

18th RUFORUM ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2022

Theme: Strengthening Africa's Agri-food Systems in the Post COVID-19 Era – Opportunities and Challenges

STRENGTHENING AGRI-FOOD SYSTEMS RESEARCH CAPACITY IN AFRICA: OVERCOMING BOTTLENECKS TO CURRENT AND FUTURE CHALLENGES

Date: 12th October 2022

Time: 15:00 – 19:00 EAT

Venue: Virtual

Registration Link: <https://bit.ly/3OQT4CK>

Concept Note

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Background

Scientific research, Technology and Innovation (STI) play a key role in spurring the transformation of the agriculture sector, for food and nutrition security, resilience and livelihoods of millions of family farmers. The STI contribution to create jobs and economic opportunities for African citizens cannot be over emphasized. However, the capacity to harness the potential of Agri-food STI is yet to be realized on the African continent. Responsible for the limited realization of STI are several challenges including but not limited to weak institutional capacity; limited human capacity and weak uptake pathways.

The few Afri-food STI initiatives have remained isolated and disregarding institutional, organizational and enabling dimensions. Though the creation of national, regional and continental level agriculture, food and environment research organizations has been seen as a step towards enhancing agricultural development, their institutional capacity to innovate coupled with limited political support are still the major barriers to the realization of their mandates (Badiane and Collins, 2016; Roseboom and Flaherty, 2016). This was confirmed during the UN Food System Summit 2021 Consultations organized by various institutions including the Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM). The Consultations recommended a review of capacity gaps and identification of mechanisms to develop/strengthen the capacities be conducted. Further it was recommended that effective synergies and integration of these organisations and leveraging economies of scope and scale be considered for achieving sustainable impact and innovating in a near future.

CO-ORGANISERS:



It is against this background that this convening is being organised in order to inform Research and Development Actors on the needs in terms of training, research, innovation and entrepreneurship for strengthening Agri-food Systems in the continent.

The overall objective of the dialogue is to establish an operational partnership on capacity development in Agri-food Systems Science, Research and Innovation at different scales on the continent.

Specifically, the dialogue aims to achieve the following objectives;

1. Discuss the current state of agri-food Systems Science, Technology and Innovation capacity in the African continent: Policies, institutions, organisations and individual capacities to deploy state of the art agri-food STI will be discussed;
2. Review existing partnerships, collaboration and coordination mechanisms for strengthening agri-food Systems STI in Africa and propose actions for positive impact on the agri-food Systems Sector;
3. Discuss the agri-food Systems STI financing mechanisms and provide an African perspective for sustainable financing of the Sector;
4. Propose a Common Framework and a road map to guide Capacity Development interventions for strengthening Agri- food Systems STI in the continent.

CO-ORGANISERS:



Draft Programme

Moderator: Dr. Antonio Querido, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Country Representative to Uganda

Time	Activity
Session 1: Opening and Setting the Scene	
15:00 – 15:10	Opening Remarks by Prof. Adipala Ekwamu , Executive Secretary, RUFORUM
15:10 – 15:25	Official opening by Dr. Godfrey Bahigwa , Director of the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy, and Sustainable Development, African Union Commission
15:25 – 15:45	Policy perspective: Hon. Lobin C. Lowe , Minister of Agriculture, Malawi (TBC)
15:45 – 16:05	Policy perspective: Hon. Monica Musenero , Minister of Science, Technology and Innovation, Uganda: Turning Research Into Use (TBC)
16:05 – 16:25	Discussion
Session 2: Leveraging Research Capacity in Africa	
16:25 – 16:40	Perspective from the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA), Dr. Yemi Akinbamijo , Executive Director
16:40 – 16:55	Perspective from the Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa (ASARECA), Dr. Enock Warinda , Executive Director
16:55 – 17:10	Perspective from Centre for Coordinating Agricultural Research for Development in Southern Africa (CCARDESA), Dr. Cliff Sibusiso Dlamini , Executive Director and Head of Mission
17:10 – 17:25	Perspective from the West and Central Africa Council for Agricultural Research and Development (CORAF), Dr. Emmanuel Njukwe , Director of Research and Innovation
17:25 – 17:50	Discussion
Session 3: Fostering/Facilitating Research for Impact in Africa	
Moderator: Prof. Brice Sinsin, University of Abomey Calavi, Benin	
17:50 – 18:05	Perspective from the African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (AFAAS), Dr. Silim M. Nahdy , Executive Director (TBC)
18:05 – 18:20	Perspective from RUFORUM: the case of Community Action Research Programme (CARPs): Dr. Anthony Egeru , Program Manager-Training and Community Development, RUFORUM
18:20 – 18:40	Discussion
18:40 – 18:50	Key Messages and Recommendations: Dr. Nadia F. Fogny , University of Abomey Calavi, Benin
18:50 – 19:00	Closing Remarks by the Session Moderator: Prof. Brice Sinsin , University of Abomey Calavi, Benin

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