

RUFORUM Webinar Series (2020)

Introductory Note for Webinar 10

Date: 07 September 2020

Time: 14.00-16.30 East African Standard Time

Engaging African Universities in Advancing Agricultural and Food and Nutrition Security in Africa: Policy Perspective

Africa's agriculture, food and nutrition security remains an important development concern owing to its central role in employment, providing food, contribution to over 35% of exports and over 25% of GDP to African economies especially in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). However, one in four persons in SSA still goes hungry and/or do not consume food with minimum nutritional requirements. Out of the 55 African countries, only 9 are presently on track to reduce under-nutrition to 5 percent or less by 2025. Africa also spends on annual food imports, a bill of \$35 billion, estimated to rise to \$110 billion by 2025 which weakens African economies, and decimates agriculture and exports jobs from the continent. The hard currency used for imports could be used for investment in transformation of agri-food sector, which could then contribute to employment and income for the continent's youthful population. Investments should be made across the entire value chains and agro-food sector including processing and value addition, logistics, food safety, marketing, etc. while being cognizant of addressing challenges of climate change, conflict, economic slowdowns, and emerging crises such as COVID-19.

Africa and Europe as continents with relatively common agri-food related challenges recognize the need to work together hence establishment of the Africa-Europe partnership. Since 2000 when the first Africa-Europe Summit was held in Cairo, Egypt, agriculture has remained the core of this partnership because of its significant social and economic roles in the two continents. As a result, the two continents have engaged policy makers and researchers to design medium to long term strategies to deploy science, technology and innovation in agriculture and related sectors for social and economic transformation. After successful 20 years of Africa-Europe partnership, the 6th Africa-Europe Summit will be held in October 2020. The European Commission has developed a draft '***Towards a Comprehensive Strategy with Africa***' to guide the EU-Africa partnership within which they aim at rapidly enhance learning, knowledge and skills, research and innovation capacities, and the creation of decent jobs and value addition with a focus on women and youth. The European Green Deal and specifically the Farm to Fork Strategy dedicated to the agri-food sector puts emphasis on research, innovation, technology and investments as means to transitioning to a fair, healthy and environmentally-friendly food system. This resonates with aspirations of Africa's Agenda 2063, the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), and the

Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy (STISA 2024) among other African strategic frameworks.

The focus on science, technology and innovation lies within the mandate of universities. Across the globe, universities train human resources, who in turn and together with universities, lead research, innovation and technology driven entrepreneurship. In the African Union Research Grants which operationalize the Africa-Europe partnership for Research and Innovation, universities lead implementation of over 50% of the grants while being partners in over 70% of the projects. They are the institutional partners implementing the Intra Africa Mobility Scheme, Horizon 2020 among other programmes. Universities thus constitute technical expert resource for the African Union and European Union to generate evidence and expert opinion to guide development and implementation of policies and strategic frameworks, financial instruments, and research and development programmes.

Universities are thus well placed to provide technical expertise in generating evidence for policy making through policy research, in implementing and generating evidence from practice for improvement of Africa-Europe partnership strategic frameworks, policies and programmes, such as “Comprehensive strategy with Africa”, the European Green Deal and its Farm to Fork Strategy, the Research and Innovation Partnership Roadmaps for Food Nutrition and Sustainable Agriculture (FNSSA) and Climate Change and Sustainable Energy Access (CCSE), among others. While university professors have been contributing to these efforts individually, a coordinated continent wide engagement of universities will yield better results. Coordinated and organized approach will make it easier to mobilise and generate continent wide input in the strategic documents as well as prepare both universities and research institutions to effectively and jointly deliver the aspirations of the EU-Africa partnership.

This Webinar 10 is organized to explore opportunities for coordinated engagement of African and European universities to contribute to the; i) Development, ii) Implementation and iii) Evaluation of policies, strategic frameworks and funding programmes under the auspice of Africa-EU partnership and CAADP. The Webinar aims to bring together policy leaders from African Union Commission, European Union Commission, Country Governments and other development partners to deliberate on how African universities should be engaged in a coordinated manner to contribute during the consultations to design programmes, implementation of these programmes and their review.

Webinar 10 Topic:	Panellists	
Engaging African Universities to advance Food, Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture in Africa	1. H.E Ambassador Josefa LC Sacko , Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture (DREA), African Union Commission, Addis Ababa-Ethiopia	1. What are key elements of the recent European Union and African Union policy documents on the Food Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture (FNSSA) Roadmap that African Governments and their

<p>Moderator: Dr. Godfrey Bahigwa, Director of Agriculture, African Union Commission, Addis Ababa-Ethiopia</p> <p>Discussant: Dr. Patrick Okori, Country Director, ICRISAT, Lilongwe-Malawi</p> <p>Date: 07 September 2020</p> <p>Time: 1400-1630 East African Standard Time</p>	<p>2. H.E Thoko Didiza, Minister for Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development, Pretoria-South Africa</p> <p>3. H.E. Lobin Lowe, Minister of Agriculture, Lilongwe-Malawi</p> <p>4. Hon. Jeanine Milly Cooper, Minister of Agriculture, Monrovia-Liberia</p> <p>5. Dr Leonard Miizzi, Food Security Head of Unit, EU, Brussels-Belgium</p>	<p>institutions need to position to respond to?</p> <p>2. What are the funding modalities for the implementation of the roadmap? Will AUC play a role or will this be up to the Member States (as with ERA-Africa and LEAPagri programmes)?</p> <p>3. How best could African Universities (and their European counter parts-eg. AGRINATURA) contribute to the development of the implementation protocols and needed joint actions?</p> <p>4. What are the critical research issues that need to be prioritised?</p> <p>5. How best could African Universities be engaged in implementation of CAADP?</p>
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There will be simultaneous English/French/Arabic Translations

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