



The Fifth African Higher Education Week and RUFORUM Biennial Conference 2016

Postharvest Management: Innovation for sustainable systems within value chains that improve smallholder incomes

Concept Note

Background

The Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network’s ([FANRPAN](#)) is currently implementing its 2016-2023 strategic plan. The plan focusses on two thematic thrusts, namely, Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) and Nutrition-Sensitive Agriculture (NSA). The two thematic thrusts are intended to ensure (i) A transformed African agriculture and food systems through the development and implementation of evidence-based Policy (ii) Adequate, safe and nutritious food for Africa, and (iii) Climate change resilient and resource sustainable food systems in Africa. Climate change is emphasized as one of the greatest global challenges as we strive to ensure sustainable food security for a growing population. It affects agricultural food production and income generation for smallholder farmers in complex ways: current cultivars may not continue to be suitable for production as the climate changes occur; land suitability to current agricultural practices may need to be reviewed; conditions of post-harvest food safety may change as changing climatic conditions may increase the vector pressure; among others. The pressure that climate change is putting on agriculture food production inherently affects smallholder farmer incomes as they struggle to produce and sell their commodities.

Food and nutrition security also poses a challenge for Africa. Post-harvest food losses and aflatoxin contamination are some of the largest contributing factors to food insecurity and under-nutrition in Sub-Saharan Africa. These factors significantly lower the quality and volume of food available for consumption and sale, thus aggravating hunger, malnutrition, and reducing smallholder household income. In Sub-Saharan Africa only,

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annual food losses exceed 30 per cent of total crop production translating to more than USD\$4 billion per annum.

In recognition of these challenges for CSA and NSA and as part of contributing to innovative approaches for sustainable systems within value chains that improve smallholder incomes, FANRPAN is implementing projects that are addressing issues around innovative [PHM technologies, gender and social equity in PHM, cost benefit analysis of PHM technologies and stemming aflatoxin pre- and post-harvest waste](#). Research from the projects has shown that rural agriculture and innovative techniques for post-harvest management is of critical importance for sustained smallholder income that enhances food security. However, climatic risks continue to threaten agricultural production and increase post-harvest losses. The presence of aflatoxins, poisonous and cancer-causing compounds that are produced by certain pathogenic moulds compromise the health, safety and nutritional value of grains and pulses (especially groundnuts) thereby affecting their marketability and consequently smallholder income. Therefore, there is a need for governments to show more commitment to the agriculture sector and address the challenges therein.

Objectives of the side Event/ Policy dialogue

The specific objectives of the policy dialogue are:

1. To identify opportunities for mainstreaming PHM into the tertiary education curriculum;
2. To provide a regional perspective of the climate risks to crop production and post-harvest handling with a specific focus on pulses and grains and aflatoxin contamination;
3. To solicit policy recommendations for advocating for PHM approaches and techniques that increase smallholder income at regional level;
4. To chart a way forward on how best to develop synergies among different stakeholders and sectors, with the aim of scaling up and out PHM best practices and technologies that increase

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smallholder income and; maintain continuous dialogue on climate risks to crop production and post-harvest handling including aflatoxin issues.

Expected outcomes

- Improved understanding of the potential of PHM in addressing the challenges of food security (especially income generation) in the face of climate change;
- Improved understanding of the climate risks to crop production and post-harvest handling including aflatoxin issues and how these affect household income;
- Policy options and innovative approaches for early action to accelerate deployment of promising PHM technologies and, practices with a particular emphasis on strengthening adaptation and application in Africa; and
- Clear recommendations for policy makers with regards to PHM.

Approach and Methodology

The Policy Dialogue will take place alongside the [5th Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture \(RUFORUM\) Biennial Conference](#) under the sub-theme: Innovation for sustainable systems within value chains that improve smallholder incomes. This will be a one day side event dedicated to sharing research results, lessons learnt and panel discussions around issues of post-harvest loss management, reduction of aflatoxin in the groundnut value chain (GnVC) and management of climate-related risks to crop production for increased smallholder incomes

Venue and Participants

The regional policy dialogue will take place in Cape Town, South Africa at the Century City Conference Centre on Monday 17th October 2016, Hall C from 0830-1730.

Who will attend the Policy Dialogue?

The Regional Policy Dialogue participants will include representatives from:

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- Relevant governments ministries and departments,
- Civil society member/non-government organization
- Farmers organizations
- Intergovernmental organization (including UN entities)
- Research/extension/education organization
- Financing institution
- Private sector
- Youth organisations

Side Event Organizers and Contact

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