



CONCEPT NOTE

International Workshop:

“Improving Responsiveness of Agricultural and Rural Advisory Services in the context of Climate change and Agripreneurship in Western and Central Africa”

***“Better engagement with women, youth and farmer’s organizations through
knowledge management”***

September 30 – October 2, 2016; Limbe (Cameroon)

The West and Central African Network of Agricultural and Rural Advisory Services (RESCAR-AOC) in partnership with GFRAS, GIZ, CTA, GWI, AFAAS, and MINADER/Programme ACEFA is organising an international conference in Limbe (Cameroon) from September 30 to October 2, 2016 with finalization and complementary meetings on October 2 and 7. The topic is "**Improving Responsiveness of Agricultural and Rural Advisory Services (ARAS) in the context of Climate Change and Agripreneurship in Western and Central Africa**". "**Better engagement with women, youth and farmer's organizations through knowledge management.**" The overall objective of the workshop is to discuss requirements necessary to ARAS to provide more effective support for an inclusive management of climate change and agripreneurship development hence contributing to the achievement of sustainable development in West and Central Africa. This international workshop is organised back-to-back with the 7th Annual Meeting of the Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services ([GFRAS](#)) that will take place from **3 - 6 October 2016** at the same venue with the topic "**Role of Rural Advisory Services (RAS) for Inclusive Agripreneurship**".

To participate, kindly fill and submit by September 12, 2016 the [online registration](#) form available [here](#). For further information, send an email to ateliers@rescar-aoc.org

A/ Background

Agricultural innovation systems (AIS) play a key role for a more productive and sustainable agriculture. AIS is recognized as having a great potential to contribute to addressing the Objective two of the Sustainable development goals (SDG 2) to "*End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.*" Improving the availability, accessibility and efficient mobilization of agricultural innovations and technologies is needed to meet the challenge of sustainably intensifying agriculture in a context marked by increasing demands for food and the impacts of climate change. The performance of agricultural innovation systems depends largely on the agricultural and rural advisory services (ARAS) that play the crucial role of brokering knowledge and facilitating interactions between different actors and stakeholders. ARAS are expected to provide adequate and customized support (access to innovation and technologies, capacity building, facilitation, support to decision-making) to producers to enable them to realize their projects and to meet challenges and opportunities generated by the transformation of their environment.

In West and Central Africa (WCA), the Responsiveness of ARAS, that is their ability to have relevant and timely offer and to adjust or anticipate whenever necessary so as to constantly be in line with the diverse and changing demands of the value chain actors is very low (Djamen, 2015). Value chain actors do not always clearly formulate and express their demands, thus it is also the role of ARAS to facilitate their identification and their analysis together with the involvement of other actors and mainly the beneficiaries. There is still a big gap between the supply and demand despite the gradual rise of participatory and demand-driven ARAS approaches and innovative methods and tools.

In several cases, decades of implementation of supply-driven systems make the demands of value chain actors not very explicit, poorly articulated and often mostly based on the potential services offered by suppliers rather than on real problems being experienced. ARAS' offer is inadequate both quantitatively (e.g. number of producers reached) and qualitatively (categories of producers reached, themes considered etc.), and varies depending on value chains, services and localities. The low responsiveness of ARAS is often due to a set of systemic factors underpinned by issues of knowledge management including among others gap or difficulties to document, store and access relevant knowledge on the theme, insufficient knowledge or integration of the clientele demands, lack of appropriate knowledge management tools and methods, outdated skills and competencies, unfavorable environment, limited resources etc.

