



The Sixth African Higher Education Week and RUFORUM Biennial Conference,

Date: 24th October, 2018.

Plant wise: Leveraging ICT innovations and partnerships to support smallholder farmers

Background

Plantwise is a global programme, led by CABI, to increase food security and improve rural livelihoods by reducing crop losses. In 11 countries across Africa, we help establish networks of local plant clinics, where farmers can get agricultural advice on managing pests and diseases. Plant clinics are reinforced by the Plantwise Knowledge Bank, an online gateway to diagnostic resources and pest management advice. Using a specially developed app, the Knowledge Bank also collects data about the farmers visiting plant clinics, as well as their crops and the pests affecting them.

By leveraging our ICT innovations and sharing data with relevant partners, we strengthen national plant health systems from within, helping to establish frameworks for in-country pest surveillance and early warning systems. For example, the fall armyworm in Africa was first identified at a plant clinic in Ghana in 2016 and DNA confirmed by our microbial laboratories, and Plantwise has been working with countries across Africa to help them to respond to outbreak.

Objectives of the side Event

The objective of the side event is to present a successful plant health programme, which is built on strong collaborations between researchers, farmers, agricultural research institutions and governments. We aim to demonstrate that improving extension services has a direct impact on agricultural production, and therefore encourage today's agricultural students – the researchers, farmers, extensionists and policymakers of tomorrow – to value and work to improve extension services, smallholder farmers driving agricultural production, cross-sectoral partnerships, innovations, gender and agricultural risks

Approach Methodology

and The side event CABI is proposing will use the example of Plantwise in Kenya to showcase how partnerships across the public sector (MoALF), research institutions (KALRO), academia (University of Nairobi), the private sector

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(Koppert Biological Systems) and development partners (CABI) are working together to transform smallholder productivity.

A key area of focus will be on technological and digital innovations work to mitigate agricultural risks (using satellite-based pest risk forecasting) and improve the quality and accessibility of extension services for smallholder (using our new e-plant clinics, equipped with tablet computers).

The primary RUFORUM Biennial Conference sub theme the side event could be classed under is therefore “**Strengthening innovations for inclusive and attractive agriculture**”, but it touches on a number of other themes including.

Participants Programme

- and Moderator:** Dr Charles Wendo, SciDev.Net
- Plantwise representative:** Elizabeth Nambiro, CABI
- Representative from MoALF:** Flora Kainyu
- Representative from KALRO:** Miriam Otipa
- Representative from academia:** Prof. John Wangai Kimenju, University of Nairobi
- Representative from private sector:** Charles Macharia, Koppert Biological Systems.

Proposed programme

We expect the side event to last about 75-90 minutes and greatly engage the audience:

- 5 minute introduction by the moderator
- 5x 5 minute presentations by each of the panellists on how they view the innovations and partnerships that make Plantwise a success
- 15 minute moderator-led Q&A (i.e. moderator asking questions of the panel)
- 30-45 minute audience Q&A

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