



Africa-Europe International Research Consortium Platform

A long-term Platform for connecting research and innovation institutions, private sector, funders, policy makers and other actors for Food Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture

Side Event Brochure

Operationalizing the AU-EU International Research Consortium on FNSSA

Date: November 1, 2023

Time: 2:00 to 4:00 PM GMT+1

Virtual Participant Pre-Registration via: <https://bit.ly/3rlMjfY>



Background

The transformation of agriculture is expected to assure broad-based growth that fundamentally rests on the agricultural knowledge and innovation system (AKIS). The AKIS is highly fragmented comprising of numerous actors with intricate connections among them. The interplay between the AKIS actors, its inputs and functions is complex, however this complexity has been over-simplified into linear segments. This simplification together with incoherent and piece-meal projectized investments have been a major failing that has slowed the pace of agricultural transformation over the past years.

Currently, changes in the Agri-food system drivers such as climate change and population growth heighten the need for an accelerated transformation of the food system from a production dominated one to an integrated climate-sensitive food system (agri-food system). There are many knowledge gaps that need to be addressed to strengthen the AKIS and accelerate the transformation of the Agri-food system. The Africa – Europe cooperation on research and innovation has worked towards addressing these weaknesses which culminated in the launch of the International Research Consortium (IRC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Project, Long-term European African Partnership for FNSSA (LEAP4FNSSA) last year. The IRC is to provide the foundation of a strengthened AKIS to address the complex issues surrounding fragmentation, large knowledge gaps and incoherence in actions.

On June 30 this year, the AU-EU Ministers of Agriculture conference on 'Resilient food systems

and sustainable agri value chains' concluded that the development of a joint AU-EU Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation System (AKIS), as a bi-continental platform linking African and European research and innovation actors to advance a science-led growth in food and nutrition security and sustainable agriculture should be supported. They highlighted the key role of the International Research Consortium on FNSSA in catalysing collective actions within the AKIS and called on public and private institutions to join the IRC and actively support its activities. They pointed out that the connection between research & innovation and the farmer is fundamental to any AKIS and that R and I actors should speak more with farmers than about farmers.

With Horizon Europe financing in line with the EU Farm2Fork strategy, the IRC is expected to be operationalized by a Coordination Support Action (CSA) dubbed 'Consortium Europe-Africa on Research and Innovation for Food Systems Transformation (CEA-FIRST)' as the long-term platform on Food and Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture (FNSSA) in line with the FNSSA Roadmap of the AU-EU High Level Policy Dialogue (HLPD).

The CEA-FIRST consortium, consists of 21 partners from Africa and Europe.

CEA-FIRST will:

1. provide public access to a large knowledge platform,
2. offer a sound method for analysis of R&I activities,
3. support the updating of the FNSSA Roadmap,
4. establish operational working groups and thematic research calls.



CEA-FIRST will also support its liaison with the HLPD. It will create a learning environment, including communication channels, to support multistakeholder networks and to strengthen R&I coordination. The final output will be a fully functional IRC, including governance bodies. The IRC will also serve related AU-EU policy priorities, such as the Climate Change and Sustainable Energy and the Innovation Agenda of the HLPD, as well as the European Green Deal priorities (and farm to fork strategy) and the AU priorities like the African Free Trade Area.

The 19th RUFORUM General Meeting presents an opportunity to initiate the discussion on the plans to operationalization of the IRC. The side event will bring together the current 50 IRC signatories, potential members and other interested R&I partnerships to discuss the key components of the IRC's CEA-FIRST Project. The side-event will also serve as an opportunity to enlarge the membership of the IRC and update the directory of the Focal Persons representing the current signatories of the IRC.

Objective

The objective is to present the process and key elements of the operationalization of the IRC while promoting it as the main AU-EU AKIS Platform on the FNSSA and building the ownership and partnerships among the relevant actors for stronger food systems, sustainable growth and jobs.

Expected Outcomes

- Inputs to inform the development of the strategy and operational plan for the IRC and for the implementation of the CEA-FIRST project will be gathered.

