

A+FS Network Newsletter 05/2015

Dear Agriculture & Food Security Network Members

This newsletter informs you about the regional F2F “Reaching the Millions” held in March in Vietnam and about the 2015 Universal Exhibition EXPO in Milano, Italy. Moreover two members of our network have contributed an article:

- *When the future is sweet as honey (by Matthias Anderegg)*
- *Sustainable intensification of organic Basmati rice production in Uttarakhand, India: a multidisciplinary systems approach (by Charlotte Decock and Monojit Chakraborty)*

Congratulations to the authors and let’s continue this participatory style. Rahel welcomes your contributions for the next newsletter at any time.

We cordially invite you to send any ideas, news or documents that might be relevant for our network. Your feedback and contributions will help to improve all activities of our network.

With Best Wishes

Felix Fellmann & Rahel Meier



Regional F2F meeting in Vietnam



“Reaching the Millions” (by Felix Fellmann / Rahel Meier)

Under the title “Reaching the millions” an A+FS Network Workshop on Rural Advisory Services (RAS) has taken place in Hanoi, Vietnam from 2 to 7 March 2015. 61 RAS experts from South- and South-East Asia met to share experiences, reflect, learn and network.

The Hanoi Statement as well as all other workshop documents, presentations and pictures are available on the [F2F blog](#).

Contact: Felix Fellmann, Focal Point A&FS Network, felix.fellmann@eda.admin.ch

SDC at EXPO Milano 2015



App helps Expo visitors understand food security

(by Markus Bürli)

The theme of the 2015 Universal Exhibition “Feeding the planet – Energy for live” relates closely to food security and nutrition. The SDC will showcase its commitment and capacity for innovation in this domain at the Expo in Milano. The Plant Doctor Game, a mobile-app game specially developed for the Swiss pavilion at the Expo, enables visitors to step into the shoes of a smallholder farmer

who needs to protect his or her crops.



SDC's Green Gold Project - Winner at Expo Milano 2015

SDC's Green Gold Project was selected out of 749 submitted projects as one of 18 Best Practices projects for sustainable development for the Expo Milano 2015. The videos, images and interviews of the project's best practice in pasture management in Mongolia will be featured in the Expo Movie.

Interview with Markus Bürli: «To strengthen food security, we need to focus on smallholder farmers in developing countries»

Contact: Markus Bürli, SDC Global Programme Food Security, markus.buerli@eda.admin.ch

Articles by Network Members



When the future is sweet as honey (by Matthias Anderegg)

This is the story about Abdul-Aziz, beekeeper and honey producer, from Bindisi in Central Darfur Sudan



Sustainable intensification of organic Basmati rice production in Uttarakhand, India: a multidisciplinary systems approach

(by Charlotte Decock / Monojit Chakraborty)

In order to provide management recommendations for organic Basmati production in Uttarakhand, this innovative and multidisciplinary research project couples field experimentation, farm surveys, bio-economic modeling and trade-off analysis in a participatory framework.

SDC News

Post-Harvest Management: Simple technology, big impact

More than 30 years ago, SDC started a post-harvest programme in Central America named "Postcosecha". The significant impact that was still evident long after the project end also continues to exist after the cessation of external support. The current priority in SDC's contribution to post-harvest management (PHM) is to use existing knowledge and experience to create conditions for scaling up the most appropriate PHM technologies in sub-Saharan Africa.

Contact: Max Streit, SDC, max.streit@eda.admin.ch

Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems

On 15 October 2014 the Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems have been approved at the 41st Session of the Committee on World Food Security, they are translated into six UN languages.

The Principles address all types of investment in agriculture and food systems - public, private, large, small - and in the production and processing spheres. They provide a framework that all stakeholders can use when developing national policies, programmes, regulatory frameworks, corporate social responsibility programmes, individual agreements and contracts.

