



ECI-Africa

Emergé Centre for Innovations-Africa

helping institutions work...

ORGANIZATION PROFILE 2022



01 Who We Are

Building a Stronger Institutional Landscape for Agriculture and Rural Development in Africa

Emerge Centre for Innovations-Africa is a registered not-for-profit limited company, operating in Kenya since 2010. Since its founding, we have been keen to live up to our tagline – helping institutions work. We are passionate about achieving transformation in agriculture in Africa, and we believe that building the capacity of African institutions to embrace learning, innovation and change is key to this transformation. We are driven by outcomes and are keenly committed to making change happen in African institutions – from community to continental level. Over time, through working with more than 100 institutions, we have learned that there is no shortage of good innovation and technology in Africa and that effective change in African agriculture and rural development is driven largely by institutions that work well in terms of design and execution. This guides our work.

Our Vision

A world in which institutions, teams and partnerships are empowered through cutting edge organizational development practice to appropriately define and deliver on their mandates.



Our Mission

To promote access to organizational development tools to African agriculture and rural development organizations to embolden them to initiate fit-for-purpose change management initiatives.



Our Team

Our team comprises of experts in organizational development; agriculture; rural development; program design and management; and monitoring and evaluation.

02 **Our Heritage**

We consider ourselves an Africa-based think tank that clearly understands the African context, designs and provides quality and customized institutional innovations to African agriculture and rural development challenges.

At ECI-Africa, we draw on a rich heritage of a deep knowledge about Africa, and an attitude of looking out for and mentoring talent “sparks” that show promise. We have an enduring respect from our clients and the broader development community for our use of facilitative techniques as a tool for strategy, leadership and learning. We continuously strive for excellence in all our engagements, and this defines what ECI-Africa is today.



03 What We Do

Strategy Development and Operationalization



Our strategy development and implementation portfolio cover:

- (i) Developing new strategies
- (ii) Conducting strategy refresh
- (iii) Developing result frameworks and work plans

- (iv) Supporting implementation at the early stages, including building the technical capacity of staff/teams as may be needed to deliver.

Our strategy development approach seeks to oversee a process of high consultation and collaboration, exploiting synergies while minimizing duplication. We are keen on creating a strategic plan that is fully owned, and which embodies the current trends in agriculture and related fields. Our experience has taught us that ownership of a strategy is critical to its successful implementation; and ownership does not happen if the strategy development is delegated to a consultant – as often happens. In order to create full ownership, we ensure that the strategic plan is co-created by a task team consisting of principal stakeholders of the institution concerned, supported by the external facilitating consultant team. Our process also consists of a combination of data/information analysis (internal & external) and the collation and synthesis of expert stakeholder opinions and validation to inform the strategy document.

Leadership Training, Individual and Team Mentorship Programs and Executive Coaching

Our Leadership and Team Development support focuses on: Leadership and Personal Mastery skills training, Group Facilitation Skills Training and Participatory Methods. Causing change requires more than just technical skills: it requires skills to lead, manage and influence others. These skills have a critical place in modern science due to the emerging realization that leaders are not exclusively born but can also be trained, mentored and nurtured and ECI-Africa offers this training, mentorship and coaching. Our team development process is aimed at creating a facilitative, supportive and enjoyable work environment to help the team achieve individual goals as well as the bigger institutional goal. This may include conflict resolution, team building or capacity building. Through a diagnostic process, we are able to gain deeper insight and determine the team's issues and dynamic, design

