



République de Côte d'Ivoire



## Concept Note

### THE 4<sup>th</sup> AFRICA-WIDE AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION WEEK

Theme: ***“Private Sector and Agricultural Advisory Services: Synergies for Sustainable Agricultural Development in Africa”***

Date: 25<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> November 2019

Location: Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire)

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## **1. About the AFAAS Africa Wide Agricultural Extension Week (AEW)**

The AFAAS Africa Wide Agricultural Extension Week (AEW) is an international event that brings together averagely 600 participants from across Africa and the World to deliberate on a selected strategic theme in agricultural extension and advisory services (AEAS) for sustainable development in Africa. Its purpose is to facilitate processes for improving the use of knowledge, technologies and innovations by agricultural value chain actors to achieve their individual and national development goals. Beyond thematic debates, the AFAAS AEW is a unique avenue for sharing experiences and learning between professionals from different backgrounds, strengthening interactions with policy-makers and investors and developing fruitful partnerships. The AFAAS AEW is also meant to discuss new developments, emerging needs in capacity development and defining new directions in agricultural extension and advisory services for the coming years. It is held biennially, and so far, three AEWs have been organised. The 1<sup>st</sup> AEW was held in August 2013 in Gaborone, Botswana focusing on “*Value Chain Approach in Agricultural Development: Coping with new demands for Agricultural Advisory Services*”. The 2<sup>nd</sup> one took place held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in October 2015 under the theme: “*Reinvigorating Extension Services for Market-led Agriculture within the Context of the Malabo Declaration*”. The 3<sup>rd</sup> AEW was held in Durban South Africa from 30<sup>th</sup> October to 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2017, under the theme “*Scaling up climate smart agriculture: integrating youth, women, and the digital revolution*”.

## **2. About the 4<sup>th</sup> AEW**

### **Background and focus of the 4<sup>th</sup> AEW**

The 4<sup>th</sup> AFAASAEW will be held in Abidjan (Cote d’Ivoire) back to back with the continental Agricultural and Animal Resources Fair (SARA) under the theme “*Private Sector and Agricultural Advisory Services: What Synergies for Sustainable Agricultural Development in Africa*”. The context of the 4<sup>th</sup> AEW is characterized by growing efforts at national, regional and international levels to make agriculture in Africa more productive, profitable and sustainable. This transformation expected to lead to increased technical, economic and environmental performances of agricultural value chains entails a paradigm and operational shift from farming for subsistence to farming for business i.e. sustainable wealth creation and sustainable development. Agricultural Extension and Advisory services and Private sector amongst other actors have a key role to play for the achievement of this transformation.

AEAS ensure knowledge brokering and facilitation of interactions between actors of agricultural innovation systems. Their mandate also include the delivery of customized support (access to innovation and technologies, capacity building, facilitation, support to decision-making processes) needed by value chain actors to overcome challenges and seize opportunities for the transformation of their activities. For smallholder producers, AEAS are key for the identification and expression of demands for relevant knowledge and technologies, but also their participatory development and efficient use.

Private sector includes businesses and other organisations that are run on non-public money, and generally with the aim to generate profits. With the wide adoption of Agricultural Innovation System (AIS<sup>1</sup>) as the main theoretical perspective for agricultural innovation, the private sector, in its diversity, is considered as one of the main actors and enablers with a determinant role for agricultural innovations development, adoption and impact. Private sector is involved in various activities including non-exclusively provision of advisory services to farmers and other value chain actors, processing of agricultural products, provision of agricultural inputs and services, equipment and outputs markets, funding facilities. Fostering entrepreneurship in agriculture is now widely recognized across Africa continent as a lever to achieve sustainable and inclusive economic growth and development. This development is leading to stronger linkages between private sector (inputs suppliers, processors, traders/marketers of agricultural commodities, banking and micro-finance, insurance, private extension service providers etc.) and smallholders. Considering their bridging role, AEAS are essential for facilitating and making these

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<sup>1</sup> An Agricultural Innovation System (AIS) is defined by FAO as a network of actors or organizations, and individuals together with supporting institutions and policies in the agricultural and related sectors that bring existing or new products, processes, and forms of organization into social and economic use. Policies and institutions (formal and informal) shape the way that these actors interact, generate, share and use knowledge as well as jointly learn.

relationships more fruitful.

