

Brief Report on Linking Knowledge with Action through Regional Scenario Building

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1. Background to CCAFS scenarios research approach

Within the CCAFS programme, inter-organizational regional scenarios of the future are being developed in order:

- a. to capture key uncertainties and challenges for regional food security, environment and livelihoods under conditions of global environmental and socio-economic change from various perspectives;
- b. to develop regional capacity for governance and decision-making in the face of uncertainty.

The development and use of the scenarios functions as a platform for the exchange and application of knowledge and experience between researchers and policy makers, private sectors, NGOs and other societal actors. Scenarios allow for the capturing of uncertainties and systems complexity in a coherent and plausible yet surprising and challenging fashion. Scenarios are an excellent tool for generating shared engagement, building relationships, commitments and new ideas.

The CCAFS regional scenarios process follows several basic steps –see figure 1. These steps reflect the need for a distinction between exploratory scenarios (focusing on what *can* happen) and normative scenarios/visions (focusing on what *should* happen) and the value that both exploratory scenarios and visions have to offer if used together.

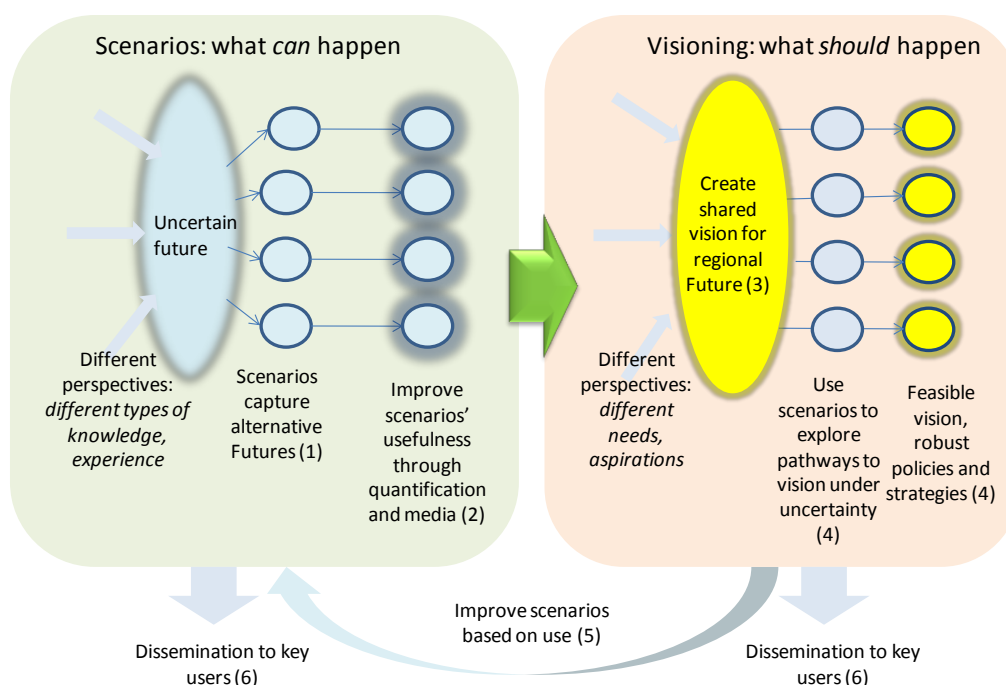


Figure 1. CCAFS scenarios strategy.

2. Progress Report on Regional Scenario Building

Development of exploratory scenarios began East Africa in August 2010 and is still ongoing. The process of developing exploratory scenarios in West Africa began in October 2011. This brief report on the progress of scenario development in these two regions will highlight progress made in terms of developing the scenarios and capacity building, publications, raising awareness about the scenarios, partnerships, and regional policy level engagement.

