

THE FOUNDING CONSORTIUM

Complementary expertise, one regional mission

The Hub brings together institutions whose complementary capabilities support the full soil health and fertilizer value chain.

IITA

HOST INSTITUTION AND OPERATIONAL LEAD

Provides the institutional platform, operational coordination and fiduciary support, drawing on its tropical agriculture research expertise, facilities in Ibadan and pan-African networks.

Mohammed VI Polytechnic University (UM6P)

RESEARCH, INNOVATION AND EDUCATION

Supports fertilizer science, research innovation and transdisciplinary graduate curricula for national agricultural research systems.

OCP Africa

STRATEGIC FUNDER AND TECHNICAL PARTNER

Contributes expertise in customised fertilizer formulations, soil mapping and delivery at scale. Supports Functions 1, 7, 12 and 13.

International Fertilizer Development Center (IFDC)

VALUE-CHAIN DEVELOPMENT

Supports integrated service delivery, policy advocacy, private-sector engagement and the regulatory environment needed for effective fertilizer markets.

African Plant Nutrition Institute (APNI)

NUTRIENT STEWARDSHIP AND FARMER ENGAGEMENT

Advances 4R Nutrient Stewardship and farmer-led experimentation, including certification approaches for last-mile extension personnel.

ISRIC: World Soil Information

SOIL DATA AND DIGITAL MAPPING

Contributes expertise in regional digital soil mapping, soil information management and FAIR data systems as an associate partner.

Together, these institutions provide the technical expertise, implementation networks and institutional capacity needed to support country-led soil health programmes at regional scale.

INVESTMENT PROPOSITION

Building systems that last

The Hub's initial operations have been anchored by **World Bank** investment through the Accelerating Impacts of CGIAR Climate Research for Africa (AICCRA) project and by **OCP Africa** through a multi-year service agreement. These commitments helped establish the Hub's operational capacity within 12 months of the Nairobi Summit.

The next phase requires additional investment to expand country implementation, strengthen national systems and accelerate the adoption of improved soil health practices.

The Hub's 2033 ambitions include reaching **3 million farmers, covering 1.5 million hectares and supporting 1.5 million climate-adapted smallholders**. These targets require sustained collaboration among governments, development partners, research institutions and private-sector investors. Three investment windows provide opportunities for partners to contribute.

WINDOW 1

Country programme co-investment

Co-finance national implementation with governments and development partners, aligning Hub functions with existing programmes, including World Bank FSRPs, IFAD-supported initiatives and bilateral investments.

WINDOW 2

Targeted functional support

Invest in specific functions under the Lomé Roadmap, including soil mapping, laboratory capacity, CAAP certification, pastoral systems and access to carbon markets.

WINDOW 3

Sustainability financing

Develop longer-term financing models linked to carbon credits, climate mitigation and lower-emission production pathways, with the aim of reducing dependence on time-limited project funding.

WHY INVEST IN THE HUB?

Build on existing investments

Align regional expertise and national programmes to reduce duplication, identify synergies and improve the value of current and future investments.

Improve the value of agricultural data

Promote standardised methods and FAIR data systems that make soil information more accessible, comparable and useful for research, policy and farmer recommendations.

Strengthen permanent national capacity

Support soil laboratories, data systems, trained advisors and institutional capabilities that can continue delivering value beyond individual projects.

Mobilise expertise at regional scale

Pool technical capabilities and resources where national systems lack the capacity to sustain specialised soil research, data management and innovation services independently.

Accelerate cross-border learning

Share evidence and practical solutions among countries with comparable soils, agroecologies and farming systems, enabling countries to learn from one another.

Connect science with adoption

Link research, extension, input suppliers and farmers so that evidence translates into locally appropriate practices and commercially viable delivery models.

The Hub's workshop-and-service model is designed to strengthen the infrastructure, expertise and institutional relationships needed for sustained delivery, rather than create isolated, time-limited project outputs.