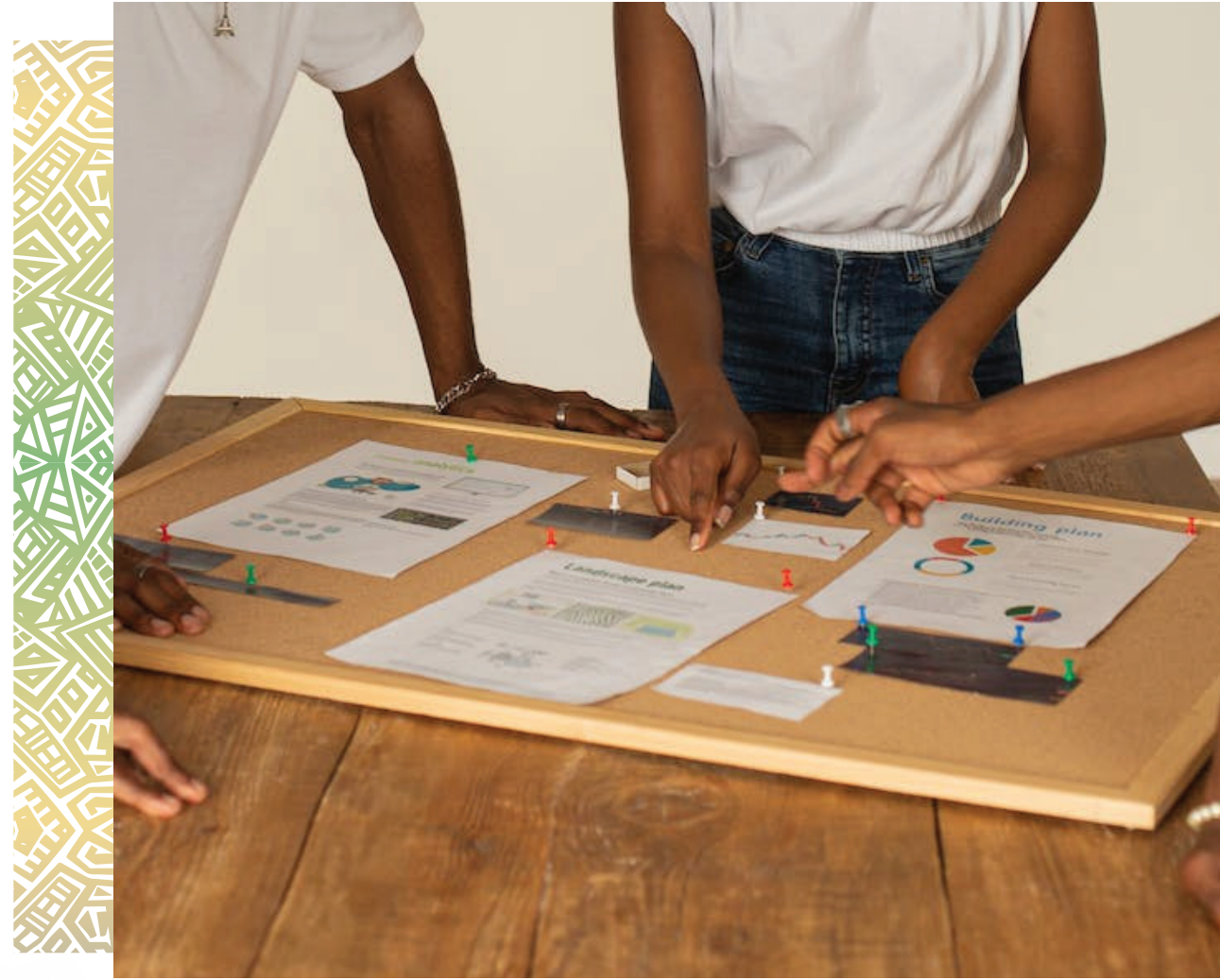


a coaching session or retreat focusing on improving the enhancing the leadership skills, improving the team's cohesion and facilitating critical discussions on issues that need to be addressed to enable an individual to master themselves to enable the team to work as one.

Project/ Program Development and Implementation

We aim to develop and implement projects which are demand driven and have impact. The projects we have developed and implemented range from research projects, community projects, leadership and designing learning events as well as mentorship of struggling projects. The proposal development stage is a collaborative process, which is informed by studies or needs of stakeholders. Working closely with our partners, we determined the need, appropriateness, willingness and motivation for stakeholders to support and own the process.

