



REGIONAL WEBINAR CONCEPT NOTE

Food Security, Hunger and Market Access by Smallholder Farmers in Southern Africa

24th September 2020 | 10:00 – 12:00

1. Introduction

Food systems in most Southern African countries are burdened by multiple challenges that include weather extremes such as droughts and floods. These undermine agricultural production and productivity, and ultimately livelihoods. For instance, the effects of the cyclones - Idai and Kenneth - experienced during the 2018/19 agricultural season devastated crop production and almost doubled the cases of people facing hunger in the affected countries. Currently, of particular concern is that the COVID-19 pandemic which may continue to compound and directly influence several existing challenges, including access to markets and finance for women farmers, the rural and urban poor, and the vulnerable. In fact, the World Food Programme (WFP) statics predict that, before the end of 2020, between 6,100 and 12,200 people could die (per day) from hunger related to the pandemic and its response.

In response to the novel COVID-19 pandemic, governments across the region have imposed lockdown regulations that have disrupted the normal functioning of markets. This has had direct effects on most smallholder farmers who depend on markets for their livelihoods and lack resilience to such economic shocks. The soci-economic instabilities have resulted in increased prices of food, basic commodities and services, therefore, adversely affecting the livelihoods of many households, especially in rural communities.

In response, Oxfam launched a Global Food & Hunger campaign to address the COVID-19 pandemic in July 2020 with the message: ***As the world comes together to reach zero cases of Covid-19, we also need urgent action to reach zero cases of hunger.*** In the Southern Africa region, the Global Food & Hunger campaign builds on work that Oxfam Southern Africa (Oxfam SAF) and the Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network (FANRPAN) are implementing, titled ***Creating an enabling environment to transform agriculture markets for the smallholder farming households.***

It is against this backdrop that Oxfam SAF and FANRPAN are co-convening a Regional Webinar focusing on food security and market access for smallholder farmers in the region. The intent of the webinar is to develop a call to action bid that serves governments and its partners to invest in initiatives that will mitigate the disruptions of the food system exerted by covid-19 effects and restrictions.

2. Scope

This webinar seeks to discuss ways to lower the current food insecurities as well as preventing a further decline in food availability and hunger in the Southern African region. Perspectives from women in agribusiness, farmers, researchers, civil society organizations, governments, as well regional and continental bodies will be explored.

3. Expected Output

The outputs of the regional webinar will comprise of the following:

- I. Understanding of enablers and barriers for creating an enabling environment to transform agriculture markets for the smallholder farming households in line with the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) agreement;
- II. Understanding of actions needed to secure food systems and avert a looming hunger crisis;
- III. Recommendations towards strengthening the policy and initiatives of livelihoods and food security; and
- IV. A call to action statement derived from the issues discussed and recommendations on food security and agriculture systems to cushion the most vulnerable and bottom-down of the pyramid in the society.

4. Platform

This Regional Webinar will be convened via Zoom on Thursday, 24th September 2020, from 10:00 - 12:00 Central Africa Time (CAT).

5. General Information

Kindly ensure that:

- You have reliable internet connectivity;
- Fully charged laptop, and in the case of a desktop computer, alternative source of energy during electricity disruptions;
- Log in on time – at least 10 minutes before commencement;

- Mute headphones when joining a call and when a fellow speaker is on the floor;
- Submit presentations prior to meeting.

6. Contacts

Further information on the meeting and any other related matters should be addressed to Chimbala Shamenda-Yoyo, Agriculture Markets lead, Oxfam SAF (cyoyo@oxfam.org.uk) or Dr Njongenhle Nyoni, Projects Officer, FANRPAN (nnyoni@fanrpan.org).



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