- Updated directory of IRC focal persons and new members mobilized.
- Inputs for the participation of the CEA-FIRST consortium during the upcoming FOOD2030 Conference in December will be gathered.

Approach

In line with the above-mentioned objectives and expected outcomes, the session will include presentations, a facilitated panel discussion and an open discussion relating to the Agri-food systems transformation, the CEA-FIRST project and the sustainability of the IRC.

Expected Participants

The expected participants include signatories of the IRC, interested R&I stakeholders and potential IRC members, including private sector actors, policymakers, national and regional agricultural research institution actors and gender and youth organisations etc.

Facilitation

The Meeting will be facilitated by FARA with support from AGRINATURA and University of Helsinki.

Date and Venue

The meeting will take place at the venue of the 19th RUFORUM General Meeting – Palais des Congrès' Inaugural Hall, Yaoundé- Cameroon on 1st November 2023.



Meeting Agenda

The meeting Agenda is presented in Annex 1.

Required logistics and services

Working logistics (video projector, audio equipment, notebooks, and pens and equipment for a hybrid meeting format)

Working documents and tools

IRC Manuscript:
<https://bit.ly/3KNzvu8>

Meeting Format

Meeting will be in a hybrid format. In-person participants are self-sponsored. Virtual Participation cost is free. Pre-Register via: <https://bit.ly/3rlMjfY>



The AU-EU International Research Consortium Platform

Transitioning the AU-EU Food Nutrition Security for Sustainable Agriculture Partnership to a long-term sustainable Platform:





Annex 1: Tentative programme

Chairperson: Dr. Hans-Joerg Lutseyer, EC

Master of Ceremonies: Dr. Irene Annor-Frempong, FARA

Time	Activity	Responsible Person
14:00 – 14:05	Registration	FARA, Secretariat
14:05 – 14:25	Opening remarks	Dr. Aggrey Agumya, Executive Director, Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) Ms. Magdalena Gajdzinska, EC Co-chair of the FNSSA Working group Dr. Monica Ebele Idinoba, AUC Co-chair, FNSSA Working group
14:25 – 14:40	Keynote Presentation: Triggers for Accelerating the Transformation of Food Systems	Dr. Jim Woodhill, Foresight4Food Network – Oxford University
14:40 – 14:55	Presentation: IRC Operationalisation Pro- cess and key elements	Dr. Irene Annor-Frempong, Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA)
14:55 – 15:05	Presentation: The IRC Knowledge Man- agement Platform	Prof. Ioannis Dimitriou, Swedish University of Agric, Sci. (SLU)
15:05 – 15:30	Panel discussion on the Sustainability of the IRC	Dr. Monica Ebele Idinoba, AUC Ms. Magdalena Gajdzinska, EC Ms. Antonella Zona, EC Dr. Prudence Makhura, NRF-SA Ms. Genna Tesdall, YPARD Dr. Michael Sudarkasa, AFAP – SA



15:30 – 15:55	Open discussion	Facilitated by Dr. Petronella Chaminuka- ARC – SA and Mr. Antti Autio, University of Helsinki
15:55 – 16:00	Closing remarks	Dr. Stephen Onakuse, President, AGRINATURA



Meet the Speakers

Dr. Aggrey Agumya



Dr. Agumya is the Executive Director at the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA). He holds a BSc in Surveying and Photogrammetry, plus an MSc (ITC, The Netherlands) and PhD degrees in Geomatics specializing in GIS and Remote Sensing (University of Melbourne, Australia). Dr. Agumya has 25 years of professional experience. His work at the World Agroforestry Centre and at the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa spans the entire African continent.

Over the past years, Dr. Agumya's interest has been focused on the development of spatial tools in development work towards improving food security, incomes, and resilience to climate change-induced shocks.

Dr. Jim Woodhill



Dr. Woodhill is a Senior Consultant with the University of Oxford's Environmental Change Institute leading the Foresight4Food Initiative and an independent consultant. He is a specialist in inclusive agribusiness, rural development, food security, and multi-stakeholder partnerships, with over 25 years of international development experience.