Some of the principles which guide our project implementation is creating value for money, impact, adaptability, participatory problem solving, learning, involvement and collaboration with key stakeholders to ensure ownership and sustainability.



Institutional Assessment

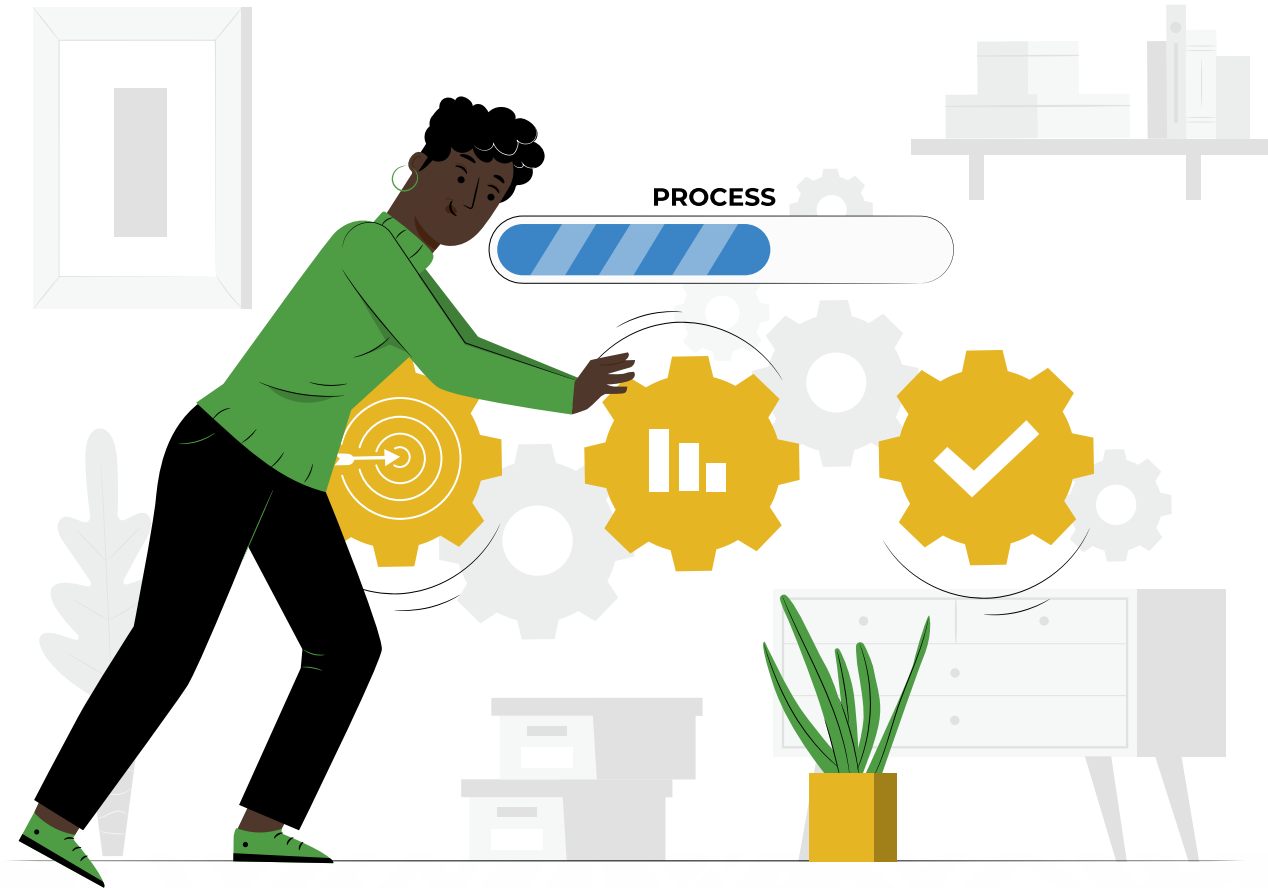


Institutional analysis goes beyond project or program monitoring and evaluation, to looking at the organization as a whole. It includes analysing the motivation behind the establishment of the organizations; its purpose, objectives and mode of operation; its performances and results (outputs, outcomes and impacts); their strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities for continuous improvement and innovation; their stakeholders and their capacity to influence agriculture policy, practices, investment and innovation systems, the M&E frameworks, and how they incentivize change. The analysis also captures what should be strengthened in the context of the organization (given its strengths and challenges) and the collective institutional architecture required to support institutional alignment/ arrangement and provide for more effective and efficient operations, future investment portfolio, programmatic design, governance structure, partnership models and strategic direction.

