but mainly for coordination, few on learning and innovation. NIC coordinating, a function to be taken over by MACO.	Demands for more platforms from other districts	The development of a sub sector is considered useful and this is scaled out to other provinces and districts (poultry)
Innovation process strengthening (from one process to another)	Coordination left to platforms External facilitation needed for learning and innovation	Facilitation tasks being taken by the platform itself Platforms raising limited funds by contributions of members Platforms seeking legal status	Flexible networks
Facilitation service providers	Facilitation capacity handed over to private sector (rice) and network (Conservation Agriculture Association). In practice this capacity only as embedded services at middle level (District agricultural coordinators, NGOs, private companies)	Facilitation being handed over to local NGOs	District council taken over role of RIU (mechanisation) AgriCare (private sector agrodealer) taken over RIU role (dairy) Kukudeal intended to take over RIU role (poultry)

**Table 21: SWOT analysis of the ACPs**

	<b>Zambia</b>	<b>Rwanda</b>	<b>Tanzania</b>
<b>Strengths</b>	National lobby function. Participatory radio communication. MS coordination at district level. Small-scale private ripping services	Focus on commodity development in districts. Clear choice made for commodity based approach, which fits with government policy. RIU engaging directly in the brokering, thus learning directly how it works. Combining development activities with relationship / platform building. Fairly well embedded locally in cooperatives and fairly good link to district level government and other service providers such as research. Maize and potato platforms taking more and more of the facilitation tasks over.	Impact at scale feasible District and ward champions No meetings for the sake of meetings Private sector engaged Government interested Research interested Entrepreneurial attitude ACP
<b>Weaknesses</b>	Loosing research in the process. Marketing less involved in CA IPs. Limited emphasis on learning and innovation.	Limited vision on scaling-up of approach. Sometimes too much focussed on delivering development services and not chain and platform building. No good linkage with those organisations that would be designated to use the approach in future. Limited visioning on the next step for the platform (i.e. marketing issues not pre-empted for cassava)	Ownership and decision-making mainly in hands of RIU ACP Expectations farmers not always met No time for other IPs previously initiated
<b>Opportunities</b>	Expansion of ripping services. Wider dissemination through radios. Facilitation learning role CAA and RTF. Expansion of the role of COMACO (private sector) in quality rice production and export.	Demand for more platforms in other districts Maize and potato platform getting to their 'adulthood'. District governments are interested in these approaches as long as it contributes to their development plan. Potato and maize and marketable crops. ISAR (research) providing good technical support. Potato and maize platforms being successful (economic and technical innovation visible) which provide good examples.	New VC Kukudeal Tanzania chicken breed Interest of policy makers ACP - MUYEK

Threats	<p>Phasing out of RIU facilitation could lead to slowing down of District IPs on CA. Rice platform closing due to lack of interest by private sector. Disconnection with the national level.</p>	<p>Cassava is hard to market. Costs of the platforms seem to be prohibitive (1/2 fte for 3 years, plus functioning budget) Limited embedding in national system, making government not buying into the approach. And government determines everything. Reducing civil liberties in Rwanda which will stifle innovation. Crop intensification program and land consolidation program. All organisations, especially farmer organisations are drawn into this. Lack of market development as it is much state controlled and limited private sector development.</p>	<p>Supply of chicks not guaranteed  Consumer preferences  Low understanding and prejudices on contract farming  Programme ending June too soon  Chicken diseases and other unexpected issues  Business attitude not always obvious  Kukudeal business interests prevail over poverty focus with time?</p>
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## Appendix 2: Timelines

### Timeline RIU Programme (general)

Date	Event
1995-2006	Renewable Natural Resources research Strategy (RNRRS) - 220 million pounds programme aiming at remove researchable constraints to the sustainable development and/ or management of natural resources. (ten research programmes on (1) animal health, (2) aquaculture and fish genetic research, (3) crop post-harvest (4) crop protection (5) fisheries management science (6) forestry research (7) livestock production (8) natural resources systems (9) plant sciences (10) post-harvest fisheries programme. 1600 research projects. Evaluation showed limited impact
	Tender – NRInternational won the contract
July 2006	Start of the RIU programme. Central research hypothesis: an innovation systems approach will prove more effective than linear approaches at getting research outputs into use for the benefit of the poor. Partners: NRInternational, PARC (with Flint), NIDA Hypothesis: 30 research products- go to scale, 1 million each
2006	Intellectual advisory group (members amongst others: Andrew Barnett, Montey Jones, Andy Hall?)- met only once
2006-2007	Review of research products 1: Former-RNRRS research managers make a short list of 280 promising research products to be put into use  2: Review of research products 2 options selected  3: private sector review of 280 products concludes none fit for investment
2007	Asian and African Challenge Funds  Pool of consultants undertake: - Country assessment (professional recruitment team selected consultants) - Country strategy
	Database on research projects (booklet)- based on former RNRRS program managers best product suggestions
June 2007	End of inception period (inception phase ended because it took so long rather than because it was clear what would be done)
	Six African Country Programmes established (Rwanda, Tanzania, Malawi, Zambia, Nigeria and Sierra Leone)
	Feasibility study of enterprise development activities involving public-private partnerships
-	National Innovation Committee - Dan Kasauzi defined the Innovation Platform - JuergenHagman brought in to assist NICs
November 2008	DFID commissioned mid-term review. Findings included: RIU lacked a unified vision. Poor management
April 2009	Ian Mauldin appointed by DFID as the new RIU Programme Director
	Ian Mauldin commissioned a technical review of the programme.
	Technical review by Andy Hall and Norman Clark
August 2009	New RIU Business plan formally approved by DFID
September 2009	RIU recruited a new team to implement the business plan Partners: LINK (learning- Central Research Team), TANGO (M&E), NRInternational (only Andy Frost) Changes: strengthened management structures, improve communication, create stronger vision,
	ACP country programmes get more freedom, more budget (flexibility funds- e.g. budget which was previously used for consultants)
End 2009	Launch of the Best Bet initiative.
	Dragon’s Den east Africa (call attracted over a 100 proposals)
	Dragon’s Den West Africa

