



The National Information Platform for Nutrition Initiative

Brief for the Agrinatura General Assembly meeting – Gembloux, Belgium, May 16th-17th, 2019

The European Union (EU) has launched an initiative to support countries in the Scaling-Up Nutrition (SUN) movement to create a country-led and country-owned 'National Information Platform for Nutrition' (NIPN) to strengthen their analysis and understanding of nutrition information in order to be able to better inform the decisions they are faced with to achieve their objectives to reduce the number of stunted children. The NIPN initiative is co-funded by the United Kingdom Department for International Development and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. In 2015 the EU established a Global Support Facility (GSF) to coordinate the provision of technical assistance in countries in which the EU Delegation had expressed an interest for the initiative, which were six in 2016 and ten in 2017. The contract for the GSF is held by the Agrinatura EEIG and is managed by Agropolis International on behalf of the EEIG, until July 2019. The GSF comprises a core team of 5 staff, as well as resources to mobilise short-term expertise.

The long-term sustainability of such information platforms has been a prominent consideration since the early development of the concept. For this reason, the implementation of the NIPNs in countries focuses on building the capacity of national institutions to produce results that have use and value to stakeholders. Nutrition is a multi-sectoral issue that requires high level leadership to bring the sectors and institutions together. The engagement of these institutions in the concept is thus very important, but has been a lengthy process that has necessitated, throughout 2016 and 2017, several missions by the GSF, facilitated by colleagues in the EU Delegations, to consult with staff of national institutions and other stakeholders in a progressive process to achieve a consensus about institutional arrangements in these ten countries.

Throughout all these exchanges, and thanks to thoughtful advice from members of the NIPN 'Expert Advisory Group' (EAG), the GSF has helped to enrich the proposed approach and to provide a flexible operational basis within the contractual limitations. The main focus of the work of the GSF in 2017 has been to work closely with the lead institution in each country to adapt the NIPN approach to their specific context and to develop their plans in terms of the organisations involved, the staff and resources needed to implement the project, and the timeline of activities, all of which were reflected in each national project proposal and budget that was submitted to the EU Delegation.

By the end of 2017, contracts to implement a NIPN had been signed between the EU Delegations and 14 organisations in 9 countries, directly or indirectly involving 23 organisations, with a total financial commitment of 21.7M€ from the EU action budget. Activities have already started in Guatemala and Niger and will start in early 2018 in Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Kenya, Laos and Uganda. The Government of Zambia has also shown strong interest in adopting the NIPN approach and, as all central funds had been committed, the EU Delegation in Lusaka decided to fund the NIPN project through its core budget. The GSF has been supporting the development of the project proposal and budget for a contract to be signed in 2018. The EU Delegation in Mali has also expressed interest in the initiative and the GSF has done an assessment mission in 2018 which concluded that it was not timely to set up such a project, as a multisectoral approach to nutrition coordination is not yet in place in Mali.

Throughout 2018, the main focus of the GSF team has been to develop technical guidance notes and tools on how to implement the NIPN approach and operational cycle of policy question formulation – data analysis – and communication of the results to decision-makers; that have been made available online: <http://www.nipn-nutrition-platforms.org/NIPN-Guidance-Notes> and are being rolled out in NIPN countries through a series of capacity building workshops.

Regular dialogue is maintained with the donors, with members of the EAG and with key organisations and partners at the international level such as the SUN movement secretariat, United Nations agencies, academic partners, etc. A global communication campaign for the NIPN initiative has also been launched with the creation of a website (<http://www.nipn-nutrition-platforms.org/>), the publication of a regular newsletter and participation in international events such as the SUN Global Gathering in November 2017 in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire; the African Nutrition Epidemiology Conference in October 2018 in Addis-Ababa, the IFPRI/FAO conference on Accelerating the end of Malnutrition in November 2018 in Bangkok.

Contact: Mélanie Broin, Agropolis International, GSF project coordinator (broin@agropolis.fr)

Summary of PAEPARD activities for 2018

This is the 9th technical report of PAEPARD project summarizing the major achievements of PAEPARD 4YE component of the no-extra-cost-extension (NECE) period which lasted from 17/12/2017 to 16/12/2018.

