

# Newsletter A+FS and e+i / December 2017

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## A&FS Network: Priorities and plans for 2018

**Building on the activities of the A&FS Network in 2017 the SDC Global Program Food Security (GPFS) and the Network Core Group have defined the priorities and a work program for 2018. The main goals for the coming year are ...**

... to continue the SDC Learning Journey Rural-Urban Links and Urbanization by sharing results achieved and discussing their implications

... to establish communities of practice for the other network focus areas nutrition, land tenure, rural advisory services, postharvest management and pastoralism that have close links with the thematic priorities of the GPFS

... to decentralize network activities and tasks with a view to gain leadership in the network topics and increase relevance for daily work

... to give members easier access to network documents such as annual programs or meeting agendas and minutes to make processes as transparent as possible and trigger response from members

Network members can:

[read about the planned activities in more detail](#) 

[browse the minutes and documents of the Network Core Group](#) 

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### Updated Focus Area Land Tenure – Your Feedback

The new Shareweb pages on land issues provide an overview of key resources, SDC projects and network activities. Network members are invited to give their feedback on the updated focus area and on their participation in a future land tenure subgroup via a short **survey**.



### New Key Documents on Nutrition

The Global Nutrition Report 2017 and the new HLPE report “Nutrition and food systems” are two key documents on the world’s nutrition challenges. They provide insights on the current nutrition situation, on the drivers of the food system, links to the SDGs and recommendations for action. You can find the reports – together with other key documents – in the focus area nutrition.



### **Farmer is successful thanks to YPARD mentoring program**

With Nicholas support, Esther did not only build her own greenhouse and break even on her first harvest but also, a major cultural change took place in Esther's community. Many neighboring farmers who had previously been unconvinced about modern farming methods watched her farming success and began to replicate her methods



### **IISD contributes to sustainable investments in African agriculture**

Currently, the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) is working with governments in eight countries and the East African Community (EAC) to ensure that laws and policies promote responsible and sustainable investment in agriculture and food systems.



### **How to reduce food loss – results of SDC project**

The project identified critical loss points, and supported the piloting of good practices and solutions to reduce post-harvest losses in the pilot countries Burkina Faso, Uganda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It will also support the development of regulatory frameworks to reduce food losses in food supply chains in each of the countries.



### **Revised FAO Climate Smart Agriculture Sourcebook**

In view of the fact that the Conference of Parties at its 23rd session elevated agriculture issues to a higher level of the strategic debate, the revised FAO Sourcebook on CSA becomes even more relevant: the new version is a digital platform where sections are updated continuously based on new scientific insights, case studies and policy developments.



### **icipe Push-Pull technology halts fall armyworm rampage**

The fall armyworm was mentioned as a main reason for maize yield and income losses in all Annual Reports of sub-Saharan SDC country offices. A publication of icipe shows that this economically important pest that recently invaded Africa can effectively be controlled with the 'climate-adapted push pull' cropping system.



### **Young agricultural entrepreneurs in Laos**

This article in the recent Rural 21 issue on rural youth describes first experiences with an SDC funded program that supports agricultural students and graduates in Laos to develop their own agribusiness. As a first stage, a competition between teams of students has been organized. The winners will then be mentored while launching their business.



### Smallholders – Big Actors?

Under this title the Swiss Forum for International Agricultural Research (SFIAR) organized an event to honor this year's SFIAR Award winners: the Climandes project financed by SDC and a Master thesis on livelihoods and aspirations of rural youth in Morocco. Climandes was one of the first projects to recognize the relevance of weather and climate services and user-dialogue for climate sensitive sectors. The Morocco project shows that youth would like to continue farming, provided the conditions improve.

Who is who | [Your comments](#) 



**ADDIS KEBEDE TESHOME**  
National Program Officer, SDC Ethiopia

#### **Addis, what do you enjoy most about your work?**

As an agricultural professional, I am taking pride in the fact that agriculture is fundamental to the socio-economic development of not only my country Ethiopia and sub-saharan Africa, but also of the entire developing world. The sector plays a significant role to ensure food security in these nations which is the focus of the political and development agenda at all levels. It is a privilege to work for and with smallholder-farmers who constitute a majority of the workforce in developing countries and produce more than 70% of the food consumed worldwide.

It is also utmost important for me to understand the challenges that smallholder families face in their everyday lives and the basis of the actions and decisions they take to face them. I therefore particularly enjoy all of our interactions and engagements, which help us to shape our thinking and recognize these challenges to identify possible and context adapted solutions. Apart from the direct encounters with smallholders in our country and the region, I also appreciate our involvement in influencing dialogues and discussions with partner institutions, who work in the same area and are committed to improve smallholders' livelihoods.

#### **Which are your favorite instruments?**

In my opinion, we need to increase awareness and promote technological innovations to ensure better livelihoods for smallholders through the benefits of modernized farming. With the introduction of these innovations, there are still enormous opportunities to realize the potentials of agriculture in many developing countries. However, these technological improvements need to become more accessible and affordable for all smallholder farmers in order to make them really benefit from an increased production, storage and sale of the surplus. We need also to strengthen our partnerships with various stakeholders, most importantly the private sector, to ensure the leverage for scaling up all the necessary innovations such as better access to inputs, mechanization, extension services and better access to markets. Nonetheless, it will depend on the effectiveness of our policy instruments and provisions whether innovations can be mainstreamed nationwide and coordinated with other sector policies and programs such as infrastructure, governance and health. Thus, I believe a coordinated programme support needs to be strengthened through appropriate mechanisms.

### **Your message for your colleagues?**

Even though it is important to address major global challenges under the Global Program Food Security, we need to understand and address the great diversity of problems and challenges that small-scale farming systems are facing nowadays in a more context specific way. Local solutions for global challenges must be promoted and adapted to the multitude of situations in different regions of a country or in the world at large. Of course, there is important strategic thinking behind the interventions and thematic priorities we are offering right now, but let's invest more effort in making them more compatible with the material challenges on the ground by asking ourselves continuously: Are the solutions we offer really relevant at the farmers' level? Most of all: We need to focus more on youth and bridging the basic inequalities between genders. Young people constitute more than 65% of the total population and they cannot be left behind from the political and economic agendas of countries. Addressing the youth issues in terms of ensuring access to land, technologies, knowledge and capital will highly contribute towards solving other interrelated socio-economic problems of migration and vulnerabilities to conflict to mention a few. To this end, a modernized and business oriented agriculture can play a great role to accommodate the unemployed local youth.

*Addis Kebede Teshome is the National Program officer in the Swiss Embassy in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and in charge of partnerships in the portfolio of the Global Program Food Security. Before coming to SDC, he worked in the GIZ Green Innovations Center for Food and Agriculture Sector in Ethiopia Project. He has a PhD in Agricultural Entomology from the University of Nairobi and did his Post-doctorate fellowship at the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT) on one of the SDC Funded projects in Eastern and Southern Africa.*

## **Your Comments**

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(only for logged-in members)