Formerly Jim was the Principal Sector Specialist for Food Security and Rural Development with the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. Prior to this, he was Director of the Centre for Development Innovation at Wageningen University and Research Centre in the Netherlands. He holds a PhD in political economics and a degree in agricultural science.



Dr. Irene Annor-Frempong



Dr. Irene Annor-Frempong is the Lead, AU-EU FNSSA International Research Consortium in FARA and the past Director of Research and Innovation. She was the Coordinator of the EU-H2020 LEAP4FNSSA project and served as a Commissioner of the CGIAR Commission on Sustainable Agricultural Intensification (CoSAI) between 2020 and 2021. A thought leader with over 30 years research and innovation experience, Irene has coordinated many continent-wide research and capacity development projects including the CAADP 'Science Agenda for Agriculture in Africa' framework and has worked in research institutes and universities in a number of African and European countries. She has played significant roles in advancing the AU-EU Research and Innovation Partnership through the Platform for Africa-Europe Partnership on Agricultural Research for Development (PAEPARD), the DeSIRA pillar 2- CAADP xP4 projects and the AU-EU High Level Policy Dialogue (HLPD) Working Group on FNSSA. She is currently a member of the foresight4food Steering group and served on the Steering group of the World Bank Africa Centres of Excellence (ACE) program and the Consultative Advisory Group on Partnership for Skills in Applied Sciences, Engineering and Technology (PASET), among others. Irene holds a PhD from the Veterinary School, University of Bristol, UK. and an M Sc. in Animal production science from Wageningen University and Research.

Prof. Ioannis Dimitriou



Prof. Dimitriou is an Associate Professor at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU), and a Senior Research Advisor at SLU's Vice-Chancellor's office, responsible for the international programmes with low and middle-income countries.

He has been involved in several EU and nationally-funded agriculture research for development projects, with the most recent examples being LEAP4FNSSA and DeSIRA-LIFT. He was recently appointed Vice-President of the European Alliance on Agricultural Knowledge for Development (Agrinatura) EEIG (Agrinatura's business unit).

His research focuses on designing productive systems with food and biomass crops while achieving minimal environmental impact, including recycling of different nutrient-rich wastes. He has been working with the science-policy interface to support the implementation of smart innovation in agriculture contributing to the sustainable transformation of food systems. Dimitriou is the author of more than 100 peer-reviewed articles, a member of several PhD examination committees, and an organiser of PhD courses at SLU and partner universities.



Dr. Stephen Onakuse



Dr. Onakuse is a senior lecturer in the Department of Food Business and Development, Cork University Business School (CUBS), University College Cork, and the President of the European Alliance on Agricultural Knowledge for Development – (AGRINATURA) – an Association of European Universities and Research centres supporting agricultural research and development (ARD) by establishing research project consortia, leading science policy dialogue, and providing an evidence-based knowledge platform for capacity building to improve the livelihoods of farmers and their communities. Steering Committee Member of the Tropical Agriculture Platform (FAO/TAP) of the United Nations. He holds a Diploma in General Agriculture, B.Agric Degree in Agricultural Science from the Federal University of Agriculture Abeokuta (FUNNAB), a MSc in Environmental Biology from the University of Ibadan, a PhD in Food Business and Development and a Postgraduate Certificate in Teaching and Learning, Postgraduate Diploma in Teaching and Learning and an MA in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education at the University College Cork, Ireland. Dr Stephen research is situated in the field of Agriculture, with a special focus on development studies, agricultural systems, value chain analysis for development and sustainable food systems transformation initiatives. Dr Onakuse is the UCC PI on the European Union DeSIRA-funded project on Climate Smart Agriculture Research and Innovation Support for Dairy Value Chains in Eritrea and the PI on the EPA project on Sustainable production and Consumption – the impact of social norms (SPAC).

