



The Sixth African Higher Education Week and RUFORUM Biennial Conference,

Date: 22th October, 2018

Consumption as a driver for Agri-food System transformation Concept Note

Background

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The Sixth African Higher Education Week and RUFORUM Biennial Conference will be held 22nd-26th October 2018 in Nairobi, Kenya. The Conference will be held under the theme “*Aligning African Universities to accelerate attainment of Africa’s Agenda 2063*”. The Conference will be held at the Kenyatta International Conference Centre (KICC) in Nairobi, Kenya from 22-26 October, 2018. The conference will bring together 1200 participants from across Africa and beyond. Participants will be drawn from diverse sectors including universities, Civil Society Organizations- CSOs, national and international research organizations (including the CGIAR and NARS), development partners, and governments, continental and regional organizations including African Union Commission.

Introduction

The agricultural sector, which is the mainstay in many African economies especially in (SSA) is underperforming. High population growth rates is threatening Africa’s capacity to feed itself and further increase food and nutrition insecurity on the continent. Africa’s population is expected to increase to over 2.5 billion people by 2050, from the current 1.5 billion¹. With the continent’s largest youth population, Africa must do more not only to accelerate production significantly, but also to harness the youth potential by improving skills and entrepreneurship on the continent.

The CGIAR Research Program on Grain Legumes and Dryland Cereals (CRP-GLDC) is focused on increasing the productivity, profitability, resilience and marketability of critical and nutritious grain legume (chickpea, cowpea, pigeonpea, groundnut, lentil, soybean) and cereal (sorghum, pearl millet, finger millet) crops grown within the semi-arid and sub-humid dryland agroecologies of sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. These crops are particularly important due to their ability to provide nutrition and

¹ EY’s attractiveness survey Africa 2015 Making choices.

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incomes for the poor on the continent and to stimulate food and nutrition security in Africa and other parts of the world. The CRP-GLDC is being implemented using a new approach that leverages partnerships from across Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia that includes national agricultural research systems partners, universities the private sector and others. It also recognizes the important role of supporting the inculcation of skills for the youth in Africa to drive its success and indeed to support the implementation of key continental frameworks and the sustainable development goals. Improved capacity and inclusivity of women, men and youth to innovate in the production, trading, value addition and consumption of nutritious grain legumes and dryland cereals will be one of the outcomes from CRP-GLDC.

Purpose and Objectives of the Side Event

In line with the above, the CRP GLDC will support NARS partners from priority countries of the initiative to attend the Sixth Higher Education Week and RUFORUM Biennial Conference to enhance synergies between the CRP-GLDC and African universities. Specifically, this proposal will Support seven scientists (from five of the CRP-GLDC priority countries) to attend the Sixth Higher Education Week and RUFORUM Biennial Conference.

Approach and Methodology

The sponsorship will be managed by RUFORUM. RUFORUM will identify participants from the GLDC priority countries and support their participation to the conference, including arranging for accommodation, air travel etc. The participants will participate in key sessions and encouraged to make presentations as relevant. During the meeting, a special meeting will be organized to highlight grain legumes and dryland cereals issues and to link them to CGIAR scientists.

Expected Outcomes

1. Seven participants from NARS focus countries participate in the conference
2. CRP-GLDC branding and materials displayed and shared with conference participants

Side Event Organizers and Contact

The Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM)
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