	<p>Best bet initiatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- FIPS Africa</li> <li>- Shujaaz</li> <li>- Stopstriga</li> <li>- Armyworm</li> <li>- NERICA rice</li> <li>- Stam out Sleeping Sickness</li> </ul>
April 2010	Annual review: observation that timeframe remaining on project is a critical issue
Mid-2011	Foreseen closure of the project (initial)

### Timeline Zambia

1995-2005	Large on-farm conservation farming programme, supported by NORAD , Netherlands and others and implemented by the ZNFU/CFU
1999	Sustainable agriculture became part of the MACOs policy
July 2006	RIU established, to last until June 2011
January 2007	Choice of Country Programmes (other than Zambia)
January 2008	Choice of Zambia as a country programme. Decision between NIDA , CAADP (chaired the RIU advisory board), FARA, and SADC-FANR: Zambia on the programme
May 2008	Start of the Zambia Country Assessment and Strategy development. Listing of potential issues and commodities
August 2008	Establishment of the NIC as interim capacity through nomination by MACO ("patron")
September 2008	
October 2008	Zambia Country Assessment and Strategy Final Draft October 4 2008
	Appointment of the Zambia RIU Country team (invited NPF declined): One staff Contract of Z-RIU with Pelum
November 2008	Innovation Challenge Fund Africa closed: Zambia not allowed to participate Daniel started Decided that Zambia would take issues for the Innovation Platforms rather than commodities (NIDA and general RIU management)
December 2008	National Innovation Coalition, Country team and Strategy launch December 15 <sup>th</sup> 2008 .Launch of the RIUZ (Z-RIU) programme
<b>January 2009</b>	<b>Revised MTR report out (first version in November 2008)</b>
February 2009	Finalisation of the Implementation Plan Decision on the thematic issues: Conservation Agriculture; Remoteness and isolation and Knowledge market services The National Process Facilitator was recruited and started work in February and the country team was now complete (Annual Report 2008-2009) Margaret Mwenya started Identification of areas (SP, EP), CP and NWP dropped
March 2009	2 <sup>nd</sup> NIC meeting; Implementation plan endorsed Report on the District Inception Workshop for Platform Formation 25 <sup>th</sup> /26 <sup>th</sup> March 2009, Chipata Motel, Chipata. Two platform themes were identified (CA and K&SM) (see list of contact persons: facilitators). Radio included. Remoteness and isolation not as standalone (came from social exclusion). Country Programme Annual report (2008-2009) District IP formation inception workshop in Chipata (stakeholder mapping and identification process around the two themes)

April 2009	Symposium with UNZA on enhancement of agriculture (7-8 April 2009) Training of the Monze and Chipata IP representatives in the Barn Motel, Lusaka (on CA, IP management, ICT, governance partly by CFU, Z-RIU). Formation of the Chipata, Monze Core (PCT) and Info (Media) team (as in executive committee)
May 2009	District IP formation inception workshop in Monze (stakeholder mapping and identification process around the two themes). 1 <sup>st</sup> CAA inaugural meeting by GART (interim secretary) and CFU, decided RIU support logistics
June 2009	First regular Monze CA IP meeting
July 2009	Report on meetings between Individual RIU Country Programmes and the Technical Review Team. 24th July 2009, Panafrica Hotel, Nairobi
August 2009	
September 2009	MoU between PELUM (o.b.o. RIU) and PANOS (PSAf)
October 2009	
November 2009	Structural change: Platforms on KSM and Remoteness and Isolation dropped; Four priority activities (CA platforms; voucher system; communication and rice value chain). Fitting into the six innovation narratives resulting in four Start of the flexibility fund (rice revolving fund; cleaning up Supa). Start of Rice Value Chain Stakeholders Forum Learning sites: 10-15 and 15 in Monze and Chipata (demos, field school, field day) represented a duplication: looking at entrepreneurs (ADP voucher) based on labour constraint in CA tillage and challenge of weed.
December 2009	Notes on programme workplan for 2009 to 2011 (=revised implementation plan)
February 2010	Expansion number of IPs, considering the resource JD suggested to expand on IPs on CA and not on rice (limited resources in flexibility fund),
June 2010	June 11 2010 National Innovation Coalition meeting
September 2010	Second thematic meeting of the Conservation Agriculture Association (CAA) was held on 1 September 2010 in Lusaka at Pamodzi Hotel.
December 2010	Exit strategy formulation with all IPs
January 2011	RIU Institutional history study
	Consolidation; Capacity building (development entrepreneurship for ripping services; rice stakeholders; private sector involvement, community/local media outlets. Local radio in Chinsali involvement in community radio programmes on rice value chain Ripper introduction in rice cultivation with ADP
June 2011	Planned closing down of the programme