2.1 Scenario Development & Capacity Building

In East Africa, the qualitative storylines that started to evolve in 2010 have been further improved in 2011 with the support of the new Scenarios Officer who has worked closely with the scenario writers. To build on the qualitative scenarios, a workshop on quantification was held in September 2011 to not only improve the storylines but make the scenarios more credible. Quantification involved using the GLOBIUM and IMPACT models. The quantification workshop has helped build capacity among 30 participants who are now aware of how to develop scenarios by merging both qualitative and quantitative information.

In West Africa, the scenario building process has begun. The Scenario Team has worked with the regional agricultural research body West and Central African Council for Agricultural Research and Development (CORAF/WECARD) to organize a successful scenario workshop, which generated enthusiasm about the process. The success of the workshop was due to the careful selection of participants from across sectors with the help of a regional scenarios consultant. It was also due to the learning experiences in the East Africa scenarios process that enabled an effective workshop setup. Scenarios writers have now been identified throughout West Africa.

2.2 Publications

Based on the experience of developing scenarios thus far in East Africa, a paper describing the scenario building as a boundary spanning process has been written and will be submitted to *Regional Environmental Change* by the end of 2011. This publication highlights the extent to which the scenario development process has been credible, salient, legitimate, and has helped to develop capacity, as well as the lessons learned from the process. The article will provide readers a good understanding of key elements to participatory, multi-stakeholder scenario development process. Additionally, two paper abstracts on the scenarios process have been submitted and accepted for the Planet Under Pressure conference in March 2012.

2.3 Communication & Outreach

The Scenario Team has partnered with Panos Eastern Africa to produce a variety of communication and outreach products in order to raise awareness about the scenarios through different mediums. Through Panos, journalists were hired to begin to develop stories based on the scenarios that may be used in newspapers. A trailer and short film has also been developed that can be used to increase awareness about the scenario process among a wide range of audiences. Interviews were also conducted about the scenario process and one interview has already been aired by Panos in Ethiopia. An illustrator has also produced 20 illustrations based on the four scenarios being developed, which is a help way to visualize the scenarios. These illustrations will be used in communication products such as posters and briefs. A brief on the

scenarios has also been produced to be distributed in COP17 to increase awareness about regional scenario development.

2.4 Partnerships

The scenario development process continues to be guided by a Scenarios Advisory Committee based at the University of Oxford. The Advisory Committee is comprised of experts in the field of both qualitative and quantitative scenario development from the ESSP community. The core Scenario Team is made up of Oxford, CGIAR (IWMI, ICRISAT, ICRAF, ILRI, IFPRI), and CCAFS experts but works closely with regional partners such as Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa (ASARECA), IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre (ICPAC), and West and Central African Council for Agricultural Research and Development (CORAF/WECARD). In both regions, this process has involved bringing together partners representing a wide range of regional perspectives, types of knowledge and experience to develop exploratory scenarios of the future. Regional consultants in both East and West Africa have been hired to identify strategic partners and participants to be engaged in the process.

2.5 Regional Policy Level Engagement

As described in Figure 1 above, the aim of the scenario building process is to move from building exploratory scenarios to using these scenarios in strategic visioning processes to explore the viability of policies, strategies and technologies under radically different socio-economic conditions.. Although the visioning exercises will take place in 2012, talks have already begun on how such a visioning workshop will be structured. CCAFS and USAID have been engaging in discussions throughout 2011 on how policy makers in the East Africa Commission can benefit from being aware of the scenarios and using them. The visioning workshop will also use vulnerability maps CCAFS has produced to engage with policy makers. Panos Eastern Africa will also be present to intensively cover the event. CCAFS has submitted a design for the workshop to USAID in October 2011, which will materialize in 2012.

3. Conclusion

Considering that there was an absence of a Scenarios Officer between January and May, which led to the progress being stalled, and a new Scenarios Officers was only hired in May, considerable progress has been made to more the scenario development process further. It is anticipated that scenarios for East Africa and will be completed by March 2012 and that the use of the scenarios in strategic visioning exercises with key actors is expected to conclude in June 2012. Scenarios for West Africa will be completed by the end of 2012.