Private sector is sometimes directly involved in the delivery of AEAS providing information, brokering of opportunities and capacity development supports to smallholders and capturing in return benefits through inputs and outputs markets or remuneration of services. The ongoing emergence of private-sector providers of AEAS is perceived as a lever for improving and overcoming some of deficiencies of public extension systems. Nonetheless, as provider of AEAS, private sector has its own challenges hence the need to identify ways to resolve them through professionalisation of its staff, deployment of suitable tools and approaches, alignment and development synergies *inter alia*. Experience sharing, joint learning, synergies and better coordination with other AEAS providers, as observed in countries with effective and inclusive country fora of AEAS actors have demonstrated a great potential and need to be fostered and extended.

Moreover, private sector organisations operating in the industrial, service or rural sectors are committing to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) including mainly, but not only, SDGs 1 (No poverty), 2 (End Hunger), 11 (Responsible consumption and production) and 13 (Climate Action). These commitments are generally concretized in the form of social investments through various mechanisms designed to meet their Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG<sup>2</sup>), and sustainability criteria. AEAS can contribute to raise the efficiency and impact of these social investments in the rural sector, by providing adequate supports to smallholders and their communities for the successful development and implementation of their social-investments funded development interventions.

Smallholder rural producers, particularly youth and women, need affordable and efficient agricultural innovations and services to transform their activities and achieve sustainable higher productivity and profitability. These increasing demands for innovations, knowledge and services offer to private sector a unique opportunity to develop new products and services, increase/diversify their customers while contributing to agricultural transformation. AEAS are fundamental for harnessing of this opportunity as they play a catalytic role in the generation, enhanced accessibility and efficient use of the new products and services.

The potential added-value and mutual benefits of enhanced synergies between Private sector and AEAS are huge, and necessary for achieving sustainable agricultural development. However, in most places in Africa, the collaboration between AEAS and private sector is still weak, erratic and informal more often, occurring generally in the frameworks of projects. The 4<sup>th</sup> AEW intends to contribute to filling this gap and explore efficient strategies and modalities for fostering and harnessing synergies between AEAS and private sector in the framework of agricultural transformation.

### **Theme and Sub Themes:**

Theme: *“Private Sector and Agricultural Advisory Services: What Synergies for Sustainable Agricultural Development in Africa”*

### **Sub-Themes**

- i. Private sector – farmers’ synergies for post-harvest management and value addition of agricultural products
- ii. Professionalizing AEAS for successful rural youth and women agripreneurship
- iii. Private sector and AEAS collaborations for Smart farming and building resilience
- iv. Agricultural Extension and Advisory Services and social investments in the rural sector
- v. Building efficient and sustainable partnerships between private sector and public AEAS

### **Goal, Objectives and Expected Outcomes:**

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<sup>2</sup> What are Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Criteria? Environmental, social and governance (ESG) criteria are a set of standards for a company's operations that socially conscious investors use to screen potential investments. Environmental criteria look at how a company performs as a steward of nature. Social criteria examine how a company manages relationships with its employees, suppliers, customers and the communities where it operates. Governance deals with a company's leadership, executive pay, audits, internal controls and shareholder rights.

**Goal:** Diverse value chain actors including policy makers, youth, women, and other key AEAS professionals develop strategies for navigating round the knowledge barriers preventing AEAS from effectively supporting the engagement of the private sector in sustainable agricultural development in Africa.

### **Objectives**

- i. To deepen the understanding of the roles of AEAS in creating synergies between the private sector and small scale farmers
- ii. To facilitate continued professional networking and learning of AEAS actors in Africa
- iii. To enhance the knowledge base on how AEAS can promote agripreneurship by the youth and women in agricultural commodity value chains
- iv. Develop capacities for Agripreneurship and Value Chains development in Africa
- v. Outline strategies to enhance efficient and sustainable private sector – AEAS platforms
- vi. Networking and building strategic partnerships, alliances and networks

### **Expected outcomes:**

- i. Fora and networks of AEAS actors at national, regional and continental levels spearheading (i) the promotion of private sector engagement in sustainable agricultural development, and (ii) the development of youth and women capacities for agripreneurship
- ii. Enhanced AEAS stakeholders networking in general and specifically around issues of engaging the private sector in sustainable agricultural development
- iii. Enhanced recognition of AEAS as a profession in a pluralistic context
- iv. Engagement of agricultural stakeholders for the establishment and rural importance private sector and AEAS platforms
- v. More sustainable and active Private Sector – AEAS collaboration platforms

### **3. Participants.**

**Participation:** AFAAS AEW is an open event; however, there will be a transparent and inclusive pre-selection of participants. The key participants in the AEW include but not limited to: AEAS providers from public (Ministry of Agriculture officials especially Directors of Extension from AFAAS member and non-member countries), Farmer based organisations, farmers, fishermen/folks, Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs) as well as institutions and programmes actively involved in Agricultural and Rural Development. Private sectors<sup>3</sup> (e.g. Telecommunications companies, agro-processors etc.) will also attend and be given space to exhibit their innovations, staff of the Ministries of Agriculture who form part of AFAAS General Assembly, and are critical for policy influence in their respective countries, while equally central for the growth of AFAAS network. Other related ministries will also be in attendance.

