

A YEAR IN REVIEW

# SHAPING THE FUTURE



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*There needs to be a transformation in the way agriculture is conceived so that each smallholder farm is treated as a competitive business.*

*Michael Hailu, CTA Director*



## MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

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**T**he central role of agriculture in meeting many of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) has shaped CTA's activities over the course of 2016 and will continue to influence the organisation's operations into the future.

Agriculture not only has a vital role to play in achieving the objectives of SDG2 – to end hunger, achieve food security and improve nutrition – but is also central to realising SDG1's aim to end extreme poverty. Additionally, the agricultural sector must facilitate work towards the goals targeting gender equality (SDG5), decent work and economic growth (SDG 8), climate action (SDG13) and the sustainable use of land ecosystems. Moreover, agriculture is key to mitigating the urgent challenges of youth unemployment and large-scale migration in Africa and other developing regions. However, subsistence agriculture, practised as a way of life for the majority of African farmers, will not succeed in meeting these challenges. There needs to be a transformation in the way agriculture is conceived so that the smallholder farmer is treated as a competitive business owner. Farms built on a modern and sustainable business model create value for smallholder producers,

young men and women, and produce consistent yields of affordable, nutritious and healthy food. CTA's vision is for the agri-food systems in ACP countries to be built on efficient and competitive agri-businesses across the value-chain.

The articles in this annual review give a good flavour of CTA's interventions to help smallholder producers benefit from innovations in agribusiness, finance, ICTs, climate-smart agriculture, agro-tourism, communications and knowledge management. For instance, CTA's Market-led, User-owned ICT4Ag Enabled Information Service (MUIIS) project – launched in October 2015 – has developed a bundle of agricultural information products, including weather alerts, agronomic tips and financial services, which Ugandan farmers can access through SMS and smartphone apps. The organisation has also continued to promote multi-stakeholder engagement in policy development through regular Brussels Development Briefings and in 2016 released a new multimedia pack highlighting the briefings' highlights from the last 8 year.

Looking forward, CTA will continue to focus on making agribusiness work for smallholders across Africa, the Caribbean and Pacific countries – working with partners to boost entrepreneurship and youth employment.

*Michael Hailu, Director*

# KEY FIGURES FOR 2016



## 176

experts from 34 countries participated in the Blending4Ag conference on *Innovative Partnerships for Agricultural Finance*.

## 1,934

farmers accessed drought-tolerant seeds during the seed fairs held in rural villages of Mali and Zimbabwe respectively.

## 55,369

small scale producers have increased adaptive capacity to climate change as a result of PGIS processes.

## 467,878

publications were downloaded from CTA Publishing website.

## 353

producers were trained in standards, norms and finance in the Caribbean.

## 5,070

new individuals subscribed to Spore magazine.

## € 700,000

were invested by international companies and organisations in young ICT agripreneur start-ups involved in CTA's AgriHack activities.



## 103

Organisations in Africa joined the Global Open Data in Agriculture and Nutrition (GODAN) initiative thanks to CTA support to the 1st African Open Data Conference and to the GODAN Global Summit.

# 210

articles, TV news and radio broadcast covered the Caribbean Week of Agriculture and

# 5,200

tweets were sent.

# 1,630

downloads of the CTA/WUR publication on “Innovation Systems: Strategies in support of Smallholder Farmers” were recorded.



# 49

people were trained in participatory geographic information systems (PGIS) of which

# 54%

of trainees were aged between 18 and 35

# 35%

of trainees were women.

# 80,000

producers in Uganda, out of which

# 35,000

women, were sensitized through the MUIIS project, to increase their productivity thanks to tailor-made information service



# 250

news stories and TV shows were published or broadcasted on the Cassava Forum in Yaoundé by

# 40

journalists and media agencies.

# 284

blogs were created through YoBloco Awards and other social media trainings,

# 46%

of blogs creators are women.

# PROMOTING AGRIBUSINESS





Rural and agricultural finance are key drivers to developing agriculture in West Africa, to feed a growing population and curb rising food import bills. The International Conference on Improving Agricultural Finance, a two-day event held in Abuja, Nigeria, explored effective strategies for developing financial instruments and policies to boost agricultural production and value chains.



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## RURAL FINANCE KEY TO AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

**A** growing population, coupled with large-scale migration from rural areas to towns, is creating strong demand for food in West Africa, which is urbanising more rapidly than any other region on the continent. Spending on food in the region is therefore expected to triple by 2022. Given that the average West African family spends 60% of household income on food, this trend creates valuable opportunities for farmers. But poor access to finance remains a major constraint for agriculture, despite the availability of adequate arable land that could be used for food production.

Taking the theme Catalysing the diversification of the Nigeria economy through agricultural

finance, the International Conference on Improving Agricultural Finance focused on opportunities for developing the agriculture sector of West Africa's most populous nation, Nigeria, which needs to diversify its economy beyond oil and grow food for its population of almost 186 million people. However, lessons learned were also identified for other countries in the region, where effective rural and agricultural finance is needed to drive more efficient food production, processing and marketing.

Dominated by foreign purchases of rice, African food imports have reached alarming levels, with a total bill of US\$22.4 billion (€21 billion) for sub-Saharan Africa in 2014. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)



*Rural and agricultural finance therefore are key drivers for unlocking the full potential of agriculture.*

SALEH USMAN GASHUA,  
AFRACA SECRETARY GENERAL

region is by far the largest food importer on the continent, led by Nigeria. This huge country, whose economy is based on its oil reserves at the expense of other productive sectors, urgently needs to develop its agriculture sector, to ensure sustainable economic growth and feed its growing population. “West Africa depends largely on food imports, when all the evidence shows that it is perfectly capable of producing much of its own food,” said Lamon Rutten, Manager of Policies, Markets and ICTs at CTA. “That would mean higher revenues for farmers and could help to stem the rural exodus, especially if young people can be persuaded that there is a future in farming. But for any of this to happen, it is essential to have the right rural and agricultural financial mechanisms in place.”

With some 200 participants drawn from the public, private and development sectors, as well as from farmers’ organisations, the meeting set out to examine positive rural and agricultural finance models, together with interventions that have proved less successful. It also discussed how best to harmonise the most promising agrifinance initiatives to ensure that investments are directed where they can be most effective.

Topics on the agenda included developing an inclusive finance sector; the role of government and central banks in improving rural and agricultural finance and innovative financial products for smallholder farmers and small and medium-sized enterprises; as well as innovations in financing agricultural value chains. Among the cross-cutting issues explored during the sessions were access to finance for youth and women, and challenges posed by climate change.

“Non-oil sectors, such as agriculture, have great potential of addressing social and economic challenges, not only in Nigeria but across the continent,” said African Rural and Agricultural Credit Association (AFRACA) Secretary General, Saleh Usman Gashua. “Rural and agricultural finance therefore are key drivers for unlocking the full potential of agriculture. The agricultural sector still is yet to attain its full potential in the continent.” 🍌



## REGIONAL SOLUTIONS IN THE PACIFIC

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The 2nd Pacific Agribusiness Forum not only identified pressing challenges but also opportunities and creative solutions focused on the development and strengthening of partnerships and linkages among the agriculture, agritourism, health, education and finance sectors.

An important theme during the 2nd Pacific Agribusiness Forum was that even small nations like those in the Pacific can achieve great things. “Small as we are, under-resourced as we are, but with true Pacific spirit and resilience, we can all become gold medallists,” said the Pacific Islands Private Sector Organisation’s (PIPSO) chairman, Howard Politini, in reference to Fiji’s rugby sevens team which had just brought back the country’s first Olympic gold medal.

The Forum was opened by Samoa’s Prime Minister, Tuilaepa Sailele Malielegaoi, who, while expressing his concerns about food security and the health crisis that the Pacific faces, also highlighted the region’s capacity to thrive. “We are indeed blessed with an ocean abundant with marine life, and fertile soils capable of recovering from the worst of natural disasters. If we only take what we need, generations after us will also be fed from the same food baskets.



*Our farmers are organic by default and organic farming will be our future.*

TUILAEPA SAILELE MALIELEGAOI,  
PRIME MINISTER OF SAMOA

Our farmers are organic by default and organic farming will be our future.”

Approximately 100 attendees experienced an intensive 4 days of presentations, industry visits, deliberations and networking. The Forum began with a workshop focusing on women in agribusiness and the launch of a Pacific Women in Agribusiness project, and ended with working group discussions formulating plans, strategies and solutions, which were circulated to the participants for action immediately after the Forum.

One of the highlights was a dinner prepared by more than 30 trainee chefs, who had undergone training with the renowned chefs Robert Oliver and Colin Chung. Organised by the South Pacific Tourism Organisation (SPTO) and the Samoa Tourism Authority (STA), and supported by PIPSO and CTA, the local chefs were able to showcase their talents, skills and creativity in utilising local ingredients for delicious contemporary island cuisines. The top-performing trainee chef received an award to visit the Caribbean and learn from her counterparts there. It was announced that more chefs in the Pacific will be awarded such scholarships through the Chefs for Development project, which is also supported by CTA.

PIPSO's CEO, Mereia Volavola, emphasised throughout the Forum that clear steps would be taken from the outcomes gathered. The Forum was a real opportunity to hear from stakeholders in the agribusiness and agritourism sectors, and identify priority areas for development which informed components of PIPSO's support. These include capacity building and linkages between farmers and the tourism industry in the Pacific; support for agritourism, women and youth in agribusiness; and encouragement of the use of locally sourced food. Another key area highlighted by stakeholders was the need for more multisectoral and multi-stakeholder partnerships, as well as solutions that had a regional approach. 🍌

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The 2nd Pacific Agribusiness Forum, held in Apia, Samoa, from 29 August to 1 September 2016, was organised by PIPSO, CTA and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) with the support of the EU, the ACP Secretariat, SPTO, STA, the Secretariat of the Pacific Community, the Samoan Chamber of Commerce and the Pacific Cooperation Foundation.

See the Forum's recommendations and actions to implement:  
<https://goo.gl/OGnX4X>



The growth of small-scale agriculture in developing countries is being held back by critical underfunding. To address this challenge, CTA was the lead organizer of an international conference which explored an innovative approach for agricultural finance – the blending of private, philanthropic and public funding to leverage greater capital flows into smallholder value chains. The Blending4Ag conference was held to improve practices in mobilising agricultural finance, and help forge new partnerships for mitigating and sharing risks in smallholder funding.



## BOOSTING AGRICULTURE THROUGH INNOVATIVE LENDING PARTNERSHIPS

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**A**t present, less than one-quarter of the financing needs of smallholder farmers in developing countries are met, leaving an annual financing gap of more than US\$150 billion (€133.4 billion). Most of this unfulfilled demand for financing, which amounts to \$84 billion (€74.7 billion), comes from 88 million smallholder farmers engaged in loose value chains – farmers who regularly produce surpluses and sell them in the market. The bulk of the financing requirements come from local markets that trade in crops such as wheat, maize and cassava.

If current trends persist, this financing gap will continue to stifle smallholder value chain development in the coming decades. Behind the funding gap is the reluctance of private financiers to lend to smallholder farmers, based on a perception of unacceptably high risks.