## Timeline Tanzania

### Overall timeline RIU-TZ

Date	Event
<b>Inception period</b>	
2007	Country assessment (report) by Mr. Blackie
2007	Country strategy (report) by Mr. Blackie- rejected by RIU UK
January 2008	Revised country strategy (report) by Management Advisory Team
February 2008	New country strategy (report) by Mr. Whiteside and Ms. Mosha- accepted by RIU UK
February 2008	Desk study on Zonal choices by Muvek
March 2008	Feasibility study by Ms. Mosha – feasibility of Zonal Innovation Challenge Funds and how to move forward (approach chosen: demand-led innovation chosen)
	Open tender on country coordination
May 2008	Establishing advisory panel
June 2008	RIU officially initiated in Tanzania Country team recruited- Muvek (management) and EDI (Zonal Innovation Fund)
June 2008	Second advisory panel meeting- baptised NIC (following other countries example) on implementation and planning of the programme
June 2008	Based on advisory panel/ NIC meeting: Strategy and implementation plan by Muvek
July 2008	Information Markets Rapid Appraisal for Tanzania (by A. Mosha)- preparing InfoCom (information market challenge component)
<b>Implementation (pre-MTR)</b>	
September 2008	Consult regional authorities for selection of topics/ priorities (aligning with regional priorities and plans) – Morogoro and Tanga regions
Nov 2008- Post-harvest Dec 2008- Mechanisation Dec 2008- Dairy May/June 2009- Coast	Stakeholder mapping and situational analysis
	Brainstorm meeting NIC and MUVEK for selecting priorities for Morogoro and Tanga based on consultations with regional authorities and selection of stakeholders to invite based on stakeholder mapping
Dec 2008	First platform meetings Innovation Platforms on Mechanisation, dairy and post-harvest. For each topic chosen in an Innovation Platform challenges were identified. A choice was made for three thrusts per platform. Thrust leaders were elected. Innovation Platforms were established
December 2008	Launch of Zonal innovation Challenge Fund
December 2008- January 2009	Call for concept notes draught power, post-harvest, dairy Innovation Platforms
January 2009	Meeting with regional authorities in Coast – recommendation of regional priorities
February 2009	First brainstorm meeting Coast, priorities and stakeholders selected
February/ March 2009	Second stakeholder meeting on mechanisation, post-harvest and dairy. New members invited. Champions, facilitators and mobilisers assigned
February 2009	First training workshop on management of post-harvest losses, first training workshop on use of farm implements (CB for mechanisation and post-harvest). Conducted by Research Institute/ Ministry of agriculture (mechanisation department)
February 2009	First brainstorm meeting Coast
SEE DOC ZICF	23 concepts notes invited to prepare full proposal for ZICF and 10 shortlisted and 4 funded
March 2009	Communication strategy (general) by MUVEK

March 2009	Learning workshop on facilitating innovation in Multi Stakeholder Processes- Juergen Haggman (pico team)
April 2009	Poverty impact study
April 2009	First platform meeting Coast
April 2009	First brainstorm meeting for developing a system for increasing access to agricultural information
May 2009	Second platform meeting Coast
May 2009	First introductory meeting for external community mobilisers (introduced to the programme and platform and each asked to think about platform they wanted to engage- this did not happen)
May 2009	Second call for concept notes for IP poultry
May 2009	Second introductory meeting for external mobilisers- had applied for areas. RIU team as shortlisted and agreed that it would work better if internal mobilisers were used. Champions would become mobilisers
May 2009- Morogoro June 2009- Tanga	Baseline surveys
<b>Technical and Midterm Reviews</b>	
June 2009	Mid-Term Review RIU UK
July 2009	Country coordinator meets technical review team Platforms reduced to two Zonal Innovation challenge Fund closed down (EDI contract not renewed) ACP more flexibility Focus changed to impact at large scale and fewer activities
Nov 2009	Meeting with CRT (Jeroen and Andy)- decided on scaling down mechanisation and focusing on poultry and expanding to five more regions to achieve impact at scale (so far Dodoma and Singida)
Dec 2009	New intervention logic Tanzania (2009-2011)
<b>Implementation (post-MTR)</b>	
July 2009	Implementation on poultry started (activities planned through previous IP meeting)
June 2009	Implementation on mechanisation innovation platform (mobilisation for tractor owners and farmers for bundling of demands and supply of mechanisation services). Union of tractor owners formed
Dec 2009	Post-harvest platform and dairy closed down
Dec 2009	Mechanisation IP informed of scaling down
June 2010	Withdrawal from mechanisation platform
June 2010	Meeting with district and ward champions to introduce ward champions to whole programme (as they were picked from the bottom). Redefined roles of district and ward champions.
Jan-Sept 2010	Programme was rolling out the poultry programme in other districts (Kibaha, Bagamoyo, Mkurunga and Kisarawe districts)
Oct 2010 – Feb 2011	Out-scaling to Dodoma and Singida regions
June – July 2010	Creation of KukuDeal
Aug 2010	Introduction of contract poultry keeping and KukuDeal in Rufiji, Bagamoyo, Kibaha and Mkurunga districts (Coast region)
Sept 2010 – Jan 2011	Piloting the first phase of poultry contract keeping under KukuDeal in Rufiji, Bagamoyo, Kibaha and Mkurunga districts (Coast region)
Jan 2011	Study on institutional history
June 2011	End of the programme?

## Timeline Post-harvest Innovation Platform, Tanzania

Date	Event
<b>Preparation</b>	
Nov 2008	Stakeholder mapping (stakeholders same as for mechanisation)
	Consultation of regional authorities on priority setting
<b>Implementation</b>	
Dec 2008	First platform workshop on post-harvest
Dec 2008 -Jan 2009	Call for concept note ZICF
February 2009	First training workshop on management of post-harvest losses, (Capacity Building for post-harvest) conducted by Research Institute
March 2009	Learning workshop on facilitating innovation in Multi Stakeholder Processes- JuergenHaggman (pico team)
March 2009	Second platform meetings for draught and post-harvest platforms
<b>Exit RIU Tanzania</b>	
Dec 2009	Post-harvest Platform closure No energy

