

Concept Note and Agenda

ESA Community of Practice – Nutrition-sensitive food system

Virtual Event – 5th December 2024 at 14.30-16.00 (Nairobi Time)

Nutrition-sensitive food value chain in the Africa region – investing in MSMEs for delivering healthy diets

Background

Some countries in Africa have experienced economic growth in the past often at the expense of a declining natural resource base and remain largely dependent on exports of only few food and non-value added agricultural commodities. Furthermore, countries are increasingly affected by climate change. Increasing land fragmentation, with a corresponding decrease of farm size, accompanied by declining soil fertility and erratic weather phenomena have led to recurrent failures in harvests and consequent food shortages. It remains therefore to be seen how economic activities can be guided towards more resource-efficient, climate-resilient, socially stabilizing and pro-poor oriented, overall sustainable development in the era of climate change. Other gaps countries in the region are facing include continued rapid population growth, demographic changes with an increased urban population, and a resulting inequitable benefit sharing. This combined with dietary transition putting food systems under pressure to provide year-round available, affordable and accessible nutritious and safe foods for all. This is contributing to alarming levels of overweight and obesity, resulting in increase in diet-related non-communicable diseases, and places great pressure on the environment.

Consumer purchasing, cooking, preparation and eating practices produce the environment footprint and consumer unsustainable consumption habits both drive and respond to agri-food system and to climate change. A substantial part of consumers lacks knowledge of sustainable consumption behavior, choosing products that are environmentally sustainable, eco-friendly, safe and nutritious, including proper food preparation and waste management.

To accelerate sustainable and inclusive growth in the region, and with the aim of placing inclusive agri-food system at the centre of economic growth strategies, there is an urgent need to foster a development approach that includes agribusinesses involving small and medium-sized food enterprises (SMEs) that are promoting sustainable and environmentally friendly safe and nutritious food products for consumers.

To attract responsible domestic and international private sector investment, SMEs need to demonstrate compelling business models capable of contributing to poverty reduction, food and nutrition security, and at the same time using environmentally-friendly innovative technologies and practices for development

and diversification of sustainable food products that can contribute to healthy and sustainable diets. In order to reach the Sustainable Development Goals, countries must also mitigate climate change and address unsustainable consumption and production patterns.

Objective

The virtual event aims at advocating and raising awareness of the issues towards creation of sustainable and inclusive food value chains to meet food and nutritional demand for consumers.

The specific objectives of the event are:

- bring innovations and different technologies, exchange of share good practices and case studies in promoting sustainable food products development by SMEs that are environmentally friendly, ecologically sustainable, safe and nutritious.
- discuss the issues and challenges for ensuring sustainable consumption, including reducing food loss and waste
- identify policy and investment options for promoting sustainable food products development by SMEs and promotion of sustainable consumption.

Expected Output

- Key issues and recommendations defined
- Technical brief developed
- Short summary of discussions through recording of the event shared

Preliminary Agenda

Welcome Remarks – *delivered by Ms Sara Mbago, Regional Director, IFAD East and Southern Africa Regional Office ESA (5 minutes)*

Fire Chat – *facilitated by Ms Nomindelger Bayasgalanbat, Senior Technical Specialist (Social Inclusion – Nutrition), IFAD, ECG (30 minutes)*

- Why invest in value chains? - Sustainable value chains introducing eco-friendly, safe and nutritious food products that support local and traditional safe and nutritious foods cultivated by small-holder farmers (e.g. adding value to traditional foods; processing of safe, better quality and nutritious food products; packing using environmentally friendly degradable packaging system, food labeling) – **Ms Betty Kibaara, Director, The Rockefeller Foundation, Africa Region Office (confirmed)**
- What technologies and innovations can be offered? - Working with MSMEs to deliver nutritious diets: food fortification as means to combat micronutrient deficiencies in Africa: – **Mr. Penjani Mkambula, Deputy Director, Programme Services, Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) (confirmed)**
- Investing in nutrition-sensitive value chain in Africa - **Dr. Kennedy Bomfeh, Senior Director, The Ajinomoto Foundation**

Panel with representatives of MSMEs – Moderated by Ms Putso Nyathi, Senior Value Chain Specialist, IFAD, PMI (40 minutes)

- Creating safe and nutritious local food products at affordable price, – **Ms. Marie Claire Nyirankundizanye, Farm Fresh Foods Ltd (Rwanda)** - Precooked beans biofortified
- Increasing utilization of local foods for healthy diets: – **Ms. Rachel Gikonyo, Eden Harvest Limited, Vegetables value chain, Kenya**
- Diversifying products to support nutritious diets: Insects as Future Food- **Dr. Geoffrey Ssepuuya, INSFOODS Limited, Uganda**
- Creating safe and nutritious local food products at affordable price - **Mr. David Kamau, Fortified Whole Grain Alliance, Eastern Africa focus on Burundi**

Closing Remarks – delivered by Sara Kaoukou, ESA Regional Lead Portfolio Advisor, IFAD

The meeting will be facilitated by *Ms. Dorothy Murugu, Nutrition Consultant, IFAD and Ms. Mulenga Kabwe, Nutrition Consultant, IFAD*

Participants

Policy makers, programme planners, civil society representing SMEs, consumers' associations, producers' groups, researchers, UN Agencies, financial institutions.

Date

The virtual event is planned to take place on 5 December 2024 at 14.30-16.00 (Nairobi Time).



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