More efficient use of public finance, which is currently the main source of bank lending to small holders, offers significant opportunities for accelerating the growth of agricultural finance, especially as a means of leveraging private sector funding.



Known as blended finance, public-private lending partnerships have already proven to be effective in a range of sectors including energy and infrastructure.

The Blending4Ag conference examined the largely untapped potential for using blending tools to leverage finance for agriculture, and particularly to unlock more private funding to develop agribusiness in the smallholder sector. “For the formal lending sector, agricultural finance is still perceived as a high-risk business, and this is inhibiting transformation of smallholder agricultural production and value addition, in turn negatively impacting on economic growth and job creation in developing countries,” said CTA Director Michael Hailu. “Blended finance is a promising formula to unlock private capital flows using public finance as leverage.”

Focusing on practical aspects of blending finance for agriculture, the conference sought to contribute to the knowledge base on how this can best be done. The event, which brought together key stakeholders from agriculture, finance, public and private sectors, investigated various blending schemes that are currently in operation and assessed some of the principle challenges to developing this approach to galvanise better funding of small-scale agriculture in the future.

“Smallholder finance is more complicated than the financing of infrastructure or power plants, for which blending techniques have so far been mostly used,” said Lamon Rutten, Manager of Policies, Markets and ICTs at CTA.

*Blended finance is a promising formula to unlock private capital flows using public finance as leverage.*

MICHAEL HAILU, CTA DIRECTOR

“Special efforts are needed to cross the last mile, and also, to ensure that as a result of the financing, smallholders benefit from higher and more sustainable revenues. The conference brought together the different groups who, through innovative types of collaboration, can deliver blended structures that effectively reach smallholders.”

Specific topics included, how to achieve leverage in unlocking private funding for smallholder agriculture through public resources, scope for developing local currency financing, partnerships for effective financing of climate change adaptation and resilience, and risk management and other support structures.

One case study presented during the conference examined the design of a fledgling financing facility aimed at increasing lending to smallholder farmers in Ghana, to improve productivity and promote climate smart agriculture in the cocoa sector. The plan involved offering a guarantee mechanism to some of the country’s local financial institutions as an incentive for them to lend to smallholder cocoa farmers and farmers’ associations. The session shared the progress they had made, including constraints, lessons learned and ideas for future schemes. 🍌

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The Blending4Ag conference was held in Brussels on 7-8 November 2016. It was organised by CTA, the African Rural And Agricultural Credit Association (AFRACA), the international financing platform Convergence, the Initiative for Smallholder Finance (ISF) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

For further information, see: <https://goo.gl/8klZuf>

Aflatoxins are toxic substances, produced by fungi, which colonise maize, sorghum, groundnuts, millet, cassava and chilies among other commodities in Africa. The consequences of contamination are manifold and detrimental for human health, food security and trade. CTA and the African Union Commission, Partnership for Aflatoxin Control in Africa (PACA), are currently seeking to engage the private sector and upscale viable solutions to tackle this complex challenge in African countries.



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## MITIGATING THE CONSEQUENCES OF AFLATOXIN IN AFRICA

**A**flatoxins – foodborne toxins produced by moulds (*Aspergillus* species) – hinder Africa's efforts towards achieving food security, improving nutrition and attaining thriving agricultural-led economic growth. Ubiquitous across African countries, a 2016 study commissioned by CTA in conjunction with PACA, and led by Professor Sheila Okoth, confirmed that these fungal metabolites pose major risks to human health and trade. Aflatoxins have been associated with liver cancer, as well as stunting and kwashiorkor in children. They also hamper domestic, intra-regional and international trade; it is estimated that the continent loses €400–600 million annually in export earnings due to aflatoxins.

Experts claim that this complex challenge can only be contained if multiple actors engage in coordinated efforts aimed at mitigating the risks along the value chains of commodities that are susceptible to aflatoxin contamination.

Their concerted actions should be complemented by enabling policies and regulations, and backed up with adequate financial and human resources. A sound institutional framework (inclusive of well-equipped laboratories) is critical.

In recent years, the spotlight has turned on strengthening alliances with the private sector, particularly farmers' organisations and industry leaders. Given the high economic losses, they are seen as instrumental to providing leadership in the shared agenda for tackling aflatoxin contamination.



*The roundtable detailed seven successful intervention stories, which demonstrated how the private sector has been dealing with the aflatoxin challenge.*

Public-private-producer partnerships for aflatoxin control in Africa can make significant contributions to improving public health and nutrition, developing agro-industries and expanding trade opportunities.

In light of this, PACA and CTA convened a roundtable side event on the margins of the 2nd PACA Partnership Platform meeting in Entebbe, Uganda on 11 October 2016, to develop a private sector engagement strategy and evaluation criteria for effective private sector-led aflatoxin mitigation. The roundtable gathered over 35 participants, including CEOs and programme managers, producers, millers, traders and processors from the groundnut, grain, chili, and coffee value chain, as well as input and equipment suppliers, technical and financial service providers, and development partners from across Africa and beyond. Representatives from AFRI-Nut (Malawi), Cereal Millers' Association (Kenya), CTA, GrainPro (Eastern Africa), Meds For Kids (MFK, Haiti), Nestlé (West Africa), PACA, USAID, and women's organisations from Uganda and Zimbabwe, also attended.

The roundtable detailed seven successful intervention stories, which demonstrated how the private sector has been dealing with the aflatoxin challenge. One of these was MFK's model – one of CTA's Top 20 Innovations – which promotes the use of appropriate control strategies throughout the entire value chain in Haiti. MFK's model supports smallholders to control aflatoxin contamination through training, collaborative research and price incentives. As a result, farmers have been able to access credit, and increase yields by 30% and farm incomes by 100%. Since 2012, a private company, Acceso Peanut Enterprise, has expanded the model to new regions of Haiti, opening up new markets to more farmers. Nestlé also shared their experience in West Africa, where they reduced rejection rates from 50% in 2007 to 4% by 2013 and got farmers to meet the stringent acceptable limits of total aflatoxins at 4 µg/kg of maize.

Other private sector-led initiatives that have achieved a growth in market share, and met consumer demands while increasing brand and quality recognition. They include:

- Self-regulation and the adoption of internal standards, which are in some cases stricter than national and international norms;
- Provision of input credits and higher prices for quality produce to farmers;





- Training of farmers in good agricultural practices, and in conducting aflatoxin testing throughout the value chain;
- Establishing joint ventures with major research facilities;
- Forming alliances with other private sector actors and producer groups;
- Investing in capacity building of staff and infrastructural development.

The following priority actions were compiled to form a private sector engagement strategy:

- Mobilise matching grant schemes for increasing access to technologies and services to support innovation;
- Build alliances with consumer groups to create awareness and demand for safe quality foods without creating panic;
- Build alliances with farmer groups/associations/cooperatives for scaling-up the adoption of good agricultural practices and collective sourcing;
- Lobby government for incentives to support innovation in the food and feed value chains, and updating and improving implementation of aflatoxin regulation governing the informal and commercial sectors.

CTA will continue to partner with PACA and other key African and international partners in the continued effort to control aflatoxin contamination in Africa, particularly to accelerate concrete collaboration with the private sector for improved agricultural production, agri-business and trade, and health and nutrition. 🍌

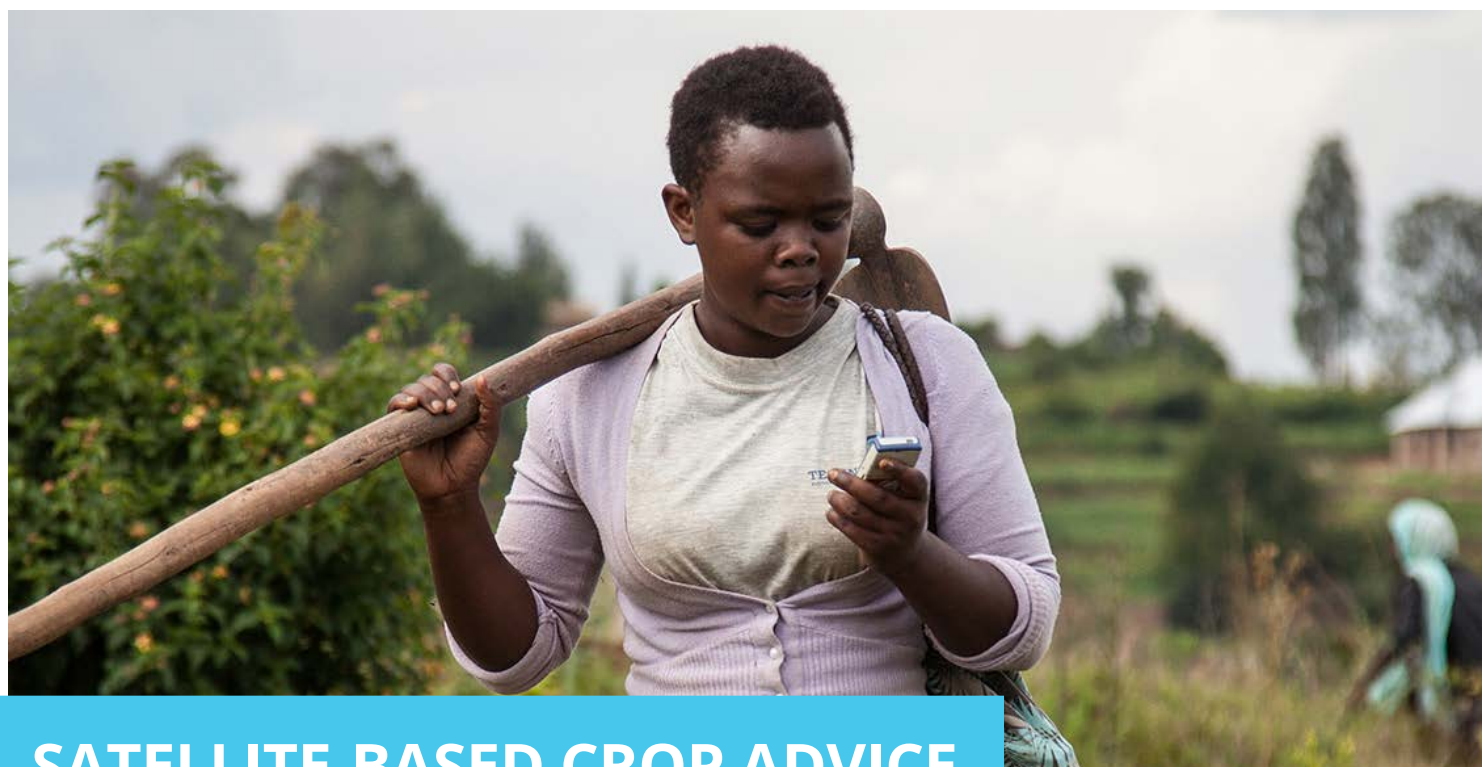
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Download the final report of the side event on the margins of the 2nd PACA Partnership Platform meeting in Entebbe: <https://goo.gl/9Whzrf>  
 Download the 2016 report, Improving the evidence base on aflatoxin contamination and exposure in Africa: <https://goo.gl/8SXVsS>  
 Download CTA's Top 20 Innovations: <https://goo.gl/xxSN6t>  
 Read about the MFK model: <https://goo.gl/pZugyz>

# ICTs FOR AGRICULTURE



In October 2015, a consortium led by CTA begun developing a bundle of agricultural information products to be sold through SMS and smartphone apps to enable Ugandan farmers to access satellite-based crop advice. The project, entitled Market-led, User-owned ICT4Ag enabled Information Service (MUIIS), provides agricultural extension advisory services to farmers at the swipe of a screen. MUIIS information products include weather forecasts and alerts, crop management and agronomic tips, and financial services, such as index-based insurance for crop farmers in Africa.