## Timeline InfoCom, Tanzania

Date INFOCOM	Event
<b>Preparation</b>	
July 2008	Information Markets rapid Appraisal for Tanzania (by A. Mosha)- preparing InfoCom (information market challenge component)
April 2009	First brainstorm meeting for developing a system for increasing access to agricultural information
	Decision on InfoCom on hold until after MTR
Dec 2010	CRT meeting- Try InfoCom until June 2010 Communication strategy at RIU UK level changed, communication would be more for PR
Jan 2010	Call for expression of interest for developing a concept note and business plan for Agricultural Information and Communication System
March 2010	Assessed the concept notes (internal), shortlisted three and selected one. They were too expensive. We approached the second, but not possible to agree on vision. Team decided to develop internal Concept Note.
April 2010	Develop concept note (Jwani), team decided that InfoCom should focus on information challenges within poultry
April 2010	Lack of information on disease control- contacted consultants at ministry of livestock and introduced idea
<b>Implementation</b>	
May 2010	Contracted ministry of livestock and started working on a guide on disease control in poultry, first draft in May
July – August 2010	Developed the first draft and submitted to RIU
Sept 2010	Infocom: First Technical consultative meeting on poultry disease management guidelines
October 2010	Resubmitted the draft with inputs
October 2010	Second draft: RIU gave go ahead for translation in Swahili (that is where we are)
February 2011	Submission of Kiswahili draft for review
February 2011	Second technical consultative meeting to review and add inputs to the Kiswahili draft
March – April 2011	Content validation by Ministry of Livestock, finalisation of the guideline printing and distribution to relevant targets
<b>Exit RIU Tanzania</b>	
	InfoCom will be closed once guide is available in English and Swahili

## Timeline Dairy Platform, Tanzania

Date	Event
<b>Preparations</b>	
Dec 2008	Stakeholder mapping
Dec 2008	First stakeholder meeting
<b>Implementation</b>	
	Thrust group meetings
March 2009	Learning workshop on facilitating innovation in Multi Stakeholder Processes- Juergen Haggman (pico team)
Jan 2009	Call for proposal ZICF
	Submission of proposal to Zonal Innovation Challenge Funds
	Proposal granted (software and talking pictures)
February 2009	Second platform meeting
<b>Exit RIU Tanzania</b>	
	Platform closure
	AGriCare takes over and platform becomes self- driven
Nov 2009, Jan, March, June, December 2010. Proposed: march 2011	Platform meetings

## Time line poultry platform, Tanzania

Date	Event
<b>Preparations</b>	
2009	Stakeholder mapping
January 2009	Meeting with regional authorities in Coast
February 2009	First brainstorm meeting Coast
<b>Implementation</b>	
April 2009	First platform workshop
May 2009	Second platform Meeting for entrepreneurship Promotion Platform
May 2009	Second call for concept notes Zonal innovation Challenge Funds for IP poultry
July 2009	Implementation on poultry started (activities planned through IP previous meeting)
July- August 2009	Implementation for poultry (mobilisation of farmers, shed and other requirements met)
July- August 2009	Internal planning for Coast (field operations- chicks and feed etc.) Establishing agreements with service providers
Implementation post MTR (activities intensified and scaled out)	
August 2009	Meeting with Kibaha Education Centre on poultry graduates involvement in house hold advising
August 2009	First meeting with poultry household advisors and champions (how to work with farmers)
September 2009	Chick distribution at Coast (Rufidji district)
	Call for chick producers (after distribution started and RIU realised not enough supply)
Dec 2009	Monitoring visit for farmers in Bungu ward, Rufidji district- farmers that received first chicks. Identify challenges (for example with advisory services, diseases, voucher system)
Jan-Sept 2010	Programme was rolling out the programme in other districts (Kibaha, Bagamoyo, Mkurunga and Kisarawe districts)
Feb 2010	Monitoring visit in Ikwiriri ward, Rufidji district- combined inventory of challenges for both wards
Feb 2009	Farmers requested meeting with Rufidji district authorities (on presenting challenges, direct contact, accessing advisory services from local extension workers- after household advisors left in October, they could not access advice anymore- discuss prices in inputs, poor quality of inputs)

Feb-March 2010	Entrepreneurship trainings in Rufidji, Kibaha and Bagamoyo
March 2010	Second meeting with household advisors- aim to get feedback on provision of advisory services in Rufidji district
May 2010	Matchmakers conducted market study for formulating local chicken sub sector development strategy
April 2010	First poultry sub sector meeting with ministry of livestock- introduce ministry to the programme and introduce regional administrative secretaries (regional leaders) of the five regions
June 2010	Meeting with hatchery owners to introduce them to each other and feedback on problems they face in production and link them with Bytrade (informed them about out scaling)
June 2010	Meeting with district and ward champions to introduce ward champions to whole programme (picked from the bottom, so needed integration into the programme) Redefined roles of district and ward champions.
June 2010	Farmers field visits to hatcheries (Rufidji)
June 2010	RIU team meeting: idea of introducing Kukudeal and contract farming was brought up (after field visit from farmers to hatcheries, farmers expressed they could not manage to buy new chicks, with feeds etc. because their investment was gone)
July 2010	Matilda and Dennis made field trips to introduce contract farming
July 2010	Out-scaling meetings Dodoma and Singida districts (introduced programme activities) District advisors (different approach)
July-Oct 2010	Process of clearing hatchery materials from port
August 2010	Creation of Kukudeal
Aug 2010	Issued call for information from poultry feed producers and distributors
August 2010	Contract farming field trips- whole RIU team- we went back to clarify what it was and how it was going to work
August 2010	Third meeting household advisors to introduce them to contract farming. Their roles changed (serve more farmers and not 1 but 4 months)
Sept 2010	Contract farming monitoring visits in Rufidji district
October 2010	Ministry and local government authority undertake field visit to hatcheries (introduced to hatchery and advice on biosafety)
Oct 2010	Workshop on hatchery regulations- ministry elaborated on each part of the regulation before implementation
Oct 2010-present	Outscaling in Dodoma- chick distribution
Nov-Dec 2010	Entrepreneurship training in Mkuranga district)
Dec 2010	Meeting with poultry feed producers and distributors to discuss quality, price, how to increase accessibility in rural areas, ministry was there also introduce them to the meeting
Dec 2010	Meeting with poultry traders and buyers – aim to introduce them to Kukudeal. (Kukudeal will be the main buyer from farmers) and how they could work and also introduce RIU and its programme
Dec 2010	Ran a radio campaign to boost urban peoples knowledge on Kukudeal and encourage urban investment in rural areas (Clouds FM)
Dec 2010	Installation of hatchery equipment in 5 hatcheries (3 in Dar, 1 in Dodoma and 1 in Iringa)
2011 Jan	Entrepreneurship in Kisarawe district
Jan 2011	TV programmes with ITV on poultry (yesterday and 2 weeks before)
Jan 2011	Meeting with hatchery owners- discuss how they are going to increase production, supply RIU until repayment of loan.