Dr. Hans-Jörg Lutzeyer



Active Senior, SCAR Secretariat EU-African Union Food Systems R&I Horizon Europe Food Systems Partnership. He was previously the senior policy officer at Directorate General Research and Innovation of the European Commission, based in Brussels, in the Bioeconomy and Food Systems unit (FOOD 2030). He was in charge of food systems Africa and co-chairing the EU-African Union (AU) Food and Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture (FNSSA) working group of the EU-AU Partnership on FNSSA. He is executive secretary of the Standing Committee on Agricultural Research, which provides advice to the Commission, Member States and Associated Countries on strategic research and innovation in agriculture, food systems and the bioeconomy. He is also contact for the Horizon Europe candidate partnership on sustainable food systems for people, planet & climate. Before joining the European Commission in 2001, he worked on short term assignments in Benin, Morocco, Brazil and Kenya and later co-ordinating for the German Research Ministry food systems related international research. He did his agronomy PhD at University of Hohenheim (Germany) with two year field studies in West Africa (Benin Republic) at the International Institute for Tropical Agriculture (IITA), one of the CGIAR Centres.



Meet the Panelists

Dr. Monica Ebele Idinoba



Dr. Idinoba is a Principal Scientific Officer at the African Union Commission. She holds a PhD in Geography. She has previously worked with the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), the West Africa Rice Development Association (WARDA) now AfricaRice Centre, in 2005 she moved on to the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), first as a Senior Scientist and later as the West Africa coordinator for Tropical Forest and Climate change adaptation. Currently, she works for the African Union Commission in the Department of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation as a Principal Scientific Officer and coordinating the EU-funded project on Research grants.



Ms. Magdalena Gajdzinska

Ms Gajdzinska is a Policy Officer in Food Systems Transformation within the Directorate General for Research and Innovation of the European Commission in Brussels responsible for microbiome for food systems transformation, EU-African Union and international cooperation. Prior to this assignment, she worked for the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. Moreover, she has experience in working with veterinary administration and food safety in other EU institutions and the Polish Veterinary Administration. She has received her degrees in veterinary medicine and bioengineering of food production from the University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn, Poland and specialised in hygiene of food of animal origin..



Ms. Antonella Zona

Ms. Zona is a Research Policy Officer in charge of international cooperation in agriculture research and innovation at the European Commission Directorate General for Agriculture and Rural Development.

She is part of the team responsible for agricultural, forestry and rural research under EU research programmes and providing the secretariat for the Horizon Europe R&I Mission "A Soil Deal for Europe". Antonella has been working for the European Commission since 1993 (rural development, agricultural markets outlook and analysis, direct support to farmers, European Innovation Partnership for agricultural productivity and sustainability, foresight and impact assessment). She holds a Master's Degree in Advanced European Studies from the European College of Parma.



Dr. Prudence Makhura

Dr. Makhura is currently the Acting Executive Director for Knowledge Advancement and Support (KAS) and Director for international collaborative research grants at the National Research Foundation (NRF) of South Africa. In this capacity she is responsible for managing bi-, tri- and multi-lateral partnerships through research funding and human capacity development between South African researchers and their international partners. She has previously held different portfolios within the South African Higher Education, Research and Innovation Sector. These includes working for the South African Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), Universities South Africa (USAf), Higher Education Quality Committee of the Council on Higher Education (CHE), Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), and the Centre for Sociological Research (CSR) based at the University of Johannesburg (UJ). She holds a PhD of Management in Technology and Innovation with The Da Vinci Institute for Technology Management.



Ms. Genna Tesdall

Ms. Tesdall is an agriculture systems thinker taking on projects to sustain the environment and people, now as the director of YPARD. She strives to be a servant-leader in order to foster equality between generations (and all delimiters of privilege). Before joining YPARD, she was the federal agricultural policy officer at the German Rural Youth Association (Bund der Deutschen Landjugend) (2020). As a Fulbright Researcher at the Humboldt University of Berlin (2018-19), she focused on youth involvement in agricultural policy and was the former president (2013-14) of the International Association of Agriculture and Related Sciences Students (IAAS). She is a graduate of the global-oriented Iowa State (2015) and Penn State Universities (2018) with an M.Sc. in Plant Pathology and International Agriculture and Development.



