



Why the Hub is Needed

Food systems in West Africa and the Sahel face critical challenges. Soil health is essential for sustainable agriculture and food security. The region suffers from a cycle of soil health decline, land degradation, poor yields, and loss of ecosystem services, leading to poverty and resource depletion. Inefficient fertilizer use further undermines food security and farmer livelihoods, while climate change exacerbates these problems.

The African Union Fertilizer and Soil Health Action Plan (2023–2033) and the Nairobi Declaration call for bold, coordinated regional action. The Fertilizer and Soil Health Hub for West Africa and the Sahel was established to provide strategic guidance, knowledge dissemination, and capacity development, aligned with the regional action plan and priorities from the Africa Fertilizer and Soil Health Summit 2024..

Overview

About the Regional Hub for Fertilizer and Soil Health for West Africa and the Sahel

Launched in 2024, the Hub addresses challenges of soil health and sustainable fertilizer use. It unites stakeholders such as the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), International Fertilizer Development Center (IFDC), OCP Africa, African Plant Nutrition Institute (APNI), University Mohammed VI Polytechnic (UM6P), and the World Bank through the Accelerating Impacts of CGIAR Climate Research for Africa (AICCRA) project.

The Hub aligns with the Roadmap for Fertilizer and Soil Health. It is governed by a consortium of technical partners and coordinated by IITA, with ECOWAS as chair of the Hub Advisory Committee of key stakeholders.

Committee leadership. Its primary role is to provide technical assistance to the development and implementation of ongoing and upcoming investments in fertilizer and soil health in West Africa and the Sahel, including Mauritania and Chad.

The Hub is an ECOWAS sub-program, governed by a Consortium of technical partners, including IITA, FDC, APNI, OCP-Africa, and UM6P, and coordinated by IITA, under auspices of ECOWAS chairs an Advisory Committee. The main role of the Hub is to provide technical assistance to the development and implementation of investments in fertilizer and soilhealth in the ECOWAS countries with inclusion on Mauretania and Chad.

What the Hub Does

Countries will call on the Hub for technical assistance in developing and implementing ongoing and upcoming fertilizer and soil health-related investments. The Hub serves as a centre of excellence and coordination, delivering knowledge, innovation, and capacity building to transform fertilizer use and soil health management. Its role includes:

- Providing technical assistance for national and regional fertilizer and soil health investments through a specialized unit equipped with expertise, tools, and assets.
- Coordinating knowledge sharing, innovations, and data across countries.
- Strengthening capacity at all levels from policy to practice.
- Supporting implementation of the AU Action Plan and regional priorities from the Africa Fertilizer and Soil Health Summit 2024.

Our Vision and Mission

- **Vision:** Healthy, productive soils across West Africa and the Sahel that support profitable, climate-resilient smallholder agriculture and food systems, contributing to sustainable transformation, food security, poverty reduction, and environmental sustainability.



FACT SHEET

Regional Hub for Fertilizer and Soil Health for West Africa and the Sahel

- **Mission:** Facilitate agronomic gains focused on yield, profitability, resource-use efficiency, climate adaptation, and soil health through delivery and monitoring fertilizer and soil health management practices and capacity development, underpinned by institutionalization. Achieved through regional coordination, robust knowledge systems, and institutionalized best practices.

Key Focus Areas

The Hub addresses strategic challenges and opportunities across four clusters:

Data & Tools

- Digital soil health and fertility maps
- Plant and soil analytical laboratory services
- Soil health and fertility dashboard
- Advice on carbon sequestration potential

Knowledge & Practices

- Repository of knowledge products
- Climate change adaptation and mitigation

Agronomy

- Site-specific nutrient recommendation models
- Unified databases and digital tools to collect and manage FAIR and standardized data
- Monitoring of the delivery of agronomic gains
- Prioritization of scientific studies
- Deployment of bio-fertilizer and specialty fertilizers
- Bundling of related services

Capacity Development

- Farmer-led experimentation
- Strengthening capacities of national institutions
- Certification scheme for extension staff

Policy Support

- Policy development and support for decision-making
- Integration of gender and youth considerations

Advocacy & Awareness Creation

- Advocacy for soil health and fertility

Resource Mobilization

- Mobilizing financial resources
- Facilitating access to sustainability schemes

Activities

The Hub implements priority functions, including technical assistance for ongoing and upcoming fertilizer and soil health investments. It facilitates coordinated implementation of the AU Action Plan in West Africa and the Sahel. **The Hub will** establish a fully equipped unit (expertise, tools, and assets) to enable the delivery of technical assistance to fertilizer and soil health-related investments in countries of West Africa and the Sahel.

Governance & Coordination

- Operates under a consortium model with defined roles and responsibilities.
- Sub-program of ECOWAS, which chairs the Hub Advisory Committee of key stakeholders.
- Coordination led by IITA.
- Governed by a Consortium Steering Committee.
- Focused on 20 priority functions over five years, emphasizing eight critical soil health and fertility functions in the first two years.

Founding Partners and Roles

- **ECOWAS:** Chairs the Hub Advisory Committee of key stakeholders.
- **IITA:** Hub coordinator and technical lead; heads the Coordination Team.
- **IFDC:** Soil health and fertilizer systems expertise.
- **OCP Africa:** Private sector innovation and partnerships.
- **APNI:** Nutrient management expertise.
- **UM6P:** Science, research, innovation.
- **World Bank (AICCRA-CGIAR):** Climate-smart agriculture and regional scaling.

Headquarters:

The main office is at the **IITA campus in Ibadan, Nigeria**.

Contacts

For more information, please contact:

Lionel Axel Kadja, Regional Hub Director at L.Kadja@cgiar.org

Barbra Muzata, Communications Lead at b.muzata@cgiar.org

Learn More: Visit our website for more information: soilhealthwa.iita.org