## Time line mechanisation, Tanzania

Nov 2008	Stakeholder mapping
<b>Preparations</b>	
	Consultation of regional authorities on priority setting
Dec 2008	First platform workshop on mechanisation
Dec 2008 –Jan 2009	Call for concept notes Zonal Innovation Challenge Funds
<b>Implementation</b>	
February 2009	First training workshop on the use of farm machinery (Capacity Building for mechanisation stakeholders) conducted by the Mechanisation Department – Ministry of Agriculture
March 2009	Learning workshop on facilitating innovation in Multi Stakeholder Processes- Juergen Haggman (pico team)
March 2009	Second platform meetings for mechanisation platform
June 2009	Implementation on mechanisation IP (mobilisation for tractor owners for bundling of demand) Union formed
July 2009	Mobilisation for famers for bundling of demands (block farming) Mechanisation IP
<b>Exit RIU Tanzania</b>	
Nov 2009	Meeting with CRT – recommendations to scale-down mechanisation and phase it out by June 2010
December 2009	Meeting with Mechanisation platform to inform them of scaling-down and phasing out of activities (came up with five priority areas for implementation by June 2010 – see third platform report)
January - August 2010	Implementation of five priority areas
August 2010	Meeting with District Mechanisation officers to hand over mechanisation activities
August 2010	Withdrawal from mechanisation platform

## Timeline Rwanda

1. Country assessment	Country assessment by team of experts, resulting in an implementation report	End 2007, Nov-Dec
2. Inception phase	Bringing together national stakeholder group: NIC as national level support group to the RIU	Dec 2007-Jan 2008
3. Initiation NIC	MOU signed by high level representatives of NIC members	End 2007
4. RIU launch	Official RIU launch, together with CAADP CAADP has a Research Into Use pillar	Feb 2008
5. Country action plan	Brainstorm meetings in Kibuye by NIC Country office gets the mandate to implement. Sam Kanjakirike named as the RIU coordinator 2 main activities: 1. Knowledge market 2. Platforms at district level	April-July 2008
6. Opportunity assessment / platform selection	4 platforms chosen: 1) Maize Nyagatare, 2) Cassava Gatsibu, 3) Rural development Karunji 4) Potato Gicumbi	May-June 2008
7. Contracting of fund manager	Decided one of NIC organisations would be the fund manager. CAPMER was selected.	Aug-Sep 2008
8. Platform initiation based on guidelines (30 participants)	Through district administration a first list. Further participants through snowball method. First RIU was looking for a facilitator from platform itself. Without payment this was impossible. The RIU programme officer was doing both, initiation and facilitation and monitoring. Later local support was contracted (after MTR).	June 2008
9. Needs and opportunity assessment by platforms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Get together first</li> <li>▪ Value chain analysis</li> <li>▪ Identify missing actors and lobby for their participation</li> <li>▪ Get ideas from the platforms for action</li> <li>▪ Prioritise and plan</li> <li>▪ Challenge was that RIU aim was to tackle a little gap where value could be added and RIU could bring together other service providers and improve use of other resources.</li> <li>▪ Beneficiaries are expecting something else. They want something concrete.</li> </ul>	
10. Focus on quick results: seed and post-harvest selected	Through the needs assessment the gap identified: maize, cassava and potato improved seed. Maize they started with building drying areas and other post-harvest technology. However, the real bottleneck was seed. Same for potato and cassava. In the platform there are different groups, to discuss different issues. To assure the participation of the right people at the right moment. In the beginning they were working more on the awareness of the need to work together.	
11. Action plan revision	New action plan. There was a 2009 action plan. Idea to influence NIC members to buy into RIU agenda. Not very effective. No leverage over national bodies as RIU is a small project.	
12. MTR	Impact on programme only after technical review	
13. Departure country coordinator	Disruption limited as RIU facilitator turned coordinator	
14. Technical review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Karonji rural platform dropped. Knowledge market dropped.</li> <li>▪ More autonomy for the RIU team</li> <li>▪ More collaboration as a team</li> </ul>	
15. Change of fund manager	Fund management changes from CAPMER to PSF	
16. Shift in focus to marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Platforms are shifting focus from planting material to marketing issues.</li> </ul>	
17. Discontinuation NIC meetings	NIC becomes dysfunctional. Focus turns entirely to facilitating the district platforms	June 2010
18. Thinking of exit strategy,	Contracting local service providers (RDO, Caritas) to take over facilitation of the platforms	November 2010- present

