



2021
CAPACITY
STATEMENT

SUSTAINABLE
AGRICULTURE FOR RURAL
DEVELOPMENT *NETWORK*
SARD-Net 

Capacity Statement

Sustainable Agriculture for Rural Development Network (SARD-Net)

August 2021

ABOUT SARD-Net

Sustainable Agriculture for Rural Development Network (SARD-Net) is a national network organization legally registered with Government of Uganda since 2009. SARD-Net works to improve the livelihoods of smallholder farmers and the sustainability of farming communities by fostering Sustainable Agriculture practices and management in Uganda. The network has membership of 200 organisation members and most of them work with rural communities in all the four (4) regions of Uganda i.e. Northern, Eastern, Central, and Western. SARD-Net has a presence in 38 districts in Uganda and reaches over 50,000 smallholder farmers in the country (60% women).

Vision:

“Rural Communities in Uganda where people live with dignity and in harmony with each other, their environment and God”

Goal:

To contribute to attainment of Sustainable Livelihoods of rural households, the development of their communities and their rural space through promotion of Sustainable Agriculture.

Mission Statement:

Our mission statement is to develop the capacities and capabilities of target rural communities and SARD-Net members in partnership with all people of good will to be effective and efficient agents in the promotion of sustainable agriculture in Uganda.

PURPOSE

SARD-Net exists in order to develop capacities and capabilities of target rural communities and SARD-Net members to promote sustainable agriculture as strategy for rural development and the achievement of sustainable livelihoods and resilience of rural households and their communities in Uganda.

SARD-Net's DEVELOPMENT APPROACH

SARD-Net believes in the use of bottom-up and geographical community approach in the promotion of Sustainable Agriculture for Rural Development in Uganda. The approach of SARD-Net is unique in that it focuses on the village or geographical community. The development process is that an active SARD-Net member mobilizes with the assistance of the local leaders, the Local Council (LC) 1 and opinion leaders. He/she gives every household a chance to participate in the development process. Through the facilitation of the community mobiliser, the village forms a legal structure under the leadership of the Village Development Committee (VDC). Under this leadership and through trainings of their choice, the community is developed in to an institution, which develops, and implements its own development plans for community development. In case external support is required, SARD-Net links the village to development partners for support to complement local efforts. The whole process is participatory and involves all community members.

Furthermore, SARD-Net recognizes the place and role of process in sustainable development. These processes include: effective participatory and involvement of target communities in the identification of development issues, problems, alternative solutions, planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and reporting of development initiatives, writing and communicating their own history of Development.

A total of 13 cells covering 38 districts of Uganda have been initiated and these cells are working with rural communities across the country. The 13 cells established are facilitating 40 communities in all the four (4) regions of Uganda. Through the cell structure, members support each other in the mobilization of their respective villages and they act as catalysts in the development process while community members work for their development through participatory processes. At the end of the process, target communities are empowered. Through the cell structure, target village members have been facilitated by SARD-Net to initiate and sustain development initiatives using locally available resources.

WHERE SARD-Net WORKS

Sustainable Agriculture for Rural Development Network (SARD-Net) is working in all the four (4) regions of Uganda using the Cell strategy to rural development.

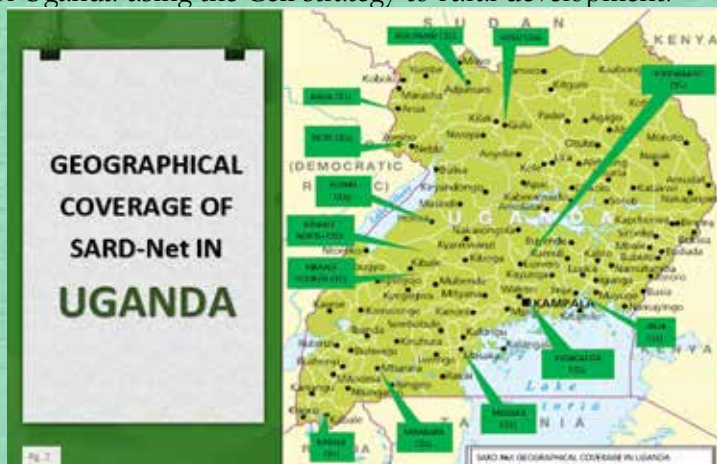


Figure 1: Map of Uganda showing where SARD-Net operates in the country.

TECHNICAL SECTORS CAPACITY/AREAS OF IMPACT

SARD-Net's Programs/Areas of Impact focus on its four (4) thematic sectors namely: Sustainable Agriculture & Livelihoods, Water, Sanitation & Hygiene (WASH), Environmental Sustainability and Research & Advocacy.

Sustainable Agriculture & Livelihoods

SARD-Net has diverse experience in supporting communities to strengthen their food security and livelihoods and increase household income in Uganda. This is through capacity and capability building of community members with knowledge, skills and technologies in crop and animal production, establishing community managed seed security systems, agribusiness skills, agro ecology and community savings groups (Saving for purpose groups) among others. The implementation of this strategy requires approaches that focus on the geographical community and processes that are participatory leading to the active involvement of targeted communities.