**Selection Process:** The Local Organising Committee (LOC) and the Regional Planning Committee are the mandated organs, with a dedicated Selection Committee constituted from the above organs. In the selection process there shall be a regional balance within Africa. There will also be a consideration for international AEAS professionals with bias to private sectors champions, who have high capacity and profile in sharing AEAS knowledge. As a guiding criterion in selection of participants, emphasis shall be placed on: Youth and gender considerations; level of contribution to the AEAS knowledge pool in the AEW theme; active role in national, regional and global AEAS activities; ability to positively influence national AEAS policies, institutions and programmes; furthermore, ability to fully self-support or partly support own

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<sup>3</sup> Targeted invitations shall be sent to private actor especially in agricultural value chains. AFAAS will also liaise with Africa Agribusiness incubation Network to mobilise private sector participation.

participation among others.

#### **4. PARTNERS:**

This event is jointly organised by AFAAS, RESCAR-AOC, ANADER and the Ministry of Agriculture, Côte d'Ivoire. The AEWs are held in partnership variously with GFRAS, CGIAR Centres, Development Partners and Bilateral Organisations, Regional Economic Communities. Partnership with Sub-Regional Research Organisations (ASARECA, CCARDESA, CORAF), FARA and Research Institutions shall be sought. Farmer organisations and private sector actors shall be key to as co-organizers of the main event, side event and/ or sponsors.

#### **5. About the organizers**

**About AFAAS:** The African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (AFAAS) goal is “Enhanced utilization of improved knowledge and technologies by agricultural value chain actors to catalyse sustainable inclusive agricultural development to feed and create prosperity for Africa”. AFAAS’ three strategic pillars are. i) Strengthening and expanding network and knowledge management capacities; ii) Developing capacities for scaling out technologies and Innovations; and iii) Facilitating advancement of Agricultural Extension and Advisory Services (AEAS). AFAAS operates at country and regional levels through its Country Fora and regional for a respectively. AFAAS works closely with GFRAS, Regional and country fora in Africa. [www.afaas-africa.org](http://www.afaas-africa.org). AFAAS upholds the 2014 Malabo Declaration and the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), the Science Agenda for Agriculture in Africa (S3A) among key Agricultural Research and Development frameworks in African continent.

#### **About ANADER:**

Created in September 1993, the National Agency for Rural Development is a private company which, under the supervision of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, aims to provide quality agricultural extension and advisory services, with a view to ensuring development in rural areas. ANADER’s mission is to contribute to improving living conditions in rural areas through professionalizing of farmers and farmer organizations, by designing and implementing appropriate tools, adapted programs to ensure sustainable and controlled development. Globally, this mission consists of conducting any agricultural activities and operations intending to promote economic and social development in rural areas. Thus, in response to pluralistic challenges in rural settings, ANADER aims to be an efficient and effective instrument offering both public service and private-sector services through agricultural advisory services based on farmer’s knowledge and experience and collaboration with other field partners and stakeholders. Within the AEAS framework, ANADER is involved with cash crops, food crops as well as animal husbandry in terms of productivity enhancement, field product quality, technology transfer, dissemination of performant varieties, risks reduction, implementation of national agricultural development strategies, capacity strengthening for cooperative organizations, environmental preservation, gender and development, etc.

**About RESCAR-AOC:** The West and Central Africa Network of Agricultural and Rural Advisory Services (RESCAR-AOC) aims to bring together all actors and stakeholders of the agricultural and rural advisory services (ARAS). Through RESCAR-AOC, these actors have a unique framework to better consult each other, strengthen their capacities, share and learn from their experiences, harness synergies to address challenges and opportunities facing agricultural advisory services and bring added value to processes for the elaboration and implementation of agricultural development policies. For investors and development agencies, RESCAR-AOC is an interface to interact more efficiently with professionals of agricultural advisory services and improve development initiatives. RESCAR-AOC places its activities in the context of coordinated efforts for an accelerated and inclusive transformation of African agriculture. RESCAR-AOC is a member of the African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (AFAAS) and the Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services (GFRAS) and do adhere to principles of subsidiarity for activities conducted at global, continental or national levels. [www.rescar-aoc.org](http://www.rescar-aoc.org)