According to the Description of Action of the project, the activities of PAEPARD 4YE contribute to achieving the below 4 key results:

- *African and European stakeholders, including the African Diaspora in Europe, have access to timely and relevant information and are actively engaged in sharing knowledge on ARD partnership opportunities and best practices;*
- *Coherence of the EU research and development programmes with MDGs and other African-European common frameworks or agreements effectively advocated;*
- *Enhanced capacities of African actors to mobilize, facilitate, participate, lead and evaluate joint multi-stakeholder ARD innovation partnerships with Europe;*
- *African-European ARD innovation partnerships, involving or led by relevant non-research stakeholders, initiated and supported/mentored to respond to ARD demands identified.*

As in the previous reports, activities carried out are consolidated into four work packages: (i) Communication & Advocacy; (ii) Capacities; (iii) Partnerships; and (iv) Management and coordination.

Five (5) major activities have dominated the NECE. They are summarized in below lines and developed in the report.

1. Capacity building under work package Capacities, 2 write-shops - with a training component on proposals writing - were organized in Entebbe to respond to two important calls (joint Canadian-Australian call and African Union Commission Research Grants). For the two write-shops, participants developed 55 proposals. Only 6 proposals were successful worth USD 6,693,548.38.

2. Visibility & publications of the project which was ensured through the presentation of PAEPARD in some events: AGRINATURA General Assembly held in April 2018 at the University of Hohenheim (Germany), 6th African Higher Education and RUFORUM Biennial Conference held in Nairobi in October 2018; PAEPARD participated in the International symposium on agricultural innovation for family farmers organized by FAO in Rome on 21-23 November 2018 where policy briefs and other documents were largely distributed to participants; and the InfoPoint at the European Commission in Brussels in November 2018 where PAEPARD outputs and outcomes were shared with participants. Above these face-to-face meetings, the visibility of the project was increased through knowledge sharing and advocacy for further multi-stakeholder partnerships (MSP) in ARD with the publication of eight (8) Thematic Briefs on subjects drawn from PAEPARD consortium gaps such as adaptive leadership, gender and youth inclusion, managing power differences, knowledge co-creation and management in ARD, reflection and learning workshop in ARD etc. A big report evaluating some consortia processes was produced with the title of *PAEPARD impact evaluation: four case studies using the impresS method*. Finally, on the publications section, a book on *Achievements, challenges and lessons of the PAEPARD multi-stakeholder partnerships* has been produced by 10 consortia. All PAEPARD publications can be accessed online at: <https://paepard.org/?PublicationsPaepard>

3. Sharing information and knowledge has been the strength of PAEPARD over years. Through PAEPARD D group, blogs, website, several documents related to the project activities but also from different ARD partners and fraternity have been published. The Dgroup membership has been growing year after year. For 2018, the membership passed from 8,765 to 10,800 on 31st December 2018 making an increase of 2,035 new members. A total of 424 blogposts were shared for 2018 with 309,046-page views which represents an average of 846 views per day.

4. Reflection on sustainability and post-PAEPARD

Time and resources were affected to this activity as per one of recommendations of end line evaluation carried out in 2017 which stipulated: " *Design of a new era should be made through relevant analyses by PAEPARD stakeholder as well as external consultants and include a smooth transition strategy from the current phase with a no-extra cost extension to a new era of PAEPARD*". Following up this recommendation, partners and stakeholders were engaged in internal reflections that aimed at developing the exit strategy and a possible new intervention. PAEPARD management also reached out to external stakeholders to get their views. The outcome of this activity is an action fiche commissioned by DevCo and called " *Supporting African-European Partnership through Research & Innovation for Food & Nutrition Security, Resilience & Development (SAfEPARD)*". This action fiche, meant for a post-PAEPARD intervention, was poured into the *Supporting Implementation of a Science-Led and climate-relevant Agricultural Transformation in Africa (SISTA)* project to feed the result on the multi-stakeholder partnerships to be organized between the ex-pillar African ARD institutions, with PAEPARD Users' Led Process (ULP) concept. SISTA is a 30 million Euros project funded by DevCo via IFAD.