04 Tools and Approaches:

Process Facilitation

Our facilitation process during the various multi-stakeholder engagements and convenings, is a co-creation processes between the partners and stakeholders. Each multi-stakeholder process is developed through close collaboration with our partners to determine the meeting objective and to inform the design of the program. Each convening is facilitated through a participatory and exploratory approach, creating an open environment to enable stakeholder to be creative, honestly engage with one another, contribute, own the process and trust each other. The approach used by ECI-Africa ensures that each stakeholder's expectation is taken into account and the members hold each other accountable for implementation of the agreed interventions and achievement of the desired transformation. Some of the techniques deployed include use of team break outs, plenary sessions, panels and open floor discussion formats, case studies and key note speakers/ experts.



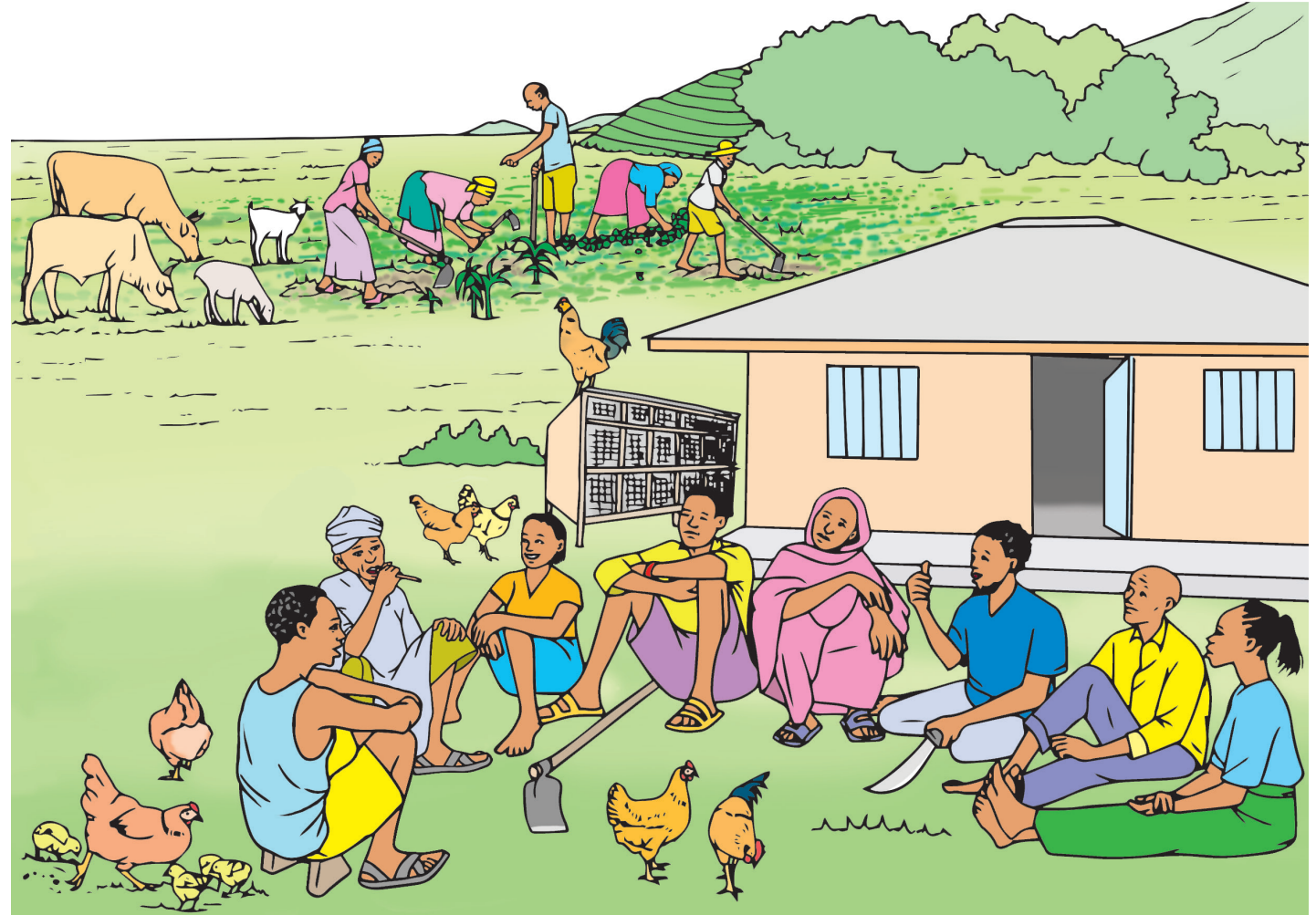
Participatory Learning and Problem Solving