## SATELLITE-BASED CROP ADVICE

©CTA

While affordable, accessible and good quality seeds, fertilisers and agro-chemicals are seen as vital for improving the productivity and incomes of smallholder farmers in developing countries, timely and accurate information for using these inputs is often overlooked.

To deliver ICT-enabled extension services to farmers, MUIIS combines the expertise of seven key public and private sector partners through an innovative but complex multi-stakeholder approach. The information chain (circle) of MUIIS has three components: data, knowledge and information. Each of these components has dedicated partners

with experience and expertise in delivering the products, making sure that the products from each part of the chain complement the needs of the other components.

Three of the partners – eLEAF Competence Center (eLEAF), EARS Earth Environment Monitoring (EARS-E2M), and aWhere Inc – are from the private sector and bring creativity and innovation to the project, making sure that MUIIS is marketable in the long-term, beyond the lifetime of donor support. In addition to the main partners, MUIIS also leverages other third party service providers that see the potential value of the project and are willing to contribute their skills, expertise and experience.



*The MUIIS initiative has received plenty of media coverage. As well as local television coverage in Uganda, MUIIS has had radio, newspaper and television coverage in the Netherlands.*


During 2016 the implementation of MUIIS progressed tremendously. The targeted weather and agronomic information, as well as index-based insurance services were developed, and an SMS platform to deliver messages to farmers was also developed. A needs-based assessment to understand farmers interest in the products, and their willingness to adopt and pay for information products through MUIIS was carried out. Training and capacity building of MUIIS Service Agents (MSAs) was also begun, with the training of 20 MSAs for baseline data collection and 184 MSAs who have begun training farmers and farmer leaders.

The MUIIS initiative has received plenty of media coverage. As well as local television coverage in Uganda, MUIIS has had radio, newspaper and television coverage in the Netherlands. VPRO Media are also producing a documentary on the project, specifically on how computer robotics and artificial intelligence can improve agriculture.

From the first week of March 2017, over 30,000 farmers, whose profiles were in the MUIIS database, were given the opportunity to start a subscription to the MUIIS Service Bundle which consists of a series of weather alerts, agronomic tips, and index-based drought insurance. A farmer will pay 14,000 Ugandan Shilling (€3.5) per season, per acre of maize, soya bean or sesame for MUIIS. It is estimated that around 100,000 farmers will have been reached by MUIIS by May/June 2017.

### Expected impact

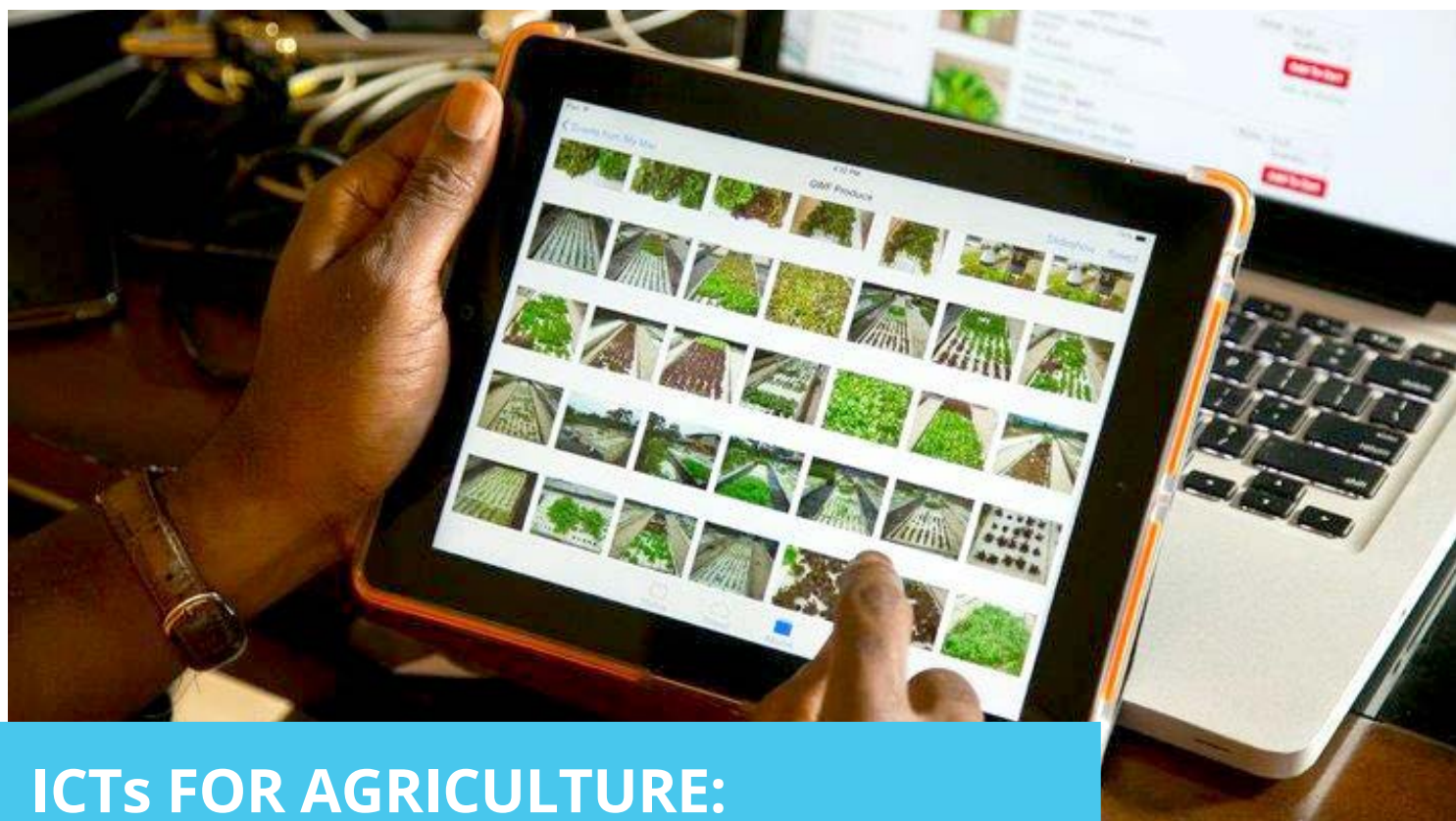
One of the most important expected impacts of MUIIS is the decreased vulnerability of food producers to climate related shocks, including droughts, pests and diseases. From the timely, precise and accurate information services provided by MUIIS, farmers will be able to make decisions that, in the longer term, guarantee sustained crop yield and income. If climate related events result in significant crop losses, food producers will be able to claim on crop insurance, which will ensure a sufficient pay-out for a sustainable degree of food security.

It is believed that as the beneficiaries of satellite enabled information services, farmers will be willing to pay for the information services and products just as they pay for other inputs, like seeds and fertilisers. 

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For more information on MUIIS, follow @MUIIS\_U ([https://twitter.com/muiis\\_u](https://twitter.com/muiis_u)) on Twitter and visit the project portal <http://muiis.cta.int/> to get updates on the progress of the project and its outcomes. The project portal also provides a helpful overview of the seven principles of MUIIS, <https://goo.gl/c2b9mt>





## ICTs FOR AGRICULTURE: A MUST FOR YOUTH AND FARMERS

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Information and communication technologies (ICTs) can play a critical role in improving incomes for small-scale producers and other players in the agrifood sector, while providing livelihood opportunities for young people able to develop high-tech solutions. As part of its continued efforts to promote youth entrepreneurs and ICTs, CTA staged a number of events at the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Forum 2016 in Geneva, Switzerland - the world's largest annual gathering of the ICT for development community.

In many developing countries, young people are proving increasingly adept at creating ICT applications to strengthen agri-food systems. In partnership with the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), CTA showcased some of these promising ICT innovations and hosted discussions on how to do more to foster creative youth involvement in addressing some of agriculture's most pressing problems.

A Plug & Play event at the WSIS Forum 2016 allowed visitors to discover a range of ICT platforms and give visibility to the young entrepreneurs who developed them. The session was based on the highly successful Plug & Play model launched by CTA in 2013, which has since been used around the world to demonstrate the potential of a wide range of technologies designed to improve practices at various stages along the agricultural value chain.

Participants were encouraged to test-drive the latest mobile and web-based applications, and discover how they could make these tools work for them in agricultural activities.



There were opportunities for them to engage with the innovators, who were each given 15 minutes to pitch their application to the audience. Innovations presented at the session included AgroCentral, a cloud-based platform that links agri-businesses to their suppliers; FarmDrive, which improves access to credit for smallholder farmers; MOBIS, which offers banking software for Savings and Credit Cooperatives; Musoni, a core-banking system; and CropGuard and PEAT, two apps to help farmers recognise and treat plant pathogens and nutrient deficiencies. Some of these innovations were developed in the framework of CTA's agricultural hackathon and incubation activities, known as AgriHack Talent.

"CTA's Mini Plug & Play event was an innovative approach to creating awareness of the potential of ICTs for agriculture," said CTA ICT4D Programme Coordinator Benjamin Addom, who organised the hands-on session. "The idea was to show new ICT innovations in the agriculture sector and give opportunities to participants to play with them, get involved with the technologies and receive answers to specific and practical questions."


An additional workshop explored how entrepreneurship based on developing ICTs for agriculture (ICT4Ag) can be supported, as a strategy for promoting youth employment opportunities and innovations in the agri-food sector, and for improving food security. The session, Accelerating ICT for agriculture entrepreneurship to promote youth livelihoods and sustainable development, involved discussions between young ICT4Ag entrepreneurs from various countries, together with international business and government experts. Issues on the agenda included examples of ICT for agriculture entrepreneurship from developing countries, strategies for strengthening business models, capacity building and investment, and

*CTA's Mini Plug & Play event was an innovative approach to creating awareness of the potential of ICTs for agriculture.*

BENJAMIN ADDOM, CTA ICT4D  
PROGRAMME COORDINATOR

roles for supporting institutions, such as government and the private sector.

"A growing number of dynamic innovations are using ICTs to offer valuable solutions to agricultural challenges, and many of them are being developed by young people in developing countries," says Ken Lohento, ICT4D Programme Coordinator at CTA, who moderated the workshop. "However, young entrepreneurs still face several challenges, such as insufficient capacity in e-agriculture entrepreneurship, non-existent or weak linkages with investors and weak support from the national public and private sectors. This dialogue aimed to generate debate on how to overcome these difficulties and unleash the full potential of young entrepreneurs in the agriculture and rural development sector."