Raising the responsiveness of ARAS is one of the key focus of the West and Central Africa Network of Agricultural and Rural Advisory Services (RESCAR-AOC), which emerged in 2010

with the vision to achieve “Effective agricultural and rural advisory services mobilized in line with demand to facilitate sustainable development in WCA”. It is in line with this vision that RESCAR-AOC is committed to facilitate the contribution of ARAS in addressing climate change and agripreneurship development, likely to structurally influence the expected positive outcomes and impacts of efforts for sustainable agricultural development in WCA. In fact climate change and variability is already seriously and increasingly affecting the performance and future of farming. Agripreneurship which is a key lever for the achievement of food and nutritional security and growth in WCA is still yet to be developed. So far, the expected contribution of ARAS (including clear identification of demands, development and customization of solutions) in addressing these challenges has been very weak.

There is a need to increase the awareness of ARAS actors on climate change and agripreneurship, but beyond that it is important to fill the gap in ARAS contribution in addressing these strategic challenges. Improving the responsiveness of ARAS include identifying, sharing and discussing conditions for the scaling up of relevant recent or current experiences that are usually conducted in the framework of projects whose duration and area of intervention are often limited. Most importantly, it is essential to consider recent evidence which stressed the need for ARAS to better harness the potential of women and youth but also farmers' organisations so as to have greater developmental impact. Farmers' organisations play a key role in the expression of farmers' demands, delivery of ARAS and governance of ARAS schemes; women and youth are highly involved in agricultural production and to wealth creation in smallholder farming systems, their potential is large but has been untapped so far. Better engagement of women, youth and farmers organisations requires the identification of challenges and opportunities facing these groups with regards to climate change and agripreneurship and consequently to design and implement adequate responses including filling knowledge management requirements which underpin responsiveness of ARAS.

This international workshop is meant to address this concern, it is organised in the framework of multi-stakeholders partnerships involving RESCAR-AOC, Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services (GFRAS), Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA), the Global Water Initiative (GWI), African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (AFAAS), the Programme for the Improvement of the Competitiveness of Family Farms (ACEFA) and the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of Cameroon (MINADER).

B/ Objective

The **overall objective** of the workshop is to discuss requirements necessary for ARAS to provide more effective support for an inclusive management of climate change and agripreneurship development hence contributing to the achievement of sustainable development in West and Central Africa.

The **specific objectives of the workshop are to:**

- Enhance awareness of workshop participants on climate change and agripreneurship;
- Improve participants' understanding of challenges and opportunities of climate change and agripreneurship amongst women, youth and farmers organisations and formulate recommendations for adoption of climate smart agriculture (CSA) and development of agripreneurship ;
- Discuss knowledge requirements, innovative approaches and operational arrangements necessary for ARAS to inclusively support adoption of CSA and agripreneurship, based on the use of sound knowledge management practices;
- Outline a regional knowledge management plan in ARAS in WCA.

C/ Content and articulation

The workshop will be organised into two main parts. The first part will run from September 30 to October 2 and will be devoted primarily to identifying and addressing implications of the integration of gender, climate change and agripreneurship in ARAS. The second part will include

a half day on October 3 and a full day on October 7, focused on drafting and finalizing regional knowledge management plans and preparation of next steps including a call for proposal to support knowledge management activities and innovative approaches in ARAS and a writeshop. While the first part of the meeting is opened to all participants, the second part will involve only a small group of people including representatives of Caribbean and Pacific regions, RESCAR-AOC regional resource persons and country focal points.

The overall articulation of the workshop is summarized in Table 1. Keynote presentations follow by case studies and field experiences made on integrating gender into value chains and RAS, climate smart agriculture and agripreneurship. A training session take place on *Integrating Gender in value chain*. A presentation supported by practical examples and exercises will be made on knowledge management and innovation processes in ARAS. A session will be dedicated to the launching of the GWI report entitled “*Towards a shared vision - Advisory services that work for smallholders and government in West Africa’s large irrigation schemes*”. Plenary and group work sessions will be organised on (i) Challenges and opportunities facing women, youth and farmer’s organisation in CSA adoption and agripreneurship development and (ii) Knowledge Management requirements and operational arrangements necessary for suppliers to address beneficiaries’ needs. Outputs generated by the different sessions will be used to elaborate recommendations and way forward for RESCAR-AOC and its partners, but also to prepare key messages to share in the GFRAS Annual Meeting.