THE NEXT STEP: SCALE WHAT WORKS

The regional policy framework is in place. The Hub has established a consortium, initiated country engagement and begun strengthening the soil data, research and institutional systems required for implementation.

The priority now is to expand country-led delivery, mobilise complementary investments and connect technical capacity with the farmers, extension services and markets that drive adoption.

The opportunity for partners is clear: invest in the regional systems that enable countries to turn soil health commitments into measurable improvements in agricultural productivity, farmer incomes and climate resilience.

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Turning political commitment into farmer-level results across **17 countries**



3 million

farmers to be reached
by 2033

1.5M ha

to be covered by 2033

1.5 million

climate-adapted smallholders
supported by 2033

17

countries in West Africa
and the Sahel

20

functions organised under
seven themes

THE CHALLENGE

Turning commitments into results

PROGRESS TO DATE

Evidence and delivery systems

Smallholder farmers across West Africa and the Sahel face a soil health crisis that threatens agricultural productivity, household incomes and regional food security. Average fertilizer use remains around **20 kg/ha**, compared with a global average of **146 kg/ha**, while an estimated **two-thirds of agricultural land is degraded**.

The 2006 Abuja Declaration set a target of 50 kg/ha in fertilizer use by 2015. Most countries in the region remain well below that ambition, highlighting the need to move beyond commitments towards coordinated implementation, stronger national systems and practical solutions that reach farmers.

The opportunity is significant. Combining appropriate fertilizer use with integrated soil health management can improve yields, raise farm incomes and strengthen resilience to climate shocks. The Hub provides a regional mechanism to translate this opportunity into country-led action, connecting scientific evidence, national priorities, public investment and private-sector delivery.

OUR AMBITION

Healthy soils, sustainable fertilizer use and climate-resilient farming practices adopted at scale, supported by stronger institutions and functioning agricultural markets.

The Hub is moving from regional commitments to practical implementation through field research, soil information systems and country engagement.

Digital Soil Mapping

The Hub is turning existing soil data into actionable intelligence for better decisions on fertilizer use and soil management. Phase 1 delivered improved digital soil maps covering 11.6 million hectares, drawing on over 38,000 historical soil records. Phase 2 is refining those maps across 3.9 million hectares in targeted areas of Nigeria and Mali, using over 1,500 new soil samples to improve the accuracy and local relevance of soil information for agricultural decision-making.

Regional Data Infrastructure and National Soil Information Systems

The Hub is partnering with governments and national stakeholders in Nigeria, Ghana, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Togo to develop national soil information systems (NSIS) for evidence-based agricultural decisions. A regional data infrastructure is also nearing completion to connect these systems, improve data sharing and support smarter fertilizer recommendations, with the first release targeted for late 2026 or early 2027

Site and Crop Specific Fertilizer Recommendations

Using 500 field trials and over 25,000 historical trial records, the Hub has developed location-specific fertilizer recommendations covering 5.1 million hectares of maize in Nigeria and Ghana and 5.2 million hectares of rice in Nigeria, Ghana and Liberia. These recommendations are now being validated in farmers’ fields and integrated into digital advisory tools such as AKILIMO 2.0 to support wider dissemination and scaling.

The Hub builds on nearly two decades of continental and regional commitments to improve fertilizer access, soil health and agricultural productivity.

2006	2018	May 2023	Sept 2023	May 2024	June 2024
Abuja Declaration African Heads of State and Government set a target of 50 kg/ha in fertilizer use by 2015.	Accra Forum Regional dialogue broadened the agenda beyond fertilizer use alone towards a more integrated focus on soil health.	Lomé Declaration An ECOWAS and World Bank roundtable, with IFDC involvement, advanced a 12-priority-action roadmap for fertilizer access and soil health improvement.	Roadmap formalisation The roadmap was formally inscribed by ECOWAS, the World Bank and IFDC.	Nairobi Summit The consortium agreement was signed and the Hub was officially launched.	Hub inauguration The Hub’s headquarters opened at IITA in Ibadan, with its dry chemistry laboratory operational.