Theme Strategy

- Promote sustainable farming systems i.e. seed security, climate resilience, Agro-ecology, Indigenous Knowledge (IK) on food and agriculture.
- Promote agriculture market development i.e. value chain development, quality and standards.
- Influencing policies on Agriculture i.e. Research & advocacy.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

SARD-Net is embracing a development-humanitarian nexus approaches dedicated to work in development & humanitarian programs in Uganda to enable target communities to reach their full potential by tackling the root causes of poverty and injustice. SARD-Net's water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) programme focuses on women and their families having access to safe, equitable and sustainable clean water, dignified hygiene, and appropriate hygiene behaviours. SARD-Net engages in WASH activities in a variety of settings – households, communities, schools, health care facilities, remote rural settings, urban and peri-urban settings, rapid onset emergencies, and fragile contexts. Our community-based approach consisting of our long-term presence gives us deep roots in the community, as well as our longevity and experience to take quality, sustainable WASH interventions to scale in Uganda.

Theme Strategy

- Ensure access to water and sanitation in public places and community spaces most at risk or most vulnerable.
- Implement WASH at community level i.e. both in refugee and host communities.



Figure 2: A hand washing kit given by SARD-Net to Paloga health centre III, Paloga Sub County, Lamwo District, Uganda.

Environmental Sustainability

Ecosystems in Uganda are increasingly being threatened by various human activities, even those that are protected by Government Laws. The progressive, systematic and induced unsustainable management of fragile ecosystems has caused declining resource productivity and resilience, resource scarcities, inequitable access that breeds conflicts, population displacements and worsen human vulnerability. As such, ecosystem management and restoration is key for enhancing land productivity, reducing poverty and enhancing the quality of life or resource-dependent farmers, pastoralists, agro-pastoralists and fisher-folk.

Therefore, SARD-Net is working with district Natural Resources and forestry offices, smallholder farmers, household home gardeners and other development partners in implementing various natural resource management initiatives in Uganda. SARD-Net promotes sustainable practices and creates access to market opportunities, which will enable communities to achieve economic wellbeing, food security, improved nutrition and enhance climate resilience.

Theme Strategy

SARD-Net's strategy is to adopt a Community-led process based on communities priorities, needs, knowledge and capacities which should empower people to plan for and adapt to the impacts of environmental degradation and Climate Change as well as take action based on their own decision-making processes. However, our Community Based Approach aims at building resilience of communities and ecosystems in Uganda and our strategies are:

- Create environmental awareness in communities and institutions.
- Promote tree planting and management.
- Promote on-farm tree management and conservation.
- Promote energy conservation at household and community levels.
- Enhance Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and Disaster Risk Management (DRM).



Figure 3: A community nursery supported by SARD-Net in Nebbi District, Uganda.

Research and advocacy

SARD-Net's Development Process is through Participatory Action Research (PAR) where communities are engaged in effective participatory identification of development issues, problems, alternative solutions, monitoring and evaluation, reporting of development initiatives and writing and sharing their history of change or development. Furthermore, SARD-Net will conduct research and disseminate findings to inform advocacy on issues affecting smallholder farmers in Uganda.

Theme Strategies:

- Identifying the problems and policy issues
- Focusing on the goal and objectives
- Identifying the target audience
- Building partnerships

Grants Management

As SARD-Net, how we manage the funding we receive is extremely important to us, not just for accountability and building of trust with our donors and partners, but more importantly, because of our calling to respond to the needs of the most vulnerable. Therefore, one of our top priorities is to be the trusted partner of choice and leveraging our financial resources for positive and lasting impact in Uganda.

Additionally, our financial and internal control processes follow our financial manual, which provides guidelines on grants management and expenditure, and is based on Generally Acceptable Accounting Principles (GAAPs). Combined with our experience in donors and partners management requirements, SARD-Net is strategically positioned as an organization with strong financial management, donor compliance and ensuring the highest levels of accountability and risk management.

Donors and Partners

SARD-Net has been able to establish and nurture good relationships with key donors to strengthen its grants portfolio. Amidst a difficult funding environment, SARD-Net was able to attract funding of an estimated US\$502,750 between 2017-2021.



Scottish Catholic International Aid Fund (SCIAF) is inspired by the Gospel, and guided by Catholic Social Teaching. We reach out with love to our global neighbours in need, regardless of gender, class, race or religion. We believe in giving people in need a hand-up, not a hand-out. We help people provide for themselves and their families, creating hope for the future.

Website: www.sciaf.org.uk



Trócaire was established by the Catholic Church in 1973 as a way for Irish people to donate to development and emergency relief overseas. Our dual mandate is to support the most vulnerable people in the developing world, while also raising awareness of injustice and global poverty in Ireland. Trócaire's work in Uganda supports those affected by conflict, the development of sustainable livelihoods and gaining access to land, improving the rights of women and holding the government more accountable to its citizens.

Website: www.trocaire.org



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People for development

AVSI remained a direct supporter of communities and partner organizations throughout the two-decade civil conflict in the northern regions of Uganda, demonstrating commitment and capacity to adapt to volatile circumstances.

Today, through public and private partnerships, AVSI engages with private sector players, government and communities to build capacity of children, youths and households across Uganda through a comprehensive family-centered approach that builds resilience and contributes to sustainable development, responding to the real needs of people.

Website: <https://www.avsi.org/en/country/uganda>

Other Partners

- Participatory Ecological Land Use Management (PELUM)
- Uganda Farmers Common Voice Platform



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