5. Sustaining the Regional Dialogues between farmer organizations and research

In the frame of the implementation of the ULP, PAEPARD has, since 2014, promoted the regional dialogues organized by the 4 non-research partners in the PAEPARD consortium as a strategy for the sustainability of the multi-stakeholder partnerships after the end of the project. During the NECE period, four thematic regional dialogues were held as follows;

- **EAFF:** Organized successfully a multi stakeholder consultation meeting with the theme " *Developing profitable and sustainable livestock enterprises through structured markets*". This was done in collaboration with the county government of Kajiado (public sector) and Kenya Commercial Bank (KCB) Foundation a finance private sector.
- **FANRPAN:** A parallel session was convened on the side-lines of the 2018 FANRPAN Annual High-Level Regional Food and Nutrition Security Policy Dialogue to discuss the post-harvest loss management and measures for operationalization and implementation of the African Union Commission (AUC) published Post-harvest Loss Management Strategy (PHLMS). The parallel session was attended by more than 40 participants and the resolutions of the side event were then shared during a feedback plenary session that was attended by more than 200 people.
- **ROPFA:** Regional dialogue meeting was held on 10-12th December 2018 in Dakar at CORAF headquarters. The aim of the regional dialogue was to address the issue of seed production and certification in agriculture. Three priority questions were discussed based on agreements and commitments between CORAF on issues of gender, biodiversity and climate change. The dialogue aimed to achieve the following results: (1) scientific evidence in the African family farmers systems to meet the challenges related to demographic growth, sustainable management of land and natural resources, market, decent food, women and youth productivity improvement etc. (2) put in place a joint technology dissemination mechanism for scaling up supported by adequate funding by leveraging on the business forum (3) develop a road map on tracking the engagement through designation of a focal point in CORAF to specifically deal with the issues of permanent dialogue framework to ensure its successful implementation based on commitments made.
- **PROPAC:** It is in the framework of strengthening the links between all the stakeholders of the process of improvement of the seed sector in Central Africa that PROPAC organized in Brazzaville, from 06 to 08 November 2018, a regional workshop on the of " *Decade of the Family Farming, what role for the seed sector in Central Africa?*". The main objective of this meeting was to contribute to the improvement of the institutional frameworks that regulate seed policies in Central Africa and specially to put in place mechanisms that encourage the consideration and involvement of FOs in research processes in the field of seeds. This meeting

was attended by about 20 participants representing farmers' organizations, national research institutes, regional research centers, and the regional economic communities of Central Africa.



Support of International Platform Merging Labour and Education

The Project SIMPLE (Support of International Platform Merging Labour and Education) is a three-year project within the Erasmus + Capacity Building in the Field of Higher Education programme running since October 2016. The project is coordinated by the Faculty of Tropical AgriSciences, the Czech University of Life Sciences Prague (CULS) and involves eight partner universities from Austria (the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna - BOKU), Belgium (Ghent University - UGent), Cambodia (the Royal University of Agriculture - RUA, the University of Battambang - UBB), Indonesia (Bogor Agricultural University - IPB, Tadulako University - UNTAD) and Thailand (Kasetsart University - KU, the Prince of Songkla University - PSU).

The main aim of the project is to encourage cooperation between the academic sector (HEIs) and the professional sector in the area of agriculture and life sciences in selected Asian countries (Cambodia, Indonesia, and Thailand), leading to enhanced employability of the alumni of those universities. The specific objectives are to (i) support networking and create a sustainable link between young graduates (alumni) and employers by establishing Alumni Centres and Platforms for Cooperation with Professional Sector, (ii) improve the study programme curricula at HEIs in the selected Asian universities by introducing (compulsory) internships leading to more practical knowledge and better professional skills of the alumni, (iii) enhance soft skills of the Asian students, and (iv) to introduce the use of guest lectures from the professional sector into study curricula as they are an effective way to connect private world with academic.