Launched in 2024 and hosted by the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) in Ibadan, Nigeria, the Hub supports implementation of the regional fertilizer and soil health agenda across 17 countries in West Africa and the Sahel.



Through 20 functions organised under seven themes, the Hub connects regional coordination with national priorities, technical expertise and practical delivery. Core areas of work include:

Soil mapping and data systems

Develop digital soil maps, strengthen laboratory capacity and establish Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable (FAIR) soil datasets to support evidence-based decisions.

Agronomic recommendations

Translate soil and crop data into locally appropriate fertilizer recommendations using the 4R principles of nutrient stewardship (right source, right rate, right time and right place), alongside Integrated Soil Fertility Management (ISFM).

Capacity development

Strengthen national research and extension systems through certified advisory services, Nutrient Omission Trials and graduate curricula tailored to national needs.

Policy and institutional support

Support fertilizer quality control, regulatory frameworks, smarter subsidy design, and the integration of gender and youth priorities into soil health and fertilizer policies.

Resource mobilisation and market development

Help countries and partners explore carbon finance, climate investment and blended public-private financing to support adoption and long-term sustainability.

The Hub works across four interconnected levels to ensure that regional commitments translate into locally relevant solutions.

1

Regional coordination
Align priorities, share knowledge and coordinate investments to reduce duplication and strengthen cooperation across countries.

2

National ownership
Work through government-led priorities, national implementation plans and National Technical Teams to build on existing institutions and programmes.

3

Sub-national delivery
Connect research and extension services with farmers through trained advisors, field trials, locally adapted recommendations and practical demonstrations.

4

Market development
Engage fertilizer suppliers, service providers, investors and other private-sector actors to improve access to appropriate inputs and make sustainable soil management commercially viable.

Healthy soils, appropriate fertilizer use and climate-resilient practices can help reverse land degradation, improve farm productivity and strengthen livelihoods across West Africa and the Sahel. Achieving these outcomes at scale requires coordinated investment, strong national institutions and sustained engagement with farmers and markets.

COUNTRY ENGAGEMENT

A phased approach across 17 countries

The Hub uses a phased approach to engagement, aligning technical support with country priorities, implementation capacity and available resources. It provides a pathway for expanding coverage while building on existing investments and strengthening country ownership.

WAVE	COUNTRIES	ENGAGEMENT FOCUS
Wave 1 7 countries	Ghana, Nigeria, Senegal, Mali, Togo, Liberia and Sierra Leone	Active engagement, including soil information system strategies, field trials and national implementation priorities.
Wave 2 4 countries	Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d’Ivoire and Niger	Active projects and implementation partnerships, including the World Bank-supported Food Systems Resilience Programmes (FSRPs) and IFDC’s SoilValues initiative.
Wave 3 6 countries	Cameroon, Chad, The Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau and Mauritania	Phased engagement as national demand, technical capacity and resources allow.

GOVERNANCE

Regional alignment, national leadership

The Hub’s governance model brings together regional institutions, national governments, technical partners and implementing organisations.

Hub Advisory Committee Chaired by ECOWAS, with representation from member states, regional organisations, investors and farmers’ organisations. It provides strategic guidance and promotes regional alignment.	Consortium Steering Committee The decision-making body for the founding consortium, providing oversight of work planning, implementation priorities and financial accountability.	Hub Secretariat Hosted by IITA in Ibadan, the Secretariat coordinates day-to-day operations and engagement across the consortium. The Hub Director is Bastiaan Huesken.	National Technical Teams Support in-country planning and implementation under National Focal Points working with their respective ministries.
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This structure connects regional priorities with national decision-making while maintaining a shared framework for technical delivery, accountability and resource mobilisation.