Table 1. Draft Agenda of the workshop

Time	Activities	Main Responsible (to be confirmed)
PART 1: IMPLICATIONS OF THE INTEGRATION OF GENDER, CLIMATE CHANGE AND AGRIPRENEURSHIP IN ARAS		
Day 1 : 30 September 2016		
Session 1: Opening and framing of the first part of the workshop		
8h00-8h30	1.1/ Welcome and installation of participants	Organising committee (OC)
8h30-9h30	1.1/ opening remarks 1.2/ official launching 1.3/ Overview of RESCAR-AOC and contribution of the workshop in the transformation of ARAS in WCA	Organizing committee Patrice Djamen
Session 2: Conceptual background, practical options		
9h30-10h30	2.1/ Integration of Gender in Agricultural Value Chain: theoretical background and feedback back from the GIZ workshop on Gender Mainstreaming in Value Chains	Hlami Ngwenya
10h30-11h00	Coffee-break & networking	
11h00-13h00	2.1/ Integration of Gender in Agricultural Value Chain: Experiences, lessons learnt and implications for ARAS (group discussions)	Hlami Ngwenya
13h00-14h00	- Lunch-break & networking	Organising committee (OC)
Session 3: Recommendations and networking		
14h00-15h00	3.1/ Integration of Gender in Agricultural Value Chain: findings and recommendations for ARAS (plenary)	Hlami Ngwenya
15h00-16h30	3.2/ open space & networking : short presentations (posters, etc.) of WCA countries on recent innovations in ARAS and experiences of integration of gender, climate change and agripreneurship	Organising committee (OC)
Session 4: Book launch and Welcome drink		
18h00-19h30	4.1/ Launching of the GWI report entitled “ <i>Towards a shared vision - Advisory services that work for smallholders and government in West Africa’s large irrigation schemes</i> ” 4.2/ Welcome drink	Barbara Adolph Organising committee

Time	Activities	Main Responsible (to be confirmed)
Day 2: 1st October 2016		
AM (8h30 - 13h00) : two parallel sessions	Parallel session #1: Training session on Integrating Gender in value chain Parallel Session # 2: Overview and implications of climate and agripreneurship for ARAS	Hlami Ngwenya Patrice Djamen
Detailed agenda of Parallel Session # 2: Overview and implications of climate and agripreneurship for ARAS		
8h30-9h00	Brief Recap of Day 1	Organising committee
Session 5: Overview of climate smart agriculture and agripreneurship		
9h00- 10h30	5.1/ Keynote presentation on climate change and climate smart agriculture + case studies on CSA	Der Dabiré, Ann Degrande
10h30-11h00	- coffee-break & networking	
11h00-12h15	5.2/ Keynote presentation + case studies on agripreneurship	Shaun Ferris, Yves Bitama, Sidy Sonko
12h15-13h00	5.3/ General discussions and constitution of working groups	Tunji Arokoyo
13h00-14h00	- Lunch - break	
Session 6: Implications of CSA and agripreneurship for women, youth and Farmer's organisations		
14h00-15h30	6.1/ Challenges and opportunities facing women, youth and farmer's organisation in adoption of CSA and agripreneurship development: Group work (3 groups): Famer's organisations, women and youth	Patrice Djamen
15h30-16h00	- Coffee - break	
16h00-17h30	6.2/ Challenges and opportunities facing women, youth and Farmer's organisation in adoption of CSA and agripreneurship development: Plenary presentations and discussions of outputs of group work, including the need for knowledge management	Barbara Adolph
Day 3: 2nd October 2016		
Session 7: Addressing implications of CSA and Agripreneurship to women, youth and Farmer's organisations from a knowledge management perspective		
8h00-9h00	7.1/ Knowledge Management and innovation processes in ARAS	Krishan Bheenick
9h00-10h30	7.2/ Knowledge Management requirements and operational arrangements necessary for ARAS to address beneficiaries' needs - Group work , 4 groups : (i) policy makers, (ii) country forum members (iii) managers of ARAS schemes and (iv) farmers organisations /1h30min	CTA Facilitator & Co-facilitator (Israel Bionyi)
10h30-11h00	Coffee - break & networking / 30min	
11h00-12h15	7.3/ Knowledge Management requirements and operational arrangements necessary for suppliers to address beneficiaries' needs - Plenary presentation and discussion of outputs of group work / 1h30min	Krishan Bheenick
Session 8: Recommendations and way forward		
12h15-13h00	8.1/ Outlining of key messages to share with the GFRAS AM 8.2/ Elaboration of recommendations for RESCAR-AOC 8.3/ Next steps	Michel Havard
13h00-14h00	- Lunch-break and networking	Organising committee
	- Parallel session 1: RESCAR-AOC internal meeting : (i) Discussion on CF and (ii) Plans and strategy for 2017	Patrice Djamen

