



The Sixth African Higher Education Week and RUFORUM Biennial Conference,

Date: 24th October, 2018.

Engaging Parliamentarians and Academia to enhance their transformative potential to achieve Agenda 2063 and SDG2

Concept Note

Background

Side Event Summary

The event aims at fostering dialogue, interaction, trust and network among policymakers and researchers to highlight the truly transformative potential of Members of Parliament (MPs) and universities towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Africa Agenda 2063. Bringing together MPs, the Deans and other representatives of the Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM)¹, officials from governments, the African Union Commission and representatives from Regional International bodies attending the Biennial RUFORUM Conference, FAO will set the stage by providing an overview of the current challenges and opportunities related to food security and nutrition (FSN) in the region, present *A Common Vision for Sustainable Food and Agriculture* with principles and actions for an integrated approach to strengthen the sustainability of food and agricultural systems. FAO will also moderate an interactive discussion among participants to foster understanding of how to translate research into evidence-based policy.

Background

In the recent years, African parliamentarians became more aware of their legislative, budgetary and policy oversight role for ensuring food security and nutrition (FSN), including through an expanding collaboration with FAO. In 2016, FAO signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Pan-African Parliament (PAP) announcing the establishment in 2017 of the Pan-African Parliamentary Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition (PAPA-FSN), and catalysing technical assistance to MPs on approaches and strategies to achieve FSN. Several other processes at sub-regional level (for example with the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA) or the ECOWAS Parliament), or at national level (for example with the

¹ Representatives of RUFORUM as identified by RUFORUM Secretariat

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establishments of the Malagasy and Congolese national Parliamentary Alliances for FSN), illustrate the increasing engagement of MPs with FAO, international organizations, civil society and academia, to meet their political commitments to their constituencies through advocacy and appropriate legislations that contributes to FSN.

Some of these African MPs actively engaged with FAO are expected to participate in the first Global Parliamentary Summit against Hunger and Malnutrition that will be held at the Spanish Senate² in Madrid, Spain, from 29-30 October 2018, intended to mobilize political support to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 2 (SDG2).

While partnerships with Academia and Research Institutions greatly enhances FAO's ability to eliminate hunger and malnutrition and contribute to the SDGs, the ongoing collaboration with RUFORUM is therefore strategic to support the activities of Parliamentary Alliances in Africa through its knowledge and technical expertise, outreach and collaborations with regional actors on improving FSN and sustainable food and agriculture systems³.

Agricultural and rural transformation is critical not only for ending hunger and achieving food security in Africa, but also for addressing many other pressing issues in Africa, including employment, industrialization, empowerment of women, ending protracted crises and conflict, and building resilience to climate change.⁴ Current challenges in food and agriculture, including climate change and rapid depletion of natural resources, require to address sustainability of food and agriculture systems to eradicate hunger and malnutrition. FAO is proud to serve as a bridge where needed to connect policymakers to the facts and support their efforts to create and implement sound policies which endure far beyond the lifecycle of a single project.

Purpose of the Side Event

To engage two strategic partnerships FAO maintains with the non-state actor community in pursuit of increased collaboration of efforts to achieve SDG 2. FAO's long history of bridging the research and policy divide has given it rich experience to share with new audiences, and informs its ability

² The Global Summit is co-organized by the Spanish Senate, FAO, the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID), and the Latin America and the Caribbean Parliamentary Front against Hunger, with support from the European Commission.

³ For example, in April 2018 FAO organised Parliamentarians - RUFORUM dialogue on enhancing food and nutrition security, involving senior RUFORUM scholars and MPs from Uganda in Kampala, Uganda.

⁴ Africa Forum for Sustainable Development Report, May 2017

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to foster new alliances between academia and policymakers. This side event seeks to facilitate discussion around the gap which exists between researchers and policymakers, specifically related to food security and nutrition

Objectives of the side Event

- Highlight the frontline role of MPs and Academia to eradicate hunger and malnutrition ;
- Discuss multi-stakeholder approaches and identify opportunities and actions for joint events, targeted researches, advocacy and awareness raising campaigns with RUFORUM in support of existing collaborations with African MPs, such as the PAPA-FS and the EALA;
- Raise awareness on FAO’s collaboration with MPs and Academia, as well as the framework “Transforming food and agriculture to achieve the SDGs, 20 interconnected actions to guide decision-makers”⁵ to inform parliamentary and university initiatives, strategies and campaigns

Approach and Methodology

The event is structured in three steps:

1. FAO will set the stage by providing an overview of the current challenges and opportunities related to food security and nutrition (FSN) in the region, presenting also its framework to address the SDGs, and posing 2-4 critical questions on the role of MPs and Academia in shaping the debate of FSN to achieve SDGs and Africa 2063 agenda.
2. These questions will be addressed by four panellists (2 MPs / 2 from Academia).
3. An interactive discussion among all participants will be then moderated by FAO to foster understanding of how to translate research into evidence-based policy.

