Data-driven farming in Africa

Panel and Launch of the Sub-Saharan Africa Food Security Portal
Organised by IFPRI, CTA, the ACP Secretariat, the European Commission, PAFO

16 September 2015, 9h30-13h00
ACP Secretariat, 451 Avenue Georges Henri, 1200 Brussels, Room C
http://brusselsbriefings.net

Data: key tool for agricultural transformation[1]
Data has become a key asset for agricultural transformation in Africa. The availability of timely, relevant, and reliable data on the agriculture sector is necessary for effective planning, monitoring, and evaluation of agricultural and rural development policies and to increase the impact of field interventions. Whereas in the past, a relatively small volume of analog data was produced and made available through a limited number of channels, today massive amount of data is regularly generated from various sources, through different channels.

The phenomenon of ''big data'' - where information comes from different sources ranging from connected devices to sensors and GPS - offers enormous potential to develop innovative products and services. Turning big data—call logs, mobile-banking transactions, online user-generated content, online searches, satellite images, etc.—into actionable information opens exciting opportunities.

The growing role of 'crowdsourcing' and other "participatory sensing" efforts bringing together communities of practice through the use of mobile phones and other platforms including Internet, hand-held radio, and geospatial technologies present promising opportunities.

Generating value at the different stages of the data value chain is at the centre of the knowledge economy. Improved and inclusive data setting, use and sharing will enhance evidence-based decision-making and improve the policies. To fully exploit the potential of open data, new partnerships are needed between policy-makers, researchers, farmers and the private sector.

Building resilience for food and nutrition security through better data
The **Food Security Portal**, facilitated by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) and financed by the European Commission, aims to provide improved food security for the world's poor and increased resilience of global food systems against food and financial crises. It brings together international, regional, and country-level data, news, and research aimed at meeting countries' immediate food security needs, as well as building long-term global food security.

The open-access project encompasses a global research-based monitoring and capacity-strengthening device for successful identification and implementation of the appropriate policy actions in response to food crises. The Food Security Portal is designed to pool information in structured ways and ensure data quality, timeliness, and relevance, as well as the opportunity for collaboration among policymakers, development professionals, and researchers.

The portal contains over 40 indicators related to food security, commodity prices, economics, and human well-being. IFPRI draws from public, authoritative data sources like the World Bank, the FAO, UNICEF, and others, as well as IFPRI's own data to cover detailed statistics for 12 focus countries and a range of statistics for the other countries in the region.

The website includes information by country and commodity, food security-related news, and interactive maps on a range of topics . It provides policy analysis tools on: Agricultural commodity markets, agricultural commodity prices and returns, capacity strengthening, excessive food price volatility; food crisis reports; and food security media analysis (FOMA). It includes a number of thematic discussion areas including Food Availability, Input Markets, Food Access, Risk and Resilience, Food Consumption, and External Shocks, which are

---

[1] See previous work at the Brussels Briefing n. 40 on **"**Data: the next revolution for agriculture in ACP countries?**"** held on 18th February 2015.

continuously updated. The FSP serves as a launching point for virtual dialogues on timely food and nutrition security-related topics.

CTA and IFPRI collaboration

CTA and IFPRI collaborate in several areas relating to improving the management of data for agriculture in Africa: (i) analysis of African Agricultural Trade through the production of a yearly Trade Outlook in partnership with the AUC, UNECA and with the expertise of African researchers from the AGRODEP network; (ii) support to Strategic Analysis Knowledge Support Services (SAKSS) to inform the CAADP process at national level and regional levels (East and West Africa); (iii) support to strengthening data management through the Agriconnexions project with African farmers organizations; (iv) joint food policy briefings in areas such as resilience, nutrition and food price volatility.

Data-driven farming in Africa

Panel and Launch of the [Sub-Saharan Africa Food Security Portal](http://brusselsbriefings.net)
*Organised by IFPRI, CTA, the ACP Secretariat, the European Commission and
the Panafrican Farmers Organisation (PAFO)*

16 September 2015, 9h30-13h00
ACP Secretariat, 451 Avenue Georges Henri, 1200 Brussels, Room C
http://brusselsbriefings.net

Programme

8h00-9h00   Registration
9h30-9h35   Welcome; *Viwanou Gnassounou, Assistant-Secretary General of the ACP Group of States in charge of Sustainable Economic Development and Trade*
9h35-9h50   Context & objectives, *Isolina Boto, Manager, CTA Brussels Office*
           Introduction to the Panel: *Jean-Pierre Halkin, Head of Unit, Rural Development, Food Security, Nutrition, European Commission/EuropeAid; Michael Hailu, Director of CTA*

9h50-13h00 Panel : Perspectives on Data-driven farming in Africