



19th RUFORUM ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2022

SOUTH-SOUTH AND TRIANGULAR COOPERATION ON CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION AND AGRI- FOOD SYSTEMS TRANSFORMATION IN AFRICA

Date: 1st November, 2023

Time: 11:00-16:00 (GMT+1)

Venue: Meeting Room E, Palais des Congrès, Yaoundé, Cameroon

Concept Note

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Introduction

As countries accelerate their actions in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, a number of developments affecting the sustainability of food systems are emerging, including the impacts of climate change that are expected to have a disproportionately negative impact on production in those countries where food demand is projected to grow most strongly.

Tackling climate change is not attainable without transforming the agrifood sector. A study carried out by FAO in 2021 noted that agrifood systems account for one-third of greenhouse gas emissions, agricultural expansion drives 90 percent of global deforestation, 70 percent of water use globally, the greatest cause for land biodiversity loss, putting pressure on food value chains. The same study also highlighted that “the food supply chain is on course to overtake farming and land use as the largest contributor to greenhouse gases (GHGs) from the agri-food system in many countries, due to rapid growth driven by food processing, packaging, transport, retail, household consumption, waste disposal and the manufacturing of fertilizers”¹.

Africa faces the greatest impacts from climate change, despite contributing least to the greenhouse gas emissions. The predictions indicate large decreases in precipitation in northern and southwestern South Africa whilst the Ethiopian Highlands are likely to record increases in rainfall and extreme rainfall by the end of the 21st century. Africa remains a net food importer and a 1.5o C climate scenario will lead to a doubling of extreme droughts, more heavy rainfall and intense flooding leading to negative impacts on Africa’s food systems and food security².

¹ FAO, 2021. Supply chain joins deforestation and farming practices as main source of emissions in agri-food sector. <https://www.fao.org/newsroom/detail/supply-chain-is-growing-source-of-agri-food-GHG-emissions/en>

² African Union. Africa Climate Strategy 2020-2030. https://archive.uneca.org/sites/default/files/uploaded-documents/ACPC/2020/africa_climate_change_strategy_-_revised_draft_16.10.2020.pdf

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While agriculture is a key contributor to climate change, it also offers many solutions to the global climate goals. From restoring degraded lands to eliminating food waste, more climate friendly production and post-production practices – can contribute significantly to mitigation and adaptation to the impacts of climate change. Africa’s Climate Change Strategy highlights that “It is recognized that the continent has an immense mitigation potential in its vast land mass, forests, agricultural systems and oceans. Africa also has unrivalled potential for renewable energy, especially solar for its own development and export. This potential should be quantified and put on the table as the continent’s contribution in return for finance and technology needed to adapt and develop despite climate change”.

Why South-South and triangulation on climate change is necessary

The FAO Climate Change Strategy 2022-2031 has a strong focus on establishing strategic partnerships with actors interested and engaged across agrifood systems, including government institutions, international, regional and national climate institutions, regional and sub-regional organizations and economic communities, private companies, research and academia and farmers³. One of the core actions of the FAO Strategy on Climate Change include supporting the stocktaking of existing good practices and local, traditional and indigenous knowledge and the emergence, exploration and promotion of innovative, proactive, sustainable and context-specific climate resilience, adaptation and mitigation solutions, and strengthening countries’ agrifood innovation capacity and systems⁴.

In 2021 FAO’s new South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC) Strategy prioritizes strengthening knowledge brokering, partnership and collaborations as two of the four Strategic Focus Areas (SFA’s). In particular, expanding Triangular Partnerships and collaborations is a key area of focus for networking, reviewing regulatory framework, creating enabling environment for the networking itself as well as for joint mobilization of resources. The main aim of the South-South Triangular Cooperation is to leverage SSTC’s catalytic and complementary role in co-developing of synergies, solutions, and skills to improve food systems through strong networking platforms at regional and global level.

Given the myriad of challenges, a paradigm shift needs to occur among Africa’s Agricultural education, research and extension system. Within the context of the ongoing discussions between FAO’s South-South and Triangular Cooperation Division (PST) and the Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM), the two organizations aim to collaborate on the formation of an integrated Network of African University-Industry on climate change mitigation and agrifood systems transformation. Considering the diversity of universities that form the RUFORUM network and the constant research generated through these universities, there is relevance in bringing this science and practice together to shape the course of programming around climate change adaptation and mitigation efforts in the continent.

³ <https://www.fao.org/3/cc2274en/cc2274en.pdf>

⁴ <https://www.fao.org/3/cc2274en/cc2274en.pdf>

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The major objectives of the Network is to coordinate and facilitate networking and collaboration among African Universities, Industry and Policy Makers to collaboratively engage in action-oriented research and knowledge generation on climate adaptation and mitigation practices from Africa. Such transdisciplinary processes aim to stimulate learning, problem-solving and co-production of knowledge through universities and research centers, and other relevant bodies. In terms of coordination, the partnership is imperative for the network's sustainability. The network in the interim has identified the following as possible areas of interest;

- a. Regenerative agriculture with its imperatives on agroecology and sustainable intensification, soil health, water, energy and environment, advanced genetics for production, crop improvement: new resilient demand driven crop varieties, livestock improvement: new resilient demand driven crop varieties, and alternative proteins amidst climate change
- b. Africa's Blue Economy: Sustainable Marine and Fresh water exploitation with a focus on aquaculture and alternative marine sources of food and fiber
- c. Reducing food losses, evening food supply and creating market opportunities for Africa's food systems with a focus on; food processing for Africa's growing and urbanizing populations, nutrition challenge (Under nutrition, over nutrition, food safety and health), policies: Taking stock of progress made against key food systems continental supportive policies, and shrinking supply chain gaps using digital and financial solutions (Fintec etc.), block chain enabled traceability, IOT for real time supply chain transparency and traceability
- d. Evidence, and actions required as part of delivering conversations on accelerating and scaling-up Africa's climate change adaptation and mitigation actions focusing on reducing emissions, what are the main sources and how can they be better managed; climate-adaptive agriculture sessions (collection of papers on this subject), and climate change governance: Strengthening disaster risk planning and governance.