Venue and Participants

At least 10 MPs from the PAPA-FSN and from Eastern African countries⁶, Deans from RUFORUM Universities and other representatives of RUFORUM, Ministers, African Union Commission representatives

⁵ <http://www.fao.org/publications/transforming-food-agriculture-to-achieve-sdg/en/>

⁶ Focus on the countries who signed the Kigali Declaration in November 2017 with intention to form East African Parliamentarian platform for food security (Djibouti, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda)

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attending the RUFORUM Biennial Conference, FAO representative(s), and, as observers, some of the grantee students of the FAO-RUFORUM community based field placement joint program.

Expected Outputs

- Fostered trust and network among policymakers and researchers, and strengthened understanding of the path to achieving evidence-based policy.
- Identified potential future opportunities for synergies between PAPA-FSN and regional/ sub-regional parliamentary initiatives on food security, nutrition and sustainable food and agriculture and activities of RUFORUM, such as joint events, awareness raising, targeted research and lobbying campaigns, amongst others.
- Presentation by parliamentarians from East African Parliamentarian Platform in Madrid Summit⁷ on FAO-PAPA-FSN collaborations and model engagement with academia (RUFORUM) to advance food security, nutrition and sustainability in Africa.

Side Event Organizers and Contact

Organisers: Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO)
 Contact person: Loreta Zdanovaite, Partnerships and South-South Cooperation Division (DPS); loreta.zdanovaite@fao.org

Annex 1: Proposed Agenda

Event requirements

Capacity (maximum no. of participants)	40 participants
Is the Side Event an <u>Open</u> or <u>By Invitation Only</u> event?	By Invitation Only
Room configuration / set-up (i.e. theatre, classroom, roundtable or u-shape)	Roundtable or U-shape, TBD
Start Time of Side Event:	October 24 –hour TBD (app. 2-3 hours)

⁷ The Global Parliamentary Summit in Madrid in October 2018 will gather MPs from around the world to share experiences and innovative solutions to end hunger.

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End Time of Side Event:	October 24 –hour TBD (app. 2-3 hours)
Technical needs required (please tick):	
• Projector ✓	Quantity required: 1
• Projection screen ✓	Quantity required: 1
• Laptop ✓	Quantity required: 1
• Microphone & PA System ✓	Quantity required: TBD
• Laser pointer	Quantity required:
• Flip chart (with paper & markers)	Quantity required:
• Note pads & pens	Quantity required:
• Telephone line	Quantity required:
• Refreshments /meals (expected number of participants, please specify) ✓	Quantity required: refreshments (40 people)
• Number of participants supported requiring accommodation reservation ✓	Quantity required: TBD
Any other special requests:	

SESSION PROGRAM

Moderator: FAO representative (s) –TBD

Time	Activity
10 min	Intro speech by FAO Representative
5 min	Audience Poll on perceptions and experiences of Academia and Parliamentarians (to be conducted via Direct Poll, a free online app. Results will be displayed)
20 min	Presentation on the gap which exists between academia and policymakers, and ways to overcome it and on the framework <i>Transforming food and agriculture to achieve the SDGs, 20 interconnected actions to guide decision-makers</i>
5 min	Introduction of policymakers and researchers on panel
30 min	Roundtable discussion (participants will be provided with some questions prior to the event. Questions from the audience will also be welcomed)
15 min	Reaction to roundtable, with priority to distinguished guests not in the panel
5 min	Audience Poll on identifying next steps to engage these 2 communities (Results will be displayed)
40 min	Reaction to Poll and Discussion on next steps

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10 min	Concluding remarks
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PROPOSED BUDGET (costs covered by FAO)

Cost of meeting room	1680 USD
Cost of refreshments (40 X 15 USD)	600 USD
Cost of conference materials (40 x 4 USD)	160 USD
Travel cost of 10 participants (Members of of Parliaments)	tbc

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