### Appendix 3: Innovation platform Comparative Tables per country

**Comparative table on CA IPs in Zambia**

	<b>Kalomo SIIF</b>	<b>Kazungula SIIF</b>	<b>Monze IP</b>	<b>National Innovation Coalition (NIC)</b>
<b>Goals</b>	Adoption enhancement of CA (dissemination and communication for education of farmers) Coordinate activities in CA and knowledge sharing with NGOs (Care, Africare, World Vision)	Adoption CA Coordinate activities in CA and knowledge sharing and dissemination (radio Sub-committee)	Coordination of all CA activities Dissemination of CA knowledge Information sharing and getting feedback More efficient resource utilisation (e.g. equipment for farmers) Learning and innovation	Advocacy, lobbying, awareness, steering committee (oversight function) in Conservation Agriculture (CA) and Rice value chain.
<b>Origin</b>	RIU initiated the platform.	RIU initiated the platform.	RIU initiated the platform. Research Into Use and CFU organised the initial workshop and DACO invited (local champion) RIU was instrumental in the initial phase for brokering, while CFU was crucial for the technical support/training	Two champions from the Cotton Association of Zambia and Permanent Secretary of MACO initiated the platform theme, location, objectives and activities were decided by means In various workshops and based on country assessment reports/implementation plan (three issues, two levels, two districts), as well as RIU instructions (issues, focus, etc.)
<b>Level</b>	At district level as subcommittee and part of the DDCC's Agricultural subcommittee There is a link with the NIC.	Kazungula IP operates mainly on district level as a subcommittee of the DDCC. There is a link with the NIC.	The Monze IP operates at Districts level, but has a link with the NIC and the local farmer platforms.	National level closely related to the Ministry of Agriculture
<b>Facilitator</b>	RIU facilitates as well as the DACO chair, secretary and fund-manager	RIU Chair/secretary/ fund manager	DACO in its day to day activities. RIU in the initial stages. Facilitator is chair of the IP.	Chairman with RIU support The RIU staff is facilitating through support of the chairman and with RIU funds. A consultant was contracted once for writing the minutes, but with inadequate results
<b>Stakeholders</b>	DACO, District council secretary, Dep. of Forestry, NGOs, radio stations	Local government members: DACO NAIS, District Forestry Office, Ministry of Meteorology, ZNFU	Four categories: Private, NGO, public, media and farmers (through ZNFU and indirectly through learning sites)	See Venn diagram → Ministry of Agriculture and cooperatives, NGOs, PELUM, Cotton Association

		NGOs, Radio stations, OPPAZ		Zambia, Zambia National Farmers Union and CFU etc.
<b>Representation</b>	RIU requires representation of NGOs, media, private and public sector and has made use of existing government structure. DFA (District Farmer's Association) and Cooperatives' representation at IPs level was encouraged. Equally important is encouraging participation of other NGOs who have field staff interfacing with farmers. The concept of supporting 'learning site (platform)' was dropped to avoid re-inventing the wheel as there are other stakeholders supporting demos who however need to coordinate well so as to reach many farmers.	RIU requires representation of NGOs, media, private and public sector Has made use of existing government structure. 112 lead farmers in FFS an demos Making use of the government structure is different from first IPs (Monze and Chipata) RIU approaches organisations in first stage set-up IP. E.g. members of PELUM No real selection criteria except interest, motivation, involvement in CA. ZNFU further represents farmers. One farmer member of the forum.	First a stakeholder mapping was done to identify organisations working on CA already. ZNFU/CFU was already active in CA theme Representatives selected by their own organisations ZNFU represents the farmers (DFA from Monze and Pemba). DFA Monze has 7 groups. One DFA member and one lead farmer in IP	All categories, except cooperatives, traders and research. Representation is not really ensured as such. People come mainly on personal interest (related to their organisation). For each organisation it also depends if there is a national office/representative (in Lusaka). All are welcome, open forum. Proposed by 'patron' MACO No market actors have been proposed yet, apart from input suppliers
<b>Lessons</b>	Existing structure is good, more sustainable, yet government actors are often involved in different programmes (wearing more than one heat...) etc. External facilitation or guidance necessary to take IP from the ground – monitor development IP and give support where necessary. RIU recommended that the DDCC sub-committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources whose members also sit on the SIIF report to DDCC on the activities of the SIIF. This way a linkage between SIIF and DDCC is created and therefore SIIF is	Synergy/connection with national and local policy developed well. Emphasis has been mainly on coordination and less on innovation or marketing, also due to the limited involvement of the private product traders. Research actors are not part of the IP. Radio communication is an innovative way to reach farmers. Existing structure is good, more sustainable, yet government actors are often involved in different programmes (wearing more than one heat...) etc. Seems difficult to engage farmers IP should evolve?!! Also to remain interesting for private	Learning and innovation difficult without 'external' facilitation Research is missed as knowledge broker and facilitator, no local representative Monze IP was found to be very dependent on the RIU programme, and IP members were therefore invited to meet and talk with the Kazungula IP to understand how they were organising things and operate more independently. The Innovation Platforms on Conservation Agriculture have proved to be very important in the coordination of all activities which take place under the heading of conservation farming.	Challenge between individual and institutional participation exists. Direct incentives to be involved low or absent, but no evidence that the high staff turnover was related. Difficult to bring people together on a regularly basis (last meeting 7 months ago). The existence of two other policy related bodies attended by CA stakeholders – CAA and CA National Task Force – is another factor contributing to this. Bringing the NIC-members together and make them work and learn together, in this