Participatory learning and problem solving is part and parcel of most of our work. We aim to create solutions and recommendations which are co-created and owned by the stakeholders. Stakeholder involvement creates an environment which is open thereby creating trust and an enabling environment for honest conversation, learning and co-creating owned solutions endorsed by all the key stakeholders. Participatory learning and problem solving is instrumental in gathering support and ensuring success for an initiative during implementation period and enhancing adaptability and sustainability of the initiative.

Innovation Platforms

The innovation platform is a unique, participatory, inclusive, facilitated approach geared towards developing actors' consensus and action on common or systemic challenges and opportunities. The core assumption in innovation systems thinking as we have applied across a number of projects, is that problems are essentially the result of institutional failures and/or inefficiencies. A functioning innovation platform works because it is a safe space for stakeholders to work together to solve industry problems. It is safe because it is facilitated and designed to build trust, honesty, and openness, encouraging and supporting the emergence of often deep-seated, complex, underlying issues and solutions to be co-created by the platform membership.



Value Chain (VC) Analysis



Value chain analysis is one of our key approach in identifying the key bottlenecks in most projects, sectors or institutions to enable us to recommend holistic and contextualized solutions to strengthen systems. Through VC analysis, we deeply engage with and analyze the production systems, support services, stakeholders and market challenges that constrain the particular sector and curtailing growth of an otherwise promising sector with significant potential for income generation. The ultimate goal is to identify what kind of “value” needs to be added to products or a system to increase consumer acceptability and demand and help create an enabling environment for sustainable businesses.

Knowledge Management (KM)

As part of our project implementation as well as monitoring and evaluation, we deploy KM to ensure the knowledge is effectively used to improve the way of doing business and achieving impact. We focus on designing more practical ways of doing knowledge management, that is, focusing more at the operational level rather than theoretical and conceptual levels. This involves identification of knowledge needs of the intended users, sourcing and acquisition, analysis, processing and storage and retrieval and sharing, and knowledge application. We apply tools such as emergent learning, collaborative, learning and adaptive (CLA) management approaches to design programs or learning events. Employing our partnership development methods, we link up different players with each other to ensure knowledge and communication flows in all the required directions and the information is recognized by key players.





Partnership Development

Through leveraging our wide network, facilitating conversation across Africa and years of experience, ECI-Africa has been able to foster the development of various partnerships, formal and leveraging agreements. These partnership agreements enable stakeholders to create relationships, learning opportunities and enhancing coordination in the target sector.



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