Time	Activities	Main Responsible (to be confirmed)
14h00-17h30 (two parallel sessions)	- Parallel session 2: Presentation of Training Materials, Methods and Tools for knowledge management	Krishan Bheenick & CTA Team
PART II: DEVELOPMENT OF REGIONAL KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT PLAN AND PREPARATION OF NEXT STEPS		
Time	Activities	Responsible
Mon 3 October (AM)	AM: Drafting of regional knowledge management plans & Presentations of examples from ACP regions	CTA Team & ACP representatives
Mon 3 October (PM) until Thursday 6 October	PM: GFRAS Annual Meeting; side events; training activities; field visits (continuation of drafting regional KM plans)	Organising committee
Fri 7 October 8h00-10h30	Presentation of draft regional KM plans and discussions on follow-up activities by ACP regions	CTA Team & ACP representatives
10h30-11h00	Coffee - break & networking / 30min	
11h00-13h00	Consultations on the development of a call for proposals for innovative approaches to scaling up innovations; supporting knowledge management activities in ACP regions	CTA Team
13h00-14h00	Lunch-break and networking	Organising committee
14h00-16h00	Discussions on the follow-up writeshop for Western and Central African regions	CTA Team & RESCAR representatives

D/ Participants

The workshop will bring together a wide range of actors and stakeholders involved in agricultural development and in the design, implementation, assessment and support to agricultural and rural advisory services schemes in particular. Participants of the following profiles are expected: leaders of women, youth and farmers' organisations, agricultural policies makers, managers of agricultural advisory programmes; leaders of ARAS platforms (at national, regional and continental levels); investors; resource persons / experts in Gender, value chain, farmers' organisations, climate smart agriculture, agripreneurship.

Sixty seats are available. People interested to attend the workshop are requested to fill and submit the [online registration form](#) (available [here](#)) by September 12. The organising committee will send confirmation to registered participants on September 17.

E/ Dates, venue and logistics of the workshop

The workshop will take place at [Fini hotel](#) in Limbé in the South-western part of Cameroon at the Atlantic coast. The workshop will run from September 30 to October 2, with finalization meetings on October 3 and 7, 2016. Participants, except those already supported by CTA, GFRAS and GWI are encouraged to seek within their organisations and/or from their partners necessary means for their participation and organize themselves their trip and stay in Limbe. The organising committee is working with local partners on the possibilities of visa issuance upon arrival at the airport and assistance to participants who need pick-up and transfer from Douala airport (80 km from Limbe). Logistical information will be continuously updated during upcoming days. For any further information about this event please contact ateliers@rescar-aoc.org

F/ Main organisers

RESCAR-AOC, GFRAS, GIZ, CTA, GWI, AFAAS, MINADER/ACEFA