The WSIS Forum also saw the launch of two new CTA publications. One of these, Innovate for Agriculture, presents about 30 ICT-based entrepreneurial ventures created by young innovators, mainly from African and Caribbean countries. The innovations feature the use of mobile phones, social media, web platforms and a new generation of tractors, offering services that target various segments and facilities along the agricultural value chain. The second booklet, Failing to Scale, looks at the other side of the coin, examining case studies of nine ICT4Ag initiatives that showed early promise, but which failed to scale beyond the initial funding. 

Plug and Play: Showcasing ICT innovations for sustainable agri-food systems: <https://goo.gl/uMU9xC>

Workshop: Accelerating ICT for agriculture entrepreneurship to promote youth livelihoods and sustainable development: <https://goo.gl/G3wZKL>

Download CTA publications: Innovate for Agriculture (<https://goo.gl/XH1bMc>) and Failing to Scale (<https://goo.gl/J0UsN7>).

See CTA's Agriculture, Rural Development and Youth in the Information Society (ARDYIS) programme: <http://ardyis.cta.int/>



## NEW SITE FOR ICT UPDATE LAUNCHED

The ICT Update website re-launched in 2016 with a new look, to make information more accessible on mobile and tablet devices, as well as on desktop computers.

ICT Update has an elegant new interface that allows a reader to navigate the website with ease. It is published in print in English and French every 2 months. The content is also delivered through a web magazine and an email newsletter.

Each issue of ICT Update focuses on a theme relevant to information and communication technologies (ICTs) for agricultural and rural development in ACP countries. The latest issue focuses on businesses led by young entrepreneurs, who usually face different challenges to, and greater difficulties than, more seasoned entrepreneurs. E-agriculture entrepreneurship in ACP countries probably began in 2004 with the market information services offered by TradeNet in Ghana (rebranded later as Esoko). Today, entrepreneurship is becoming common in this field, even if e-agriculture is still nascent in most ACP countries.




*Young innovators in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific have recognised the need for creative solutions to raise agricultural productivity and the huge prospective market for their ICT-enabled services in agriculture.*

KEN LOHENTO, CTA ICT4AG  
PROGRAMME COORDINATOR

“Young innovators in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific have recognised the need for creative solutions to raise agricultural productivity and the huge prospective market for their ICT-enabled services in agriculture. Although they still face many challenges, their products have the potential to transform agricultural value chains in developing countries,” writes Heike Baumüller, who co-authored the lead article together with Ken Lohento, CTA Programme Coordinator of ICT4Ag.

The latest issue features several commissioned articles, including ‘Building a healthy ecosystem for ICT entrepreneurs’ by Barni Qaasim, a partner at US-based Devlabs Venture Capital, and ‘Farms could become the offices of the future’, by Michael Oluwagbemi, co-founder and executive partner at LoftyInc Allied Partners. In addition, readers will find a Guest Editor contribution, Tech Talk, Resources and Dispatches features, and a Question and Answer section.

The ICT Update site also features downloadable PDF versions of the previous issue in Kiswahili and Spanish, together with an archive of all issues over the last 16 years. 



During the last quarter of 2016, Pitch AgriHack's 25 finalists – selected from a competitive group of 152 e-agriculture start-ups from across Africa and the Caribbean – participated in a 2 day training bootcamp, which focused on offering successful business services in e-agriculture, at iHub in Nairobi. Pitch AgriHack 2016 was organised by CTA, in collaboration with the African Development Bank (AfDB), with the objective to accelerate youth-led e-agriculture entrepreneurship to improve livelihoods and food security. Many of the start-ups involved are already reaping benefits from the activity.



## SUPPORTING YOUNG E-AGRICULTURE START-UPS

**P**itch AgriHack is a new component of CTA's AgriHack Talent programme, which aims to promote youth ICT innovations and entrepreneurship in ACP regions. The programme is part of CTA's strategy to strengthen youth involvement in agriculture through the provision of services to the sector and, in so doing, modernise agriculture and stimulate youth employment. "Pitch AgriHack has been assisting very promising e-agriculture start-ups by supporting the development of services they offer, including by facilitating access to key business players and financiers," explains Ken Lohento, ICT4D Programme Coordinator at CTA.

The winners of Pitch AgriHack, announced on 24 November 2016, were split into two categories depending on their stage of development: there were three winners in the early stage category – for e-agriculture start-ups that have been developed, but still need software and business model improvements – and one in the advanced category – for start-ups which are already operating and generating revenue. Sooretul, the advanced stage winner, is a Senegalese web and mobile marketplace, which offers an e-commerce platform where processed agricultural products made by women are sold. Pitch AgriHack has provided Sooretul with a €15,000 grant to upscale their services, notably by

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creating two new sales points in Côte d'Ivoire and France, as well as exposure to attract long-term investment and promote their business.

The winners of the early stage category included mAgri (an application that gives farmers access to relevant information and a mobile marketplace in Botswana), Daral Technologies (a Senegalese livestock application, which collects data and provides an advisory service for farmers), and MobFit (a GSM-supported agricultural supply chain software, which connects rural smallholder farmers in Uganda to buyers in the market at a low cost). These start-ups received grants of €7,500, €6,000 and €5,000, respectively, to help them develop their businesses, along with the same level of exposure and networking support as Sooretul.

Since being awarded the grants, Daral Technologies and Sooretul have taken part in the International Agricultural Show in France, where they were given the opportunity to explore commercial and institutional partnerships. All four winners also received complimentary services from the venture capital firm Prohaus VC – one of the partners of Pitch AgriHack – including a remote accelerator programme and seed capital of between €9,381 and €18,763.

It is not only the winners who have benefitted from Pitch AgriHack; Prohaus VC gave additional prizes to start-ups whose business models they found promising. These include Kuza from Kenya, AgroCenta from Ghana, and FarmAfriQue from Nigeria, who will also receive benefits from Prohaus VC. AgroCenta has since signed an off-taker agree-

*The Pitch AgriHack bootcamp provided finalists with expert advice and coaching on pitching, as well as the opportunity to network with similarly oriented businesses.*

ment for over US\$300,000 (€281,439) and partnered with Global Open Data for Agriculture and Nutrition. All seven of these start-ups, as well as the other best participants in Pitch AgriHack, attended the AfDB Youth Agribusiness Forum in Nigeria in April 2017, where they interacted with potential new business partners.

The Pitch AgriHack bootcamp also provided finalists with expert advice and coaching on pitching, as well as the opportunity to network with similarly oriented businesses. Two start-ups that met at the bootcamp, Ujuzikilimo and Farmers Pride, have now officiated a partnership to provide access to better knowledge, precision and quality inputs for Kenyan farmers, which will help to strengthen the work of both businesses. Pitch AgriHack's best start-ups are also benefiting from mentoring support from the African Agribusiness Incubation Network.

The reaction generated by Pitch AgriHack, a unique initiative in the ACP regions, has surpassed expectations. While preparing a new edition in the coming months, CTA and its partners will assist and monitor the services deployed by the young start-up winners of this first edition, so that they can grow and effectively impact hundreds of thousands of agricultural stakeholders. 🌱

# COMMUNICATION AND KNOWLEDGE SHARING



Spore, CTA's flagship magazine on agriculture and rural development in African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries, has undergone a digital makeover. The aim was to diversify Spore's audience by allowing readers to play a more active role in discussing – and even contributing to – issues covered by the magazine, which has built up a dedicated following since it was first launched in 1983.



A NEW-LOOK FOR SPORE



*Available in English and French, the new-look website presents agricultural and rural development news from all six ACP regions, with a special focus on innovations that are helping to transform agriculture as an engine for inclusive growth.*

Recent studies have revealed that Spore's current readership is disproportionately male-dominated, 87% of its readers are men, and the majority are aged 36 or older. The revamped website will help to attract a wider audience, especially targeting women and young people, but also readers from currently under-represented groups, such as civil society, regional and international organisations and the private sector. "The site will encourage sharing of different opinions and insights, and exchange of information from the field," says CTA Director Michael Hailu. "Now interactive, Spore enables you to participate fully in the debate, suggest topics and express your own views."

Available in English and French, the new-look website presents agricultural and rural development news from all six ACP regions, with a special focus on innovations that are helping to transform agriculture as an engine for inclusive growth. Spore also features a mixture of portraits, interviews and case studies, giving a voice to people who are working to resolve challenges posed by climate change, soil depletion, poor market access, and other constraints to higher rural incomes.

### Instant sharing

Spore in print is free for all organisations and individual residents, in ACP countries, involved in agricultural and rural development. The site allows visitors to download all of the past issues of the magazine, as well as to subscribe online to receive print versions as they are published. There is also an option to sign up for the newsletter on the website.

With a simple, but eye-catching layout that makes the site easy to navigate, visitors can head straight for the subject that interests them most, by clicking on a topic from a range of choices, including agricultural production, environment, business, trade, blue economy, research, and nutrition and health. Quality photographs, illustrating technologies and innovations in the field and the people who are using them, are given high priority. A section devoted to facts and figures linked to Spore's regular Dossier brings complex topics to life, with visuals and infographics to illustrate them.

The website layout is deliberately designed to promote networking and exchange. Every article has an option for instant sharing, via Facebook, Twitter or LinkedIn, and where possible, links are given to enable readers to find out more. Although many readers are likely to view the Spore site from a large screen computer, it works equally well on a portable laptop, tablet or smartphone.





*The addition of new regional pages to the website makes it possible for readers to home in on news and developments that affect their own country and region, or to investigate how people are tackling similar challenges to those they face in other parts of the world.*

### Custom-made news

The addition of new regional pages to the website makes it possible for readers to home in on news and developments that affect their own country and region, or to investigate how people are tackling similar challenges to those they face in other parts of the world. A press review offers a round-up of the latest articles, many from publications in ACP countries, and all covering topics likely to be of interest to Spore readers.

The website offers opportunities for followers of Spore to explore other information and services supplied by CTA, including recent publications and up-to-date details of upcoming events. A new addition is the opinion section, which takes an important topic and presents the viewpoint of a number of experts. Visitors are invited to express their opinion online; either by clicking on a range of options to give their standpoint, or by leaving a longer post that goes into more detail. There is also an option for visitors to post a blog on an upcoming topic, or suggest one that they would like to see addressed by the Spore editorial team. 🍃



## AFRICA'S FIRST 'YOUTH IN AGRIBUSINESS' WEB TV!

©AgribusinessTV/Inoussa Maïga

To encourage more youth to actively engage in the agricultural sector, a new web television (web TV) channel devoted to raising awareness of successful young entrepreneurs engaged in agribusiness has been established in Burkina Faso.

In recent years, individuals and organisations have been strongly advocating the increased engagement of African youth in agriculture. With an ageing farming population and high youth unemployment, the development of innovations in the agricultural sector has potential to provide greater employment opportunities for young people. However, stories of young people successfully participating along the agricultural value chain need to be valorised and shared to ensure agriculture becomes a more attractive sector for youth.