Thanks to establishing the Alumni Centres and the Platforms for Cooperation with Professional Sector and organization of the Career Days at Asian Universities following benefits are given to students and staff as well as other stakeholders attending the events organised within the project: networking/contacts, learn more about careers and potential opportunities as well as job market need, internship opportunities, meet potential employers, job search skills and practice good communication skills. Students are also informed by potential employers on what they need to know about career paths, employer expectations and professional opportunities, etc.

As the first step, the project team prepared the study of "Best practices for cooperation between academic and professional sector" and organised the interactive workshop in June 2017, which was focused on the best practices of Alumni and Career Centers together with experiences of a number of outstanding international experts. In addition, the one-week intensive training for staff of Alumni and Career Centers was held in October 2017 and provided deep insight into events like Career Days, Mentoring projects, Internship Days, How to Apply, Career Calling and Job Week. The project team prepared following documents, which are broadly shared among various stakeholders as multiplication aspect of the project activities: (i) in-depth analysis of experiences with Alumni Centres in Europe was prepared and published as the study "Good Practices of Alumni Centres", (ii) Action plan for cooperation with the non-academic sector, (iii) Guidelines of best practice examples of Alumni Centres, and (iv) templates of Internships Forms and Evaluation sheets for successful implementation of internships.

The project is also focused on creating Platform for Cooperation with Professional Sector and supports cooperation with other Erasmus+ projects (e.g. PISAI, DOCKSIDE, FSCC), international organisations like the AGRINATURA Association, Young Professionals for Agricultural Development (YPARD), the Erasmus+ Student and Alumni Association (ESAA), and the Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture (SEARCA). Contributions to the project platform were set up with different organizations from both



Support of International Platform Merging Labour and Education

the governmental and private sector as well as NGO's (Chambers of commerce, Embassies, Ministries, and the private sector with companies such as BETAGRO, C.P., etc.). The Career Days were organized at the project partners' universities in Cambodia, Indonesia and Thailand, supported by experience, recommendations and new equipment financed by the E+ programme. Various Guest lectures from more than 60 representatives of the professional sector relevant to different fields of study, soft skills trainings and improvements of practical internships were also provided.

Thanks to the support of the project there were established (or improved) Alumni Centres at the project partners' universities and created the most effective teaching methods with greater practical orientation towards the requirements of future employers, supported the establishment of contacts between these two spheres, which is a priority not only of the university and its graduates, but also of employers for the development of a qualified work sector. The final project conference will be organized on 27th August 2019 and the project results will be shared and disseminated. The final assessment study will be available on the project SIMPLE websites in October 2019.

Main activities:

Alumni centres

- Writing in-depth Assessment study of the examples of good practises of Alumni centres.
- Organization of workshop "Best practice for Alumni Centres" in Belgium, June 2017
- Training of staff of Alumni Centres in Austria, October 2017
- Guidelines of best practice examples for Alumni Centres
- Establishment of the Alumni Centres at project partner's universities in Asia

Platform for cooperation with Professional Sector (PC-PS)

- Analysing potential cooperation
- Foundation of the Platforms at all project partners' universities in Asia

Internships

- Introduction of practical training (internships) into the curriculum of the study programmes at Asian universities with connection of experiences with PC-PS

Guest lectures

- Support of guest lectures provided by representatives of enterprises at Asian HEIs

Career Days

- Organization of Career Days at Asian universities together with PC-PS.

Cooperation

- Support of exchange know-how and experiences among EU and Asian Alumni Centres and PC-PS.
- Feasibility study of Alumni Centres and PC-PS for dissemination.

Project Associates: Agrinatura, EMA, ESAA, FORS, SEARCA, YPARD

Duration: October 2016 – October 2019

Project budget: 535 600 €

FRAMING QUESTIONS

- What is the contribution of the value chain to economic growth?
- Is this economic growth inclusive?
- Is the value chain socially sustainable?
- Is the value chain environmentally sustainable?

Version 1.2, April 2018

**Updated version coming
Autumn 2019**

1. PURPOSE	p.2
2. FUNCTIONAL ANALYSIS	p.4
3. ECONOMIC ANALYSIS	p.8
4. SOCIAL ANALYSIS	p.12
5. ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS	p.14
6. SYNTHESIS & RECOMMENDATIONS	p.17

VCA4D studies - May 2019