Mr. Michael Sudarkasa

Mr. Surdakasa is the CEO of the African Fertilizer and Agribusiness Partnership and also the founder and Chairman of Africa Business Group (ABG). A U.S. commercial attorney by training, Michael has lived, travelled, and worked in 50 countries around the world (including 35 in Africa), and is the author of several publications, including: The African Union Commission's Africa Business Directory: Toward the Facilitation of Growth, Partnership and Global Inclusion (African Union, 2014), A Field Guide to Inclusive Business Finance (UNDP 2012) and Investing in Africa: An Insider's Guide to the Ultimate Emerging Market (John Wiley & Sons, August 2000).

Michael also currently serves as the Chair of Impact@Africa, a continentaly focused impact investment ecosystem development platform, sits on the global board of the UNDRR's Private Sector Alliance for Disaster Resilient Societies (ARISE), is a member of the University of Michigan Provost's Advisory Committee, sits on the Advisory Board of the African Center for the Study of the United States of the University of Witwatersrand, and as also Chair of the Advisory Board of the African Studies Center of the University of Michigan. He holds a B.A. degree from the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor (High Honors in History) and a J.D. degree from Harvard Law School.



Dr. Petronella Chaminuka



Dr. Chaminuka leads the Impact and Partnerships Division in South Africa's Agricultural Research Council (ARC). She holds a PhD in Environmental and Natural Resource Economics from Wageningen University, and has more than 25 years of international working experience in multi-stakeholder R&I platforms. She was involved in the ProIntens Africa and LEAP4FNSSA projects, and several bi-lateral initiatives with European partners. She led the "Study on the projects funded to support the FNSSA Partnership" and contributed a chapter to "The Routledge Handbook of EU-Africa Relations". She is part of a team of global south advisors for scaling research and innovation impact and is published extensively in scientific and popular media.

Dr. Antti Autio



Dr. Antti Autio studied in the Doctoral Programme in Interdisciplinary Environmental Sciences (DENVI) at the Department of Geosciences and Geography at University of Helsinki. He works as a project coordinator at the Finnish University Partnership for International Development (UniPID), and is a doctoral researcher in the University of Helsinki, focusing on the political ecology of climate change adaptation among smallholder farmers in Kenya. He has previously coordinated UniPID responsibilities in the Long-term EU-AU Research and Innovation Partnership for Food and Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture (LEAP4FNSSA), and currently in the Long-Term Joint European Union – African Union Research and Innovation Partnership on Renewable Energy (LEAP-RE). He has also worked as a coordinator for the Taita Research Station of University of Helsinki, located in Kenya, and is an active board member of the Finnish Society For Development Research (FSDR). He holds an MSc in Development Geography, and BE in Environmental Technology.



Partners



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19TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

28 Oct- 02 Nov. 2023

CAMEROON

The poster features the RUFORUM logo at the top left, followed by the text "19TH RUFORUM Annual General Meeting 2023". It includes a map of Africa with member universities highlighted in brown, and a map of Cameroon with its flag. The theme "Transforming Higher Education to Sustainably Feed and Create Prosperity for Africa" is centered, along with the date "28 Oct- 02 Nov. 2023" and the hashtag "#RUFORUMAGM2023". Logos of several universities are shown below the theme.

The section is titled "CALLING EXHIBITORS TO REGISTER FOR A SLOT FOR AN EXHIBITION AT THE RUFORUM ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE IN CAMEROON". It provides details: Venue: Yaoundé Conference Centre, Cameroon; Date: 30th Oct - 02nd Nov 2023; Deadline: 30th September 2023; and Contact: m.nada@ruforum.org | f.artur@ruforum.org. To the right, there's a "TARGET AUDIENCE:" list and a grid of hexagonal images showing exhibition booths and attendees.

The graphic shows a large audience in a conference hall, the RUFORUM logo, and the text "19TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2023". Below it, the event details are repeated: "RUFORUM Annual General Meeting" at "Yaounde Conference Centre, Cameroon" from "28 Oct- 02 Nov. 2023". The theme "Transforming Higher Education to Sustainably Feed and Create Prosperity for Africa" is also mentioned. At the bottom, there's a "SAVE THE DATE" callout for "28 Oct- 02 Nov 2023".