### Seeing is believing

There is nothing more effective than actually seeing youth who are successfully engaged in agriculture to convince others to take the first steps to get involved themselves. On this basis, the first web TV initiative, Agribusiness TV, focuses on young agricultural entrepreneurs in Africa. Initiated by Medi-



*Agribusiness TV is a web and mobile application, featuring young women and men, who are engaged in agribusiness.*

aProd, a company specialised in communication for agricultural and rural development, the project is supported by CTA. Featuring youth interviews, testimonials and stories from the field, Agribusiness TV addresses the following questions:

- How did these young people achieve success in agribusiness?
- What were the key factors which made their business idea work?
- What were the challenges they faced and how did they manage to overcome them?
- What is the current status of youth in agribusiness in Africa, particularly in each of the various countries of focus?
- Where are the opportunities and how can they be seized?

Agribusiness TV is a web and mobile application, featuring young women and men, who are engaged in agribusiness. The videos focus on key commodities identified by regional economic organisations (ECOWAS, CEMAC, etc.) and in regional agricultural policy documents, as well as regional trade endeavours. Youth already involved, or interested in becoming involved, in agribusiness, are the primary target audience, but individuals and organisations supporting youth in agricultural entrepreneurship are also targeted by the videos.

The project features quality video reports from four countries in West and Central Africa: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon and Côte d'Ivoire, although other countries are also covered to some extent. Other relevant videos produced by partners and other stakeholders are identified, selected and shared through the web TV.

The team behind Agribusiness TV is a group of young African video journalists and agricultural specialists who have worked in the agricultural sector for many years and have a good knowledge of youth in agriculture. 🌱



Building three-dimensional physical models in village settings is bringing together traditional and modern scientific knowledge to tackle challenges ranging from soil degradation to land use planning, and forest management to climate change. *The Power of Maps: Bringing the Third Dimension to the Negotiation Table*, published by CTA, details some of the field experiences of the technique, known as participatory three-dimensional modelling (P3DM). This book has been at the forefront of promoting the practice across African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries.



## THREE-DIMENSIONAL MAPS: EMPOWERING RURAL COMMUNITIES

©CTA/Giacomo Rambaldi

Developed in the early 1990s in Southeast Asia, P3DM is rapidly gaining ground in other parts of the global south. Participatory 3D models, made out of cardboard and illustrated with coloured paints, pushpins and yarn, portray different land cover, such as farmland, rivers and forests, as well as other features, including coastal resources and sea depth. Uniquely, they also depict traditional knowledge, such as ancestral land rights and sacred places. These features are generally supplied by elders

in the community, while younger members build the map itself. The result is a free-standing relief model which provides tangible evidence of local knowledge, serving as an effective tool for analysis, decision-making, advocacy, action and monitoring.

“Knowledge built up over time and passed from generation to generation represents a unique asset for rural communities when it comes to their land, forest and aquatic resources,” says CTA Director Michael Hailu. “The ability to collate and geo-reference local knowledge and





*Experiences of P3DM can generate other benefits, such as imparting new skills and increased self-confidence to participants and offering funding for communities to implement beneficial activities.*

represent it in the form of three-dimensional maps offers a unique opportunity for local communities to have a voice in decisions on how to sustainably manage their resources.”

Often, the process of P3DM is in itself empowering, bringing communities and generations together and helping them to visualise the extent of their resources. It also helps communities understand how climate change and other threats, such as mining and deforestation, may be affecting them. Once completed, the physical model remains with the community.

Case studies presented from Ethiopia, Fiji and Madagascar show how P3DM has led to the development of community-driven natural resource management plans. Other examples of P3DM initiatives described in the book demonstrate how the technique can give marginalised rural people a voice to make their case heard. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Bambuti-Batwa pygmy community used a P3DM exercise to drive talks on the injustice they claim has been enforced on them, by being evicted from the territory they had inhabited for generations.

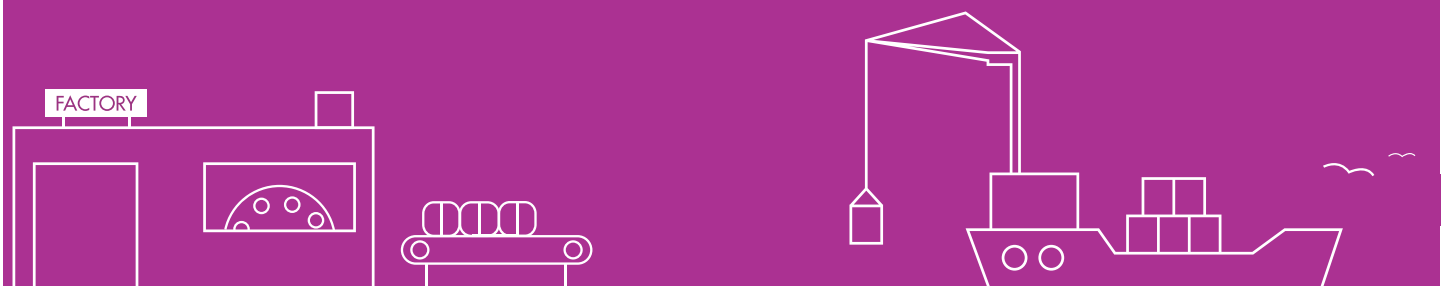
Three-dimensional mapping has also helped the Kenyan hunter-gatherer Ogiek tribe to document its ancestral land rights and knowledge systems. Meanwhile, in Tobago, a Caribbean island that has suffered a series of extreme climate events in recent years, P3DM has been used to guide community-driven disaster risk reduction strategies.

South-South cooperation is helping to make the practice of P3DM become better known, and CTA has been closely involved in efforts to share training and facilitation between Caribbean and Pacific Islands and a range of African countries.

Experiences of P3DM can generate other benefits, such as imparting new skills and increased self-confidence to participants and offering funding for communities to implement beneficial activities. For instance, in Grenada a participatory three-dimensional model helped to mobilise donor funding for climate change adaptation, for a community that created a model, on a stretch of the coastline badly affected by hurricane damage.

“P3DM, the process documented in this book, has proved to be successful in eliciting substantial amounts of what is termed as tacit knowledge from individuals, to collate individual world views into a shared, visible and tangible representation of collegial knowledge,” says Senior Programme Coordinator Giacomo Rambaldi, who has led CTA’s involvement in P3DM. 🍌

# POLICY ENGAGEMENT



A review of policy issues and challenges facing agriculture and rural development in ACP countries discussed at the Brussels Briefings, from 2007 until 2015, is now available on DVD and USB stick.



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## EIGHT YEARS OF AGRICULTURAL POLICY ENGAGEMENT

**K**nowledge and policy dialogue are a prerequisite for Brussels-based actors engaged in ACP agriculture to be able to better respond to emerging challenges. To help meet this need, CTA has released a new multimedia pack that reviews key documents and highlights from the Brussels Development Briefings, spanning 8 years.

The pack aims to provide insight from experts, decision-makers and key actors, in a format that contributes to knowledge sharing amongst the development community in Brussels and beyond, with more than 30 background research documents ('readers'). Other resources include expert presentations and videos from each briefing, policy briefs and a series of infographics reflecting the most pressing policy issues and developments in agriculture, trade and rural development in ACP countries.

*A new multimedia pack that reviews key documents and highlights from the Brussels Development Briefings, spanning 8 years.*

The contents are presented under five themes, which are resilience for food and nutrition security, trade and investment, climate change and sustainable use of resources, drivers of agricultural transformation, and blue economy. This collection concludes a year-long project involving annual reviews of the key documents and materials from the past Brussels Development Briefings, from their inception in 2007 until 2015. "Participants in the Briefings consistently rate the range and availability of resources at our events very highly.




*We are confident that the new format and revised content of the multimedia pack will build on the popularity and success of the previous edition.*

ISOLINA BOTO,  
CTA BRUSSELS OFFICE MANAGER

We are confident that the new format and revised content of the multimedia pack will build on the popularity and success of the previous edition,” says CTA’s Isolina Boto of the previous edition of the DVD, released in 2012.

The new edition is now available in the form of a USB stick and can be ordered through the CTA Publications website (shipping is currently only available to ACP countries).

The Brussels Development Briefings are jointly organised by CTA, the European Commission/Europaid, the ACP Secretariat, Concord and other development partners. 

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Learn more about the Brussels Development Briefings: <https://brussels-briefings.net/>

Order your USB stick “Promoting agriculture and trade policies for sustainable food systems: the Brussels Development Briefings multimedia pack” (shipping only available to ACP countries): <https://goo.gl/9uZWbw>

Discover the CTA Publications website: <https://publications.cta.int/>



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## ACHIEVING THE SDGs THROUGH TRANSFORMING AGRICULTURE



In order to achieve the second Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) to end hunger, achieve food security and improve nutrition in ACP countries, agri-food systems need to be significantly transformed. The role of agriculture for inclusive growth and the successful achievement of the SDGs was examined at a high-level panel, co-organised by the ACP Secretariat and CTA, in Papua New Guinea on 8 July 2016. The panel concluded that investment in agribusiness across the value chain is essential to ensure agriculture in ACP countries becomes commercially competitive and economically sustainable.

*Agriculture must be transformed into a profitable business if it is to become a real engine for growth.*

MICHAEL HAILU, CTA DIRECTOR

Experts at the event agreed that ensuring the future sustainability and affordability of food should be a matter of priority for the public and private sector in ACP countries. It is anticipated that 9 billion people will have to be fed by 2050, many of whom will come from developing countries already facing labour shortages, climate change risks, demographic shifts and migration away from rural areas. Michael Hailu, Director of CTA, argues that for ACP countries in particular, this means that “agriculture must be transformed into a profitable business if it is to become a real engine for growth.”

### **Agriculture at the heart of sustainable development in ACP countries**

Constituting 79 countries across three continents, the ACP group represents a significant share of developing countries for whom agriculture is part of the social fabric and a key source of employment and nutritious food. Notwithstanding agriculture’s importance, agrifood systems in ACP countries suffer from a lack of investment, poor infrastructure, limited access to affordable technological resources and other inputs, vulnerability to climate change, and high levels of exposure to commodity price fluctuations, as they rely on the export of low value-added goods.

These are concerns directly addressed in SDG 2 whose five targets focus on improving food and nutrition security, and agriculture. Agricultural productivity, small-scale food producers (particularly women, indigenous peoples, family farmers, pastoralists and fishers), secure and equal access to land and other productive resources and inputs, such as knowledge, financial services, markets, and opportunities for value addition and non-farm employment are all included in the second SDG. Other SDGs also address important food and agricultural issues, including women empowerment, post-harvest and food losses, access to land and regulation of fishing.

### **Transforming agriculture: an imperative that can be achieved**

“Agriculture is a key sector for most ACP countries in terms of economic growth, employment and nutrition,” noted ACP Assistant Secretary General, Henrique Banze, who made the opening remarks at the event. However, in order for agrifood systems to contribute to sustainable development of ACP coun-





*By looking at the countries that have succeeded in transforming their sector, we can learn that agroindustry and agribusiness are clear avenues for inclusive growth.*

HENRIQUE BANZE,  
 ACP ASSISTANT SECRETARY GENERAL

tries, to counter poverty, malnutrition and unemployment, they need to be significantly transformed. “By looking at the countries that have succeeded in transforming their sector, we can learn that agroindustry and agribusiness are clear avenues for inclusive growth,” Banze went on to add.

