

The challenges of scaling technology

This week I joined some 200 people at a workshop on integrated agricultural research for development (IAR4D) - an initiative of the West and Central African Council for Agricultural Research and Development (CORAF/WECARD).

The aim was to debate and discuss the challenges facing the scaling up and out of technology through innovation platforms to smallholder farmers, including how to foster stronger engagement with the private sector.

Engaging more in others' planning sessions is important to take our partnerships to a higher level. ICRISAT's West and Central Africa Director Dr Ramadjita Tabo and ICRISAT Board member Dr Paco Sereme were also participating.

It was very open and friendly workshop, with people broken into small groups to tackle some of the big issues being debated.

I made a presentation on the application of innovations systems within the CGIAR, providing examples including ICRISAT's strategy on inclusive market-oriented development (IMOD).

I also highlighted others involving CGIAR centers including Agri-Business Incubators, AfricaRice's IP hubs and Integrated Systems for Humid Tropics operating in West and Central Africa.

Dr Harold Roy-MacCauley, Executive Director of CORAF/WECARD launched three books on IAR4D that were recently published.

I also had the opportunity to sign an updated partnership agreement with Dr Roy-Macauley between ICRISAT and CORAF/WECARD that better reflects the evolution of the scientific environment in Africa and the world.