	<p>aligned to DDCC. Although this is not a guarantee for good interaction, in this way more actors especially non-govt like private sector, NGOs, media etc. are involved.</p> <p>What becomes very clear from this IP thus far is the fact that there was insufficient support from the RIU country team. They should have interfered on time to assure that the IP would have started with joint activities.</p> <p>Notwithstanding the short time SIIFs have been facilitated, Kalomo SIIF is truly behind others, largely due to a lack of key staff stability in MACO and D/Council especially shortly after the IP was facilitated, until recently. Now, each IP was allowed latitude to develop a plan and how they intended to proceed with implementation. The relationship among stakeholders in Kalomo is different from that in Kazungula.</p>	<p>sector etc. Sitting allowances are not needed by NGOs DACO being involved as such seems to be a good choice in terms of continuation after ending RIU. Little emphasize is given to joint learning and innovation so far. Innovation is to be found in coordination of activities, and learning from each other's activities. Technical knowledge not a requirement from the RIU team. Yet, to move the IP beyond knowledge sharing and coordination towards (technical) innovations in CA, some technical know-how on board might be helpful to stimulate this (research ...?). CFU input was highly appreciated and made use of. RIU team was positive about the bottom-up approach leading to appreciation of local structures and the more organic growing of the IP. RIUZ intention of the IPs was to increase sharing experiences, knowledge/lessons and also enhance harmonisation of messages, coordination and links among stakeholders. Field joint activities among stakeholders in Kazungula were a good outcome, but do not necessarily represent a commonly adopted activity among IPs.</p>	<p>Initially the platforms were actually referred to as programme coordination teams (PCTs). The platforms chaired by the District Agricultural Coordinator (DACO). Knowledge sharing and dissemination of knowledge is considered another function of the IPs. Little emphasis is given to learning and innovation, also caused by the fact that no external facilitators are used and the interest of the DACO chain in coordination. Agrodealer claimed to have experienced "some benefits", yet goals were set really high in the beginning; adoption rate of farmers practising CA is much lower than initially was aimed for) Facilitator should Initially bringing different types of stakeholder together to share information on conservation agriculture Facilitation needed is by experts, while funds need to be sourced for various activities. IP in itself is an innovation and it needs to continue and scaling-up (e.g. through the use of the DDCC) Could it be well possible that as agriculture evolves as well as the issues that farmers are faced with in a specific area (where the IP is operative), an IP should evolve, in terms of topics addressed and also its members (or maybe even dissolve)? In the medium to long term, other forms of relationships can emerge such as good functional business and working links among different actors.</p>	<p>case particularly on CA policies and strategies at the national level based on local platforms. Champions are required, more champions were to be recruited</p>
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			Local champion proves to be essential as well as some authority, although this could lead automatically to the coordination function. Initial knowledge input by GART and CFU was essential. I also believe that the direct achievements such as the radio programmes are very motivating for different stakeholders in terms of touchable results and also the advantages of working together.	
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Comparative Table Tanzania

	<b>IP poultry</b>	<b>IP mechanisation</b>	<b>IP post-harvest</b>	<b>IP dairy</b>
<b>Goals</b>	Developing the sub sector of local chicken	Improve collaboration between tractor owners and small scale farmers	Improve rice and maize post-harvest revenues. IP has never started since first priority was mechanisation	Stabilise production of milk over the year
<b>Origin</b>	RIU started from the idea of enhancing entrepreneurship and moved into poultry	RIU	RIU	RIU
<b>Level</b>	From local to national	Middle (with some institutional change on national level) and local	Middle and local	Middle and local
<b>Facilitator</b>	RIU is the broker	RIU facilitated interactions. Realisation that the main activities needed would normally fall under the responsibility of the district council. As such district council has integrated this in district plans and taken over the activities	RIU was facilitator	AgriCare took over from RIU. RIU withdrew because some internal politics needed to be solved before brokering would have an effect.
<b>Stakeholders</b>	Processors, producers, district and regional authorities, private sector, service providers and research institutes,	Producers, district and regional authorities, private sector, service providers	Farmers groups at ward level, SACCOS, service providers: input dealers, transporters, processing companies, research organisations: ARI, Katrin, Dakawa A.R., MviWata, NGOs such as Worlds Vision, DALDO. District executive officer and district council	Processors, producers, district and regional authorities, private sector, research
<b>Represent</b>	Champions	Champions	n.a	Thrust leaders

ation		Tractor owners association		
<b>Lessons</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Brokering rather than facilitation</li> <li>- Innovation Platforms easily get formal which hinders quick action-reaction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Innovation Platforms aimed at achieving institutional change. Activities needed for enhancing mechanisation in rice and maize rather is a 'standard' development activity which fits in the local district development plans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Not a priority as long as production has not increased</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Difficult to manage due to internal conflicts amongst key stakeholders</li> <li>- Conditions for achieving institutional change not met as long as interdependency and joint objectives are not clear to all</li> </ul>
<b>Status</b>	Moved from a platform to informal networks.	RIU has withdrawn. Activities taken over by District Council	RIU has withdrawn Closed down	RIU has withdrawn. AgriCare (private Sector) has taken over

NB1: Since the meetings for the Innovation Platform on Post-harvest were organised together with those of the mechanisation platform, and since the stakeholders decided that the challenge on mechanisation would have to be dealt with before dealing with post-harvest issues, the IP on post-harvest never materialised. As such no detailed account on the IP post-harvest is given hereunder.

NB2: In Tanzania an advisory panel was established at the start of the RIU ACP Tanzania, this panel evolved in the National Innovation Coalition after the example of the other countries. Yet, the NIC has never really functioned and as such cannot be discussed hereunder.

NB3: In some documents activities (e.g. website: <http://www.researchintouse.com/programmes/riu-tanzania/riu-tz43innov-infocomms.html>) in relation to information and communication activities are labeled as Innovation Platform on InfoCom, yet this is not actually a platform but rather a work area. As such this also will not be treated here in detail.

NB4: On the website (<http://www.researchintouse.com/programmes/riu-tanzania/riu-tz45innov-zonalchallenge.html>) the activities on Zonal Innovation Challenge Funds are also referred to as an Innovation Platform. In practice however these ZICF ceased to exist as from mid-2009 and has never meant to be an Innovation Platform. Instead it concerned a challenge fund for platform related activities. A major lesson is that such funds are easily treated as development projects and as such encourage formal structures and delays rather than flexible use for emerging challenges to enable innovation.

## Appendix 4: Respondents

### Zambia

Name	Position	E-mail
Justin Ngosa	DACO and Chairman Monze IP	<a href="mailto:ngosajustine@yahoo.com">ngosajustine@yahoo.com</a>
Jonathan Mwila	Monze Business Development Association	<a href="mailto:Jonathan_mwila@yahoo.co.uk">Jonathan_mwila@yahoo.co.uk</a>
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Fair Mufwafwi	CFU facilitator Monze	
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Victor Makasa	RIU, Country Director	<a href="mailto:vmakasa@pelum.org.zm">vmakasa@pelum.org.zm</a> ; <a href="mailto:chipili@cheerful.com">chipili@cheerful.com</a>
Richard Mumba	COMACO, Chief Extension Officer	<a href="mailto:crumumba@itwild.org">crumumba@itwild.org</a>
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ChaliMulenga	Farmer Newspaper	<a href="mailto:mulimule@yahoo.com">mulimule@yahoo.com</a> ; <a href="mailto:mulimule@gmail.com">mulimule@gmail.com</a>
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Max Choombe	DACO, Kalomo	<a href="mailto:drchoombe@yahoo.com">drchoombe@yahoo.com</a>
KebbyChipinza	NAIS, Kalomo	<a href="mailto:kebbychipinza@gmail.com">kebbychipinza@gmail.com</a>
Teresa Nyamba	Small scale ripper service provider, Monze	
Mary Jo Kakinda	PELUM, Regional Director	<a href="mailto:mjkakinda@pelum.org.zm">mjkakinda@pelum.org.zm</a>
Mathews	PELUM,	<a href="mailto:mubangamusyani@pelum.org.zm">mubangamusyani@pelum.org.zm</a>
Diana Banda	UBA, Rural sociology	

## Rwanda

Name*	Function
Apolinaire Rutabaiu	Branch manager Duterimbe, Eastern province
Asmane Bagara	President cooperative KIAI
Gabriel Turatsinze	Potato producer
Augustin Mutijima	RIU coordinator
Vincent Nzakizwanimana	President ROPARWA
Jean Bosco Kabagambe	Senior programme officer RIU
Clement	Monitoring and communications officer
Didas Maniraguha	Cassava cutting producer
Eric Ntubumwe	Agronomist RDO Nyagatare
Fabien Habumugisha	Cassava platform facilitator
Ziridamu Silver	Potato farmer and platform treasurer
Faith Gasingahire	Maize trader and farmer
Imgabire Pelagi	Cooperative member, cassava farmer and platform vice-president
James Butare	RADA
John-Peter Hakorimana	Input dealer, potato platform member
Twesige Edward	Sub-branch manager RDB
Winfrieda Mukakigeri	Maize farmer

\* In addition 3 mini-workshops were held with 10 members of the maize, potato and cassava platforms

## Tanzania

<p>RIU ACP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- JwaniTranquilinoJube (communication officer)</li> <li>- Vera Mugittu (country coordinator)</li> <li>- Dennis Mbangulla (Programme officer innovation)</li> <li>- Matilda Mndeme (field operation officer)</li> </ul>
<p>Fieldtrip Rufiji District</p> <p>Group discussion with Farmer poultry group in Msafiri village, Bungu Ward in Rufiji district :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- MaimunaSeifMkongea (District Champion/Mobiliser)</li> <li>- SalumAbdalahKiwope (Ward champion)</li> <li>- Omar JumaNkossa (farmer)</li> <li>- ZennaKasimRoya (farmer)</li> </ul>
<p>Interview with Ministry of livestock</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- John Kaijage – National Coordinator for Small Stock Production</li> </ul>
<p>Interview with Bytrade</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dr Charles Mgaya (Animal Health Division Manager - Bytrade)</li> <li>- Dr. Salum Diwani (Director - Bytrade)</li> </ul>
<p>Interview with District Coalition (Mvomero and Kilosa Districts)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ThabitWaziri – Kilosa District (mechanisation officer) – Platform Facilitator/ Mobiliser / Champion</li> <li>- FoyaHozeniele - Mvomero district (both platforms) (District Extension and Crop officer) – Platform Facilitator/ Mobiliser / Champion</li> <li>- George Mhina – Mvomero District Agriculture and Livestock Development Officer (DALDO)</li> </ul>
<p>Interview with Tractor owners association</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hamisi Simba Baayuna – Tractor Owner (secretary in the tractor owner association)</li> </ul>
<p>Dairy Platform</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Jonas Kizima – Researcher (thrust leader in the Dairy platform and ZICF recipient)</li> </ul>
<p>Interviews with Hatchery owners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Festo Balegele – hatchery owner – joined RIU in late 2009</li> <li>- Nkalla Nkalla – hatchery owner – joined RIU from first platform meeting in early 2009</li> </ul>

Interview with manager Kukudeal - Eliasa Said
Interview with NIC members - Agrippina Masha - Dr. Sendalo – National Livestock Research Institute (written interview)
Interview with AgroVet dealer - Dorothy Mang'ana – joined RIU from first platform meeting in early 2009

## **Appendix 5: List of other annexes available on request**

### Zambia:

1. Main actors
2. Cases on the outcome and impact of Conservation Agriculture
3. Conservation agriculture technology
4. National Innovation Coalition
5. Monze Innovation Platform
6. Kazungula Stakeholder Innovation Interaction Platform (SSIF)
7. Kalomo Stakeholder Interaction Forum
8. Rice Value Chain stakeholders' Forum in Chinsali

### Tanzania:

1. Stakeholders involved in innovation platforms
2. Innovation Platform Mechanisation
3. Innovation Platform poultry
4. Innovation platform diary

### Rwanda

1. Rwanda country report
2. Outcomes of mini-workshop potato platform
3. Outcomes of mini-workshop maize platform
4. Outcomes of mini-workshop cassava platform