Transformation of the agricultural sector entails greater support for ACP agribusiness development and private sector development. The ACP group is already exploring strategies to advance agriculture and fisheries products, which can compete in local, regional and international markets.

“As a source of employment for the majority of ACP populations, agriculture is crucial to poverty reduction and sustainable development. With the large number of young women and men entering the labour market each year and not finding jobs easily, more efforts should be exerted to make agriculture attractive and remunerative for youth,” emphasised Michael Hailu. He also proposed that achieving “this requires a mindset change among policymakers and farmers, as well as a significant investment by the public and private sector”.

Janet Sape, Executive Director of PNG Women in Business, concurred as a representative of the private sector. She told the panel that “the lack of access to markets was among the biggest challenges for women in Papua New Guinea,” and this has to be addressed with innovative financial services suited to the needs of producers. This demand led her to set up the PNG Women in Business Micro-Bank, providing a concrete example of successful grassroots interventions that can help empower local producers and agribusinesses. 🌱

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The high-level panel on sustainable agriculture and food security was organised jointly by the ACP Secretariat and CTA, at the 8th ACP Summit of Heads of State and Government in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea. The panel was made up of Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah, Deputy Prime Minister of Namibia; Mukhisa Kituyi, Secretary-General of UNCTAD; Janet Sape, Executive Director of Papua New Guinea (PNG) Women in Business; Peter Seligmann, CEO of Conservation International; and Pa’olelei Luteru, Ambassador of Samoa to Belgium and the European Union. Participants included ACP ministers and senior government officials, policymakers and representatives of international organisations.

Download the event’s background note: <https://goo.gl/X8NT8o>



## EUROPEAN DEVELOPMENT DAYS: WORKING TOWARDS THE SDGS

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The European Development Days (EDD) gathering, organised by the European Commission and held in Brussels, is a forum which brings the development community together to share ideas and experiences on innovative solutions to the world's most pressing challenges. In 2016, it focused on five main themes: people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership. CTA seized this opportunity to organise five events during the 2-day forum.

A first debate organised by CTA and partners on Developments in agricultural trade and the Sustainable Development Goals in African, Caribbean and Pacific countries explored how the multilateral trade system can drive inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work. Discussions for this session also placed a special focus on the scope for agriculture to help drive poverty reduction.

Still on the subject of trade, and its implications for smaller economies and the producers who often form their backbone, a high-level panel – Treatment of food standards in mega-regional trade agreements: policy implications for ACP countries – discussed the effects of these agreements. The rules governing global trade threaten to sideline ACP countries even further from global value chains. Often agreed in negotiating fora where these nations have no voice, such trade regulations also impose a heavy burden in the form of more rigorous food standards, with cumbersome and costly compliance requirements for producers.






*A session on Gender and agricultural entrepreneurship showcased how women in agribusiness can be the drivers of positive change in the social and economic development of their communities, and how important it is to ensure that women have better access to productive resources and economic opportunities in agriculture.*

Accounting for some 40% of the agricultural labour force, women play a critical role in food production, processing and marketing and have the potential to make major contributions to improving rural livelihoods. A session on Gender and agricultural entrepreneurship showcased how women in agribusiness can be the drivers of positive change in the social and economic development of their communities, and how important it is to ensure that women have better access to productive resources and economic opportunities in agriculture.

Strengthening linkages between tourism and agriculture is another development approach that is rapidly gaining ground in some ACP regions, especially in Caribbean and Pacific island countries. These two sectors offer significant opportunities for inclusive economic growth. Stronger linkages between tourism and agriculture can also help to limit food imports and promote healthier diets based on local produce. A panel session – Supporting local and sustainable food production in African, Caribbean and Pacific countries – brought farmers, chefs and actors from the tourism sector together to share best practices on sustainable farming and agribusiness development.

The 5th debate, Ending hunger and undernutrition: It can be done faster, co-organised by CTA, lined-up high profile speakers who recognised that progress towards ending hunger and undernutrition is moving ahead too slowly. They discussed how the pace can be stepped up and the need for targeted research, innovations in delivery, and rapid interventions to reach the most vulnerable and inaccessible people. 

CTA and its partners are building capacity in ACP countries to use open data in agriculture. At the recent International Open Data Conference, CTA reported on four innovative approaches to developing the capacity of farmers and other groups to use open data in tackling key agricultural and nutritional challenges.

## TOWARDS A GLOBAL DATA ECOSYSTEM FOR AGRICULTURE AND FOOD

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**F**eeding the world's growing population means that agriculture must adapt to increasing demands and changing conditions, such as those caused by climate change and volatile markets. Many initiatives have been launched in recent years to help unlock the potential for using open data to innovate. Yet this data will only be useful if farmers have the capacity to use it.

Developing data standards, or analysing and publishing the large amounts of data that already exist on agricultural processes and products, can increase productivity, as has already happened in other industries. For example, geological, satellite and weather data, when combined, can accurately forecast problems such as drought and disease.

CTA has been involved in open data for a number of years and has recently stepped up its activity through the GODAN Action Project (Global Open Data for Impact and Capacity Development in Agriculture and Nutrition), which was launched by the UK's Department for International Development to bring together agriculture and nutrition specialists and open data experts to build people's capacity to engage with open data. This work is contributing to increasing farmers' yields, improving nutrition for consumers and providing better evidence-based policy-making. Focusing on standards, research and capacity, the project will be supported by activities aiming at high levels of uptake of its results, and monitoring and evaluation.



*We presented several innovative approaches that we are developing, which are aimed at allowing data publishers, farmers' organisations, civil society and journalists to use open data to tackle key agricultural and nutritional challenges.*

ISAURA LOPES,  
GODAN PROJECT COORDINATOR

## Capacity development

CTA's GODAN project coordinator Isaura Lopes made a presentation to the International Open Data Conference in Madrid, Spain on 7 October 2016, focusing on capacity development. Much of the work she reported on came from the activities of the GODAN Capacity Development Working Group, which is led by CTA, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Open Data Institute (ODI). "We presented several innovative approaches that we are developing, which are aimed at allowing data publishers, farmers' organisations, civil society and journalists to use open data to tackle key agricultural and nutritional challenges," Isaura explains.

The project started by assessing existing training needs, incentives and barriers, and mapping the capacity-building landscape to identify key partners. A capacity-building group was developed in partnership with GODAN, to make the most of the significant contribution and resources of its international members working with open data. As a result, a range of capacity development activities will take place, with a specific focus on Africa. The project will focus on building capacity using four approaches and will assess their efficacy.

The four approaches are:

- Face to face: to promote open data training with existing ICT training providers and help improve open data materials
- 'Workbench' activities: with multiple stakeholders on an open data project building their applications and learning about key success factors
- E-training: to develop online training courses based on existing approaches with FAO
- Self-learning: in particular, innovative approaches to learning using mobile phones.

All the materials produced for each training event will be uploaded to the 'open data learning repository' to ensure efficiency and knowledge sharing among capacity development activities. This will enhance capacity on data production and data curation amongst different stakeholder groups such as data producers and researchers. "Our challenge is the opening of access to this data not just through coding but through awareness and use," explains CTA's Chris Addison.





*Open data can be particularly useful to journalists writing about the critical challenges facing agriculture.*

Open data can be particularly useful to journalists writing about the critical challenges facing agriculture. Participants heard about the CTA-sponsored training provided to members of the CAADP Journalists Network, with practical tips for using open data. CAADP is the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme, which works to improve food security and nutrition, and increase incomes in Africa's largely farming-based economies.

One of the key resources of the GODAN Action Project will be a Knowledge Repository Platform of learning materials on open data, including examples of good practice, success stories, training materials and initiatives hosted on the GODAN website. Produced and used by the many different stakeholders in agriculture, from smallholders to multinational conglomerates, a shared global data space will drive forward the productivity and efficiency of the industry. 🌱



# CLIMATE-SMART AGRICULTURE



Farmers need all the support they can get to fight the adverse impacts of climate change and extreme weather conditions that are becoming more frequent. Outputs of maize and groundnut – two key crops for West African food security – could be greatly increased by better farmer access to improved seed, supported by good agricultural practices. Varieties developed by research institutes offer higher yields and stronger resistance to challenges related to climate change, such as drought. Two seed fairs, held in Kayes and Sikasso, Mali, between 20 and 25 June 2016, sought to create awareness of the seeds that are available to help farmers adapt to climate change, and provide opportunities for key value chain actors in West Africa to exchange information and feedback on seed systems.

## BETTER SEED TO FIGHT CLIMATE CHANGE IN WEST AFRICA

©IFAD/Sanjit Das/Panos





**T**he fairs, organised by the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) and CTA, brought together farmers, researchers, extension agents, agro-dealers and district planners to strengthen linkages and share information about improved seed that can help to combat climate change.

ICRISAT has developed early maturing and drought tolerant groundnut varieties to counter constraints that are severely hampering current yields. Other research organisations have developed improved maize varieties for the same purpose. Maize is one of West Africa's main staple food crops, while groundnut, which is rich in protein, oil and micronutrients such as iron and zinc, is essential for the health of rural communities and contributes to soil fertility, by fixing nitrogen.

However, climate change is badly affecting yields of both crops in the region, with recent declines caused by drought estimated at 15% in the case of maize and 38% in the case of groundnut. Recurrent droughts have resulted in local seed stocks being exhausted, because seed is being used as food.

“One of the options to help farmers adapt to uncertainties in weather is to improve their access to new improved, drought tolerant germplasm for major crops – maize and groundnut varieties,” says Olu Ajayi, Senior Programme Coordinator, Agricultural and Rural Development Policy at CTA. “The seed fairs aimed to strengthen and stimulate linkages and information sharing among farmers, rural development change agents, researchers and private sector seed companies and agro-dealers on drought tolerant seeds that can help farmers to better adapt to climate change.”

Despite the existence of improved seeds, many farmers lack access to them due to insufficient information, high prices and an ineffective seed production and distribution system. Challeng-

*One of the options to help farmers adapt to uncertainties in weather is to improve their access to new improved, drought tolerant germplasm for major crops – maize and groundnut varieties.*

OLU AJAYI, CTA SENIOR PROGRAMME CO-ORDINATOR, AGRICULTURAL AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY

es exist in both the public and private sectors. Lack of awareness due to inadequate extension services, coupled with poor agro-input dealer networks, prevent communities in remote areas from accessing certified seeds of the valuable improved crop varieties which could help them increase their yields.

Low profitability means that seed companies have little incentive to ensure sufficient quantities of improved seed reach farmers when they need it. A common problem among producers who succeed in acquiring drought tolerant maize and groundnut seed is crop failure caused by late planting, as a result of delays in acquiring the seed. Early maturing varieties that could overcome these difficulties are not widely distributed due to inadequate knowledge and poor linkages between actors in the seed value chain.