A partnership with RUFORUM will provide the Network with an opportunity to form a platform for researchers and practitioners to address the pressing issues of the food system transformation in Africa. It will build on RUFORUM's vast University Networks, interventions and experiences in the implementation of action-oriented research⁵, and graduate research as well as promotion of collaboration between academia, policy makers and practitioners to identify, document and share on-the-ground innovations, knowledge, and good practices on climate change mitigation. .

⁵ RUFORUM has implemented at least 17 action research projects within a value chains approach. These are impacting the agri-food systems. The CARPs have been implemented previously in Ethiopia, Malawi, Tanzania and currently; in Uganda, Benin, Ghana, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Namibia, Uganda, Botswana, Kenya, and Sudan. Eight projects have specifically focused on greenhouse gas emissions assessment.

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Purpose and objectives of the side event

The purpose of this meeting is to bring and connect experts and professionals from across the academia, public and private sector from Africa to co-create the future of the Network of African University-Industry as a mechanism for promoting South-South and Triangular Cooperation on Climate Change Adaptation and Agri- Food Systems Transformation in Africa. The specific objectives of the meeting are;

- a. Develop a collective understanding of the proposed network of African university-industry on promotion of south-south and triangulation cooperation on climate change adaptation and agri-food systems transformation in Africa
- b. Collaboratively design the high-level target programming focus areas for the network as well as develop key performance indicators for the network
- c. Review the forms and patterns of collaborative and adaptive research undertaken in Africa on climate change adaptation and agri-food systems transformation and map-out the gaps relevant for informing policy and programming for resilience.

Meeting approach

This session will be held an open dialogue co-creation event. A keynote address will be delivered on the relevance of creating convergence climate change adaptation and agri-food systems transformation efforts in Africa. The following sessions are designed based on collaborative panels and open discussions.

Programme

Moderator: Prof. Johnny Mugisha, Makerere University, Uganda

Rapporteur: Mr. Napoleon Kajunju

Time	Activity	Person in-charge
11:00-11:05	Arrival and short-overview of the outside hall exhibition	Mr. Napoleon Kajunju University of Eduardo Mondlane, Mozambique
11:05-11:10	Opening Remarks from RUFORUM	Prof. Anthony Egeru, RUFORUM-Uganda
11:10-11:20	Opening Remarks from FAO	Ms. Ali Athifa, FAO-Rome

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11:20-11:40	Key note address: “Relevance of creating convergence climate change adaptation and agri-food systems transformation efforts in Africa”	Prof. Emmanuel Kaunda, Vice Chancellor, Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (LUANAR)
11:40-12:00	Conceptual framing of the <i>Network of African University-Industry as a mechanism for promoting South-South and Triangular Cooperation on Climate Change Adaptation and Agri- Food Systems Transformation in Africa</i>	Ms. Ali Athifa, FAO-Rome
12:00-12:15	Discussion	Prof. Johnny Mugisha
12:15-12:45	Panel discussion: Learning from implementing Community Action Research through a value chain approach <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prof. Agnes Mwangombe, University of Nairobi (Cassava value chain) 2. Prof. Basil Mugonola, Gulu University (Rice value chain) 3. Prof. Vallantino Emognor, Botswana University of Agriculture and Natural Sciences (Sufflower) 	Panel Moderator (TBC)
12:45-13:00	Discussion and Drawing Insights for the Collaborative network	
13:00-14:00	Lunch Break	
14:00-14:30	Panel Two: Building on collaborative climate research initiative in sub-Saharan Africa <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prof. Bobe Bedad, Haramaya University, Ethiopia (Centre of Excellence in Climate Smart Agriculture) 2. Prof. Yazdhi Bamutaze, Makerere University (South-South and North-South climate partnerships) 	Panel Moderator (TBC)
14:30-15:20	Co-creation (Group work): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What should the network look like in terms of building blocks 	Prof. Johnny Mugisha

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	2. What should the key performance indicators be 3. How should the network resource be implemented	
15:20-16:00	Group Presentations and feedback	Group leaders
16:00-16:30	Bringing everything together and mapping way forward	All
16:30	Closing	Prof. Anthony Egeru

Expected outputs

- Insights into the nature of the proposed network of networks for climate change adaptation and agri-food systems
- Collaboration and networking opportunities among researchers, private sector and policy and decision markers.
- Climate change and agri-food systems research directions and agenda identified and prioritised for continued engagement.

Participants

This meeting will have the following stakeholders participants

- Researchers and Academics:** Scholars and researchers who will provide insights in the climate change adaptation and agri-food systems.
- Educators and academic staff:** Instructors, and educators who share their experiences and provide insights on climate change adaptation and agri-food systems transformation.
- Development partners and international organizations:** Representatives from international organizations interested climate change adaptation and agri-good systems transformation as well as collaborative engagement across institutions.
- Students and early career research fellows:** Students and alumni who are shaping their future as early career researchers in climate change and agri-food systems development.

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