The Principles are voluntary and non-binding, but represent the first time that governments, the private sector, civil society organizations, UN agencies, development banks, foundations, research institutions and academia have agreed on what constitutes responsible investment in agriculture and food systems that contribute to food security

and nutrition. As for any global norm and framework, the RAI Principles need to be translated into action: Ideas, feedback and initiatives are welcome!! See also <http://investinginfsn.com/>

Contact: Alexandre Ghélew, SDC - GPFS, alexandre.ghelw@eda.admin.ch

SDC-GPFS Fact Sheet on Plant Variety Protection

Access to good seeds is a primary requirement for smallholder farmers. Seeds of new varieties offer the potential to increase productivity and/or to respond to new challenges, such as abiotic or biotic stress tolerance. New seeds can be produced by the public or the private sector and can be protected under national seed laws. Such plant variety protection laws can either jeopardize or encourage smallholder farmers to access new and improved seeds, depending on whether the seed sector is formal or informal.

Plant Variety Protection laws are increasingly being discussed in a number of countries. Some SDC offices have been actively involved, others might become aware of some basic insights on how such laws are being developed. SDC's Global Programme Food Security has taken up this issue and produced a fact-sheet.

Contact: Peter Bieler, Head, SDC Global Programme Food Security
peter.bieler@eda.admin.ch

Agri-Fin Mobile Videos

Rural advisory services often hardly reach remote areas and are costly. Bundling agricultural and financial services through a mobile platform and partnering private and public actors is now a promising approach to reach millions, thus improving agricultural production, increasing and stabilising income of smallholder farmers and contributing to increased food security. Agri-Fin Mobile bundles agricultural and micro-finance services via mobile phone in Indonesia, Uganda, and Zimbabwe reaching 180'000 smallholder farmers after the first programme phase, building on a sustainable business model. The programme is funded by SDC and executed by Mercy Corps. See also:

<http://www.agrifinmobile.org>

Contact: Peter Bieler, Head, SDC Global Programme Food Security
peter.bieler@eda.admin.ch

Further Information

IFAD online video series “AgTalks”

AgTalks, an engaging new online video series produced by IFAD promises to keep issues affecting the world's 500 million smallholder family farms in focus. The objective of AgTalks is to share the latest thinking, trends and research on policies and innovations in small-scale farming. Each AgTalk is recorded as part of a live event hosted by IFAD, and is released biweekly.

Global Food Policy Report 2014-2015

The report by IFPRI calls on global institutions, the private sector, and citizens of middle income countries to reshape these countries' food systems to focus on nutrition and health, close the gender gap in agriculture, and improve rural infrastructure - particularly sanitation - in order to ensure food security for all.

Global Risks Report 2015 warns of water crisis

Environmental risks figure prominently among the biggest risks in the coming decade. A World Economic Forum publication states that water crises rank highest in terms of impact.

Upcoming Events

1 May – 31 October 2015

EXPO Milano 2015: “Feeding the planet – Energy for life”

4-7 May 2015

International Conference on Soil

The Conference is organized by the Agricultural University of Tirana in the context of the International Year of Soils and it will be held in Tirana, Albania. It will discuss the interaction between natural ecosystem components (land, water, biodiversity) and socio-economic indicators affecting soil quality; impacts of human mismanagement on soil resources and examples of best management practices in reducing soil degradation effects as well as cropping systems, nutrient management and cycling.

11-17 May 2015

Global Land Forum

The International Land Coalition is organizing its 6th Global Land Forum in Dakar.

6-10 July 2015

Regional F2F Latin America (Nicaragua)

The topic of the F2F will be "Rethinking good practices in integrated land and water management". The F2F involves five SDC networks: Water, Climate Change, Disaster Risk Reduction, Employment and Income, Agriculture and Foodsecurity. This F2F will generate new inputs for SDC strategies in Latin America.

Beginning of November 2015

Regional F2F West and East Africa

The topic will be pastoralism, more details will follow.