The seed fairs, which were organised back-to-back in two rural locations, where maize and groundnut are widely grown, aimed to create awareness of improved seed sources and varieties, as well as a forum for knowledge exchange on seed production systems among researchers, farmers and seed experts.

It was hoped that presentations by experts would contribute to increased production and distribution of high quality maize and groundnut seed, while small packages of seed were distributed to farmers in an effort to introduce them to the benefits, so they could judge the results for themselves. 🌱

With the future of agriculture high on the agenda at the UN Conferences of the Parties (CoP22) negotiations, a trio of side events examined key issues for farmers facing climate change. Sessions held on the sidelines of the climate change talks in Marrakesh, Morocco, included the launch of an ambitious new initiative to support agriculture and build climate resilience for farmers in Africa. Also discussed was the importance of involving young people in developing and implementing smart climate change solutions for agriculture, as well as effective ways of mobilising finance to fund them.



## CoP22 – ACTION FOR AGRICULTURE

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**A**fter the Paris Agreement came into force on 4 November 2016, the focus of deliberations at CoP22 was on implementation. More than 90% of African countries have included agriculture in their Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC) for meeting both adaptation and mitigation goals, significantly raising the profile of the sector in climate change negotiations.

“Addressing agriculture is critical to achieving global climate change goals, both in terms of adaptation and mitigation,” says Michael Hailu, Director of the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA). “Agriculture is being

severely impacted by climate change, but it can also contribute significantly to meeting mitigation targets. Several effective climate-smart agriculture solutions have already been identified. The time has now come to take concrete action on the ground and adjust national and regional policies that will encourage them.”

Together with a range of partners, CTA supported three side events that focused on agriculture and climate change.

This includes From Science to Action which focused on The Adaptation of African Agriculture (AAA), unveiled in Marrakesh and aims to trans-





*Young people must be involved in developing and implementing climate smart solutions if countries are to succeed in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)*

form African agriculture by mobilising US\$30 billion to support innovative policies, financial mechanisms and capacity development. Developed by the Moroccan Government, AAA focuses on three pillars for adaptation – improved management of soils, water and climate risk. The launch offered a platform for national governments, farmer organisations and civil society to share success stories.

“There are a number of innovations that can be brought to scale, to counter the threats of climate change,” said Bruce Campbell, Director of the CGIAR Research Programme on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security (CCAFS), which jointly hosted the event with Morocco’s Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries and the country’s National Institute for Agricultural Research (INRA), with support from CTA and other partners. “For example, AfricaRice has been working in West Africa with rice farmers, successfully adapting water management techniques that have shown success in Asia’s rice fields to West African conditions. Farmers have seen rice yields increase from 1.5-2 t/ha to 3.5-4.5 t/ha.”

Although six of the ten countries most affected by climate change are in Africa, the continent only attracts around 5% of climate funding. And just a small portion of the agricultural fi-

nance available for climate change trickles into funding for climate-smart agriculture. A session on investment opportunities for scaling up climate-smart agriculture (CSA) examined innovative approaches to mobilising investment.

The event, organised by the Global Alliance for Climate Smart Agriculture (GACSA) in cooperation with the Italian Ministry of Environment and CTA, brought together experts from a range of sectors including international organisations, financial institutions, government and research. The meeting discussed investment opportunities for CSA in the future, building on lessons learned from case studies where innovative financing schemes have shown good results.

Young people must be involved in developing and implementing climate smart solutions if countries are to succeed in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and addressing the impacts of climate change, another meeting heard. CSA is particularly suited to youth, as a pathway for sustainably increasing productivity, building resilience and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

“African youth have already proved their potential in promoting and implementing innovations to combat climate change,” said Oluyede Ajayi, Senior Programme Coordinator of CTA, which co-hosted a session on youth engagement in CSA in Africa, together with CCAFS, the Climate Smart Agriculture Youth Network (CSAYN) and other partners. “The aim of the session was to highlight the challenges youth face and the opportunities that exist for them to engage in the promotion of CSA on the continent. This will help young people to become agents of change for CSA.” 🍌



## THE ROAD TO CLIMATE-RESILIENT CEREAL AND LIVESTOCK FARMING

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Since the release of the Food and Agriculture Organization's Report, *Livestock's Long Shadow: Environmental Issues and Options*, the livestock industry drew intense scrutiny worldwide for its contribution to the release of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. Yet, there is hardly any sector of human and economic activity without a distinct contribution to climate change, and many institutions, including CTA, are working tirelessly to create innovative climate-resilient solutions.

**I**t is estimated that 14% of human-generated greenhouse gases are a result of agriculture; and that almost half of all methane, and nearly 60% of nitrous oxide, emissions are generated by agricultural activities, including livestock production. Animal protein is key to food security and nutrition, this means that there is a growing portfolio of work, completed and ongoing, on multiple fronts – global, regional and national – to reduce the contribution of the livestock sector to climate change and ensure farmers, partners and communities are not only climate-resilient, but that they essentially discover the true meaning of being 'climate-smart'.

In September 2016, CTA and the Southern African Confederation of Agricultural Unions (SACAU) organised a regional meeting in Johannesburg, South Africa, to "build climate-resilient cereal and livestock farming in Southern Africa". CTA and partners identified four proven solutions that cereal and livestock farmers can adopt to



*Farmers are entrepreneurs and business people, and therefore strive to increase their farming enterprises' profitability as well as improve their livelihoods.*

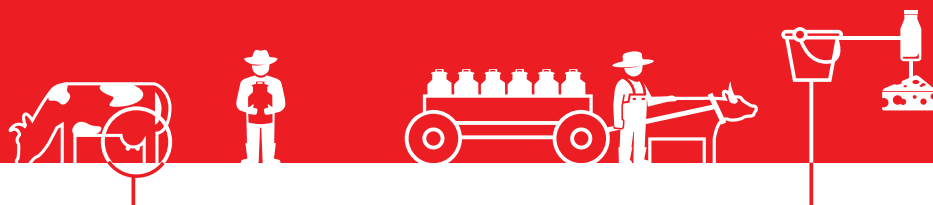
make the transition to climate-resilient agriculture: stress-tolerant germplasm, ICT-enabled climate information services, diversifying livestock-based livelihoods and weather-based insurance.

### **Solutions to ensure profitability and sustainability**

The validated solutions, specifically aimed at cereal and livestock farmers, reaffirm the importance of farmers as central actors in agricultural development. As the meeting's participants acknowledged, farmers are entrepreneurs and business people, and therefore strive to increase their farming enterprises' profitability as well as improve their livelihoods. But in order to realise the full benefits of the tested solutions, livestock farmers require support – financial, institutional and intellectual – from stakeholders to remain climate-resilient.

The shift from the usual response of 'drought relief' (providing farmers whose crops have failed with food aid) to 'production relief' (supporting farmers to make changes that allow them to grow cereals and rear livestock in an uncertain climate), is possible and long overdue. The meeting discussed the business case for the engagement of the private sector in scaling up climate-smart practices. It also assessed the existing level of use of mobile communications, ICT, knowledge management and extension tools to disseminate agricultural information to small-holder farmers. Participants were drawn from partner organisations, the private sector, farmers' organisations, banks and financial sector players, mobile and ICT operators, and national and regional government institutions. The meeting led to detailed implementation strategies for scaling-up each of the solutions in the region. 🍁

# DEVELOPING VALUE CHAINS





Of all the crops grown in Central Africa, cassava has the strongest potential to increase food security, generate greater benefits for farmers from value addition and foster regional trade. The Regional Forum on Cassava in Central Africa organised at the end of the year by CTA and its partners examined how to develop a regional value chain that can tap into these opportunities, creating jobs and income for a large number of people.



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## CASHING IN ON CASSAVA IN CENTRAL AFRICA

**W**ith production of more than 40 million t in Central Africa, cassava is a key crop for the region, providing a rich source of energy, protein, vitamins and minerals to millions of people, especially those in the region's rapidly growing cities. Aside from its place as a staple in local diets, cassava is also used in animal feed, and as a raw material for industrial processing. It also offers promising scope as an ingredient to substitute imported commodities, in food and beverage products such as beer, flour and crisps, reducing foreign exchange

demand, increasing food sovereignty and generating local employment and revenues. Another important attribute is cassava's resilience to climate change, able to withstand periods of drought and to thrive in soil with low fertility.

"Cassava is a truly remarkable crop, and although production in Central Africa accounts for almost one-third of output in the whole of Africa, the region has only scratched the surface in terms of taking advantage of all the opportunities that cassava has to offer," said Michael Hailu, Director of CTA.

*This forum provided a chance for the many different actors to come together and share their experiences, with the ultimate goal of shaping a strong regional value chain for cassava.*

MICHAEL HAILU, CTA DIRECTOR

“This forum provided a chance for the many different actors to come together and share their experiences, with the ultimate goal of shaping a strong regional value chain for cassava.”

The Cassava Forum brought together around 120 participants drawn from different strands of the Central African cassava value chain, as well as NGOs, researchers, financiers and policymakers involved in developing the sector. As part of the hands-on nature of the event, training sessions on cross-cutting areas such as social media, knowledge management, innovative value chain finance and forming effective inter-professional organisations were provided.

As well as undertaking field visits (organised to demonstrate innovations in the production, small-scale processing, industrial and semi-industrial processing, marketing, packaging, standards and financing), participants were invited to attend a series of business-to-business (B2B) meetings to promote networking and forge closer links between producers, traders, processors, agribusinesses and financial institutions.

In addition to calling for greater investment in research and extension, the Forum’s final recommendations also highlighted the importance of improving public policies and links with agribusiness, including promoting the development of public-private partnerships, implementation of insurance and adapted financing systems, and encouraging the development of quality standards. Other recommendations focused on the need to improve the integration of women and young people in the value chain, including by training young people in the use of ICTs to better access markets, and facilitating the development of ICT applications and start-ups offering agricultural services. 

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Held from 6-9 December 2016 in Yaoundé, Cameroon, the Regional Forum on Cassava in Central Africa was organised by CTA and the Plateforme Sous-Régionale des Organisations Paysannes d’Afrique Centrale (PROPAC), with support from the Regional Centre of Applied Research for the Development of Farming Systems in Central Africa (PRASAC), the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the Institute of Agricultural Research for Development (IRAD), the Agricultural Investment and Market Development Project (PIDMA), the Cameroon Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MINADER), and the Cameroon Ministry of Mines and Technological Development (MINMIDT).

For more information, visit: <https://goo.gl/TZF20Z>





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## IMPROVING WEST AFRICA'S REGIONAL GRAIN TRADE

The level of intra-regional trade of cereals such as maize, millet, sorghum and rice is lagging far below its potential in West Africa, despite opportunities from flourishing local production and strong demand from growing urban populations. A conference on ‘How to structure the grain trade in West Africa: which market instruments and public policy measures?’ examined some of the current constraints to increasing intra-regional trade in the cereals sector, as well as ways of making it more dynamic.

**I**n a region where the population is almost doubling every 20 years, grain crops account for one-fifth of total cultivated land area and provide part-time work for around 80% of the West African population. But despite increases in production from 16 million t in 1980 to 63 million t in 2015, less than 1.5 million t of local grain crops are sold in cross-border trade in the region. Figures for the inter-regional grain trade are lower than imports of wheat, wheat flour and especially rice into the region.

A range of barriers prevents local producers from being able to sell at competitive prices. Due to high transaction costs and inefficient logistics, some agrifood processors such as breweries and feed manufacturers prefer to import sorghum or millet from outside the region, rather than source locally. “Modernising the West African grain market is critical to ensuring higher incomes for small-scale farmers,




*Market reforms are needed  
to establish a balance for  
sustainable food security.*

DJIBO BAGNA,  
PRESIDENT OF ROPPA

improved food security and a reliable supply of cereals needed for livestock and fisheries feed supply chains,” said Michael Hailu, Director of CTA.

Bringing together the main players in the region’s grain trade, including cooperatives, processors, traders, policy-makers, development organisations and financiers, the 3-day regional forum sought to develop a strategy that could overcome current challenges and take advantage of the common market formed by the West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). “For farmers and other agricultural producers, grains are their staple supply, helping to ensure the right to food for people in the region,” said West African regional farmers’ organisation (ROPPA) President Djibo Bagna. “However, the current market structure supports a few cash crops, leading to food systems that do less and less to promote the consumption of local grains. Market reforms are needed to establish a balance for sustainable food security.”

High on the agenda was the development of market instruments that could help to organise, regulate and finance the regional grain trade, enabling producers to obtain higher prices, buyers to have a more reliable supply of high quality cereals, and other actors in the supply chain to benefit as a result. As well as examining and sharing best practices for producers, processors and dealers the conference looked at ways of creating a regional policy environment to encourage greater private sector involvement in the grain trade and improve the capacity of trade support institutions, so as to promote efficient and stable regional grain markets. Use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) and innovative funding and insurance tools were also explored, as were prospects for developing cross-border grain value chains, methods for helping farmers to adapt to climate change and strategies to address aflatoxin – which causes serious problems, both to public health and trade. 

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The event, held in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso from 29 November to 1 December 2016, was organised by CTA, together with ROPPA, the West African Grains Network (WAGN-ROAC) and the African Rural and Agricultural Credit Association (AFRACA).

For more information, visit: <https://goo.gl/GQwXXB>



The Chefs for Development platform that promotes stronger linkages between chefs and small-scale producers in Caribbean, Pacific and Indian Ocean countries was launched in the Caribbean during the 2016 Caribbean Week of Agriculture. Chefs for Development aims to stimulate demand of local agrifood products in the domestic and hospitality sector, improving public health and reducing unsustainable food import bills in island countries.

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## A POWERFUL SYNERGY BETWEEN AGRICULTURE AND CUISINE



Up to 80% of the food consumed in the Caribbean is imported; as a result, the region has some of the world's highest levels of non-communicable diseases and obesity rates. Eight out of the ten countries with the world's worst rates of obesity are Pacific islands.

Chefs for Development (Chefs4Dev) is an online community which uses chefs' roles as ambassadors of local cuisine, and teams them up with smallholder farmers and agro-processors who

can supply quality products.

The aim is to increase revenues for smallholder producers and promote healthier, locally sourced agrifood products to households, hotels and restaurants in regions suffering from soaring food imports and high levels of diet related diseases. Tourism is a major source of income for the island states of all three regions, yet most visitors and domestic consumers are served food shipped in from other countries and cultures, much of it high in calories, sugar and salt.



“Chefs for Development is an exciting initiative that brings chefs closer together with local producers,” says Stéphane Gambier, Senior Programme Coordinator Communications at CTA. “It’s a way of highlighting the value of home produced fruits, vegetables and livestock products, as opposed to ones imported at great cost to national economies. Most of all, it’s a question of restoring pride in local cuisine and improving people’s health, as well as revenues for smallholder producers and agribusiness actors.”


“We see chefs as advocates for food security,” said Ena Harvey, Barbados Representative for the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), which is closely involved in the initiative. “Culinary tourism is providing not only enjoyment for our visitors, but more importantly, rewarding opportunities for women, farmers and rural communities to achieve sustainable livelihoods and have a tangible and direct share in tourism revenues.”

*I like to keep the money  
I earn in the hands of  
local farmers. It’s my small  
contribution to keeping  
down the food import bill.*

ROBERT SKEETE, CARIBBEAN CHEF

At his three restaurants on the island of St. Lucia, Caribbean chef Robert Skeete makes a point of serving dishes using local ingredients. “Everything I cook is based on Caribbean products, so dasheen, yams and breadfruit instead of potatoes, as well as many foods people have never heard of,” said Skeete, who appears on two television cooking shows and is a member of the Chefs4Dev platform. “I go to the market seven days a week. I like to keep the money I earn in the hands of local farmers. It’s my small contribution to keeping down the food import bill.”

With support from CTA, the South Pacific Tourism Organisation (SPTO) is training chefs in Samoa to use ingredients they can source locally, linking hotels with local producers. SPTO and four young chefs from the Pacific are meeting the Caribbean chefs and the Caribbean Tourism Organisation (CTO) to exchange best practices and knowledge. CTA and partners work with celebrity chefs such as Robert Oliver in the Pacific and Peter Edey in the Caribbean to promote the regions as food tourism destinations.

“Up until now, most of the food available in hotels and restaurants in the Pacific has been imported,” said Deepika Singh of SPTO. “We want to change that mindset and get chefs to incorporate local products in their cuisine. It’s about trying to link the local agriculture sector with tourism, so as to reduce the leakage of foreign exchange.” 

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The Chefs for Development platform [www.chefs4dev.org](http://www.chefs4dev.org) offers resources, news, activities and information as a website and mobile app. It is coordinated by CTA and IICA, in partnership with many public and private partners, such as the Pacific Islands Private Sector Organisation (PIPSO), the South Pacific Tourism Organisation (SPTO), Women in Business Development Inc., farmer’s organisations, agribusinesses and chefs.

In the Caribbean, boosting sustainable and profitable value chains offers the best prospects for driving a dynamic agriculture sector. Together with various partners, CTA is implementing a 3-year programme to develop value chains in the region, with expected direct benefits for up to 3,000 Caribbean farmers. The range of initiatives, which are already producing encouraging results, are aimed at improving food security and increasing rural incomes, and reducing the Caribbean's soaring food import bill, which is currently more than US\$4 billion per year, and forecast to more than double by 2020.



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## DYNAMIC VALUE CHAINS FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

**W**orking with the Caribbean Farmers Network (CaFAN) and Caribbean hotel chain, the Sandals Foundation, CTA is helping small-scale producers and other players in agricultural value chains become organised and upgrade products, processes and productivity to match market demands. As a result, smallholders have significantly improved their chances of profiting from domestic, regional and international markets, including the flourishing tourism and hospitality trade. A number of producer groups are already linking up with hotel buyers. Examples

include members of the Barbados Agricultural Society, who are supplying fruit and vegetables to Sandals hotels and an association of women farmers in Grenada, who are drawing up agreements to sell agrifood products to hotels in their country.

An important focus of the value chain strategy involves supporting producers in accessing key business development services, such as inputs, value addition and especially finance, the lack of which poses a major constraint for agricultural development. With support from finance NGO, the Finance Alliance for Sustainable Trade (FAST), CTA is forging links



between smallholder enterprises and financial institutions in the region, and offering mentoring for the most promising enterprises on how to access finance.

“We have seen the challenge faced by many agri-small and medium enterprises to comply with the requirements for being considered bankable by financial institutions,” said Noemi Perez, President and CEO of FAST. “We see great potential in initiatives that are providing agri-SMEs with a comprehensive framework of support, including improvements in production, marketing, and business development.”


In the Dominican Republic, a partnership between CTA and private bank ADOPEM, which considers agriculture a potential growth area, is making responsible, productive finance available to small-scale producers.

Meanwhile, ICTs for agriculture are being harnessed to support value chain and agribusiness development, helping to attract young people to the sector in the process. In Barbados, an ICT system called Crop Guard, which won second place at a CTA Hackathon event in 2014, is an agriculture app that seeks to improve food security by helping farmers to protect their crops through pest diagnosis, monitoring and control. In Grenada, a cloud-based crop forecasting software system is improving the quality and reliability of food product supplies from small-scale producers, as well as providing assurances to buyers over food safety.

*It enables value chains to provide regular supplies. No consumers in hotels or restaurants want to be told there’s no cantaloupe on the menu, because the farmers haven’t been able to supply the crop.*

RUEL EDWARDS, CEO OF THE NATIONAL  
MARKETING IMPORTING BOARD OF GRENADA

“The aim of this system is to predict what’s in the field,” said Ruel Edwards, CEO of the National Marketing and Importing Board of Grenada, which launched the system. “It enables value chains to provide regular supplies. No consumers in hotels or restaurants want to be told there’s no cantaloupe on the menu, because the farmers haven’t been able to supply the crop.”

Challenges remain in coordinating single success stories and scaling them up to achieve regional impact. “A number of initiatives are currently being conducted on the ground, in the Caribbean, to support smallholder value chain actors, in terms of production, processing, post-harvest management and marketing,” said Juan Cheaz, CTA Senior Programme Coordinator for Agricultural Policy and Value Chains. “Now we need to ensure that the separate programmes work collectively, so that we can scale these up into a regional effort to have wider-reaching outcomes.” 

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The Caribbean Week of Agriculture 2016 was held from 26–28 October 2016 in the Cayman Islands. It was jointly organised by CTA, the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI), the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA).

For more information, please visit: <https://goo.gl/O8oWkd>









CTA headquarters, Wageningen  
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# LIST OF STAFF MEMBERS IN 2016

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*Director*

Deborah Kleinbussink,  
*Executive Assistant/Board  
Secretary*

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Carmen Broeders,  
*Financial Controller  
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Kim Swerts,  
*Financial Control Officer  
(from 20/09/2016)*



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MEMBERS IN 2016



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Martijn Van der Burgt,  
*Sr Finance Officer*

Christine Webster,  
*Sr Procurement and  
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Christèle Coutureau,  
*Human Resources Associate*

Julia Nijhof,  
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Aurélie Reynier,  
*Administrative Assistant*

Igor Biskupic,  
*IT Officer*

Louis Kolkman,  
*IT Technician*

Serge Adolph,  
*Accounts Payable Assistant*

Marco Van Maurik,  
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Hermann Tossou  
David Walker

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Mikaïla Issa Abramane,  
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Anastasia Armeni,  
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(mid February)*

Bianca Beks,  
*Associate Programme Coord/  
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Carmen Broeders,  
*Financial Controller  
(mid September)*

Gema Fernandez-Albujar,  
*CS Administrative Assistant  
(end September)*

Eva Huet,  
*Jr Programme Assoc. LME  
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Benjamin Moy,  
*Budget Assistant (mid May)*

Marloes Pals,  
*Project Assistant (end April)*

Yihenew Zewdie Lemma,  
*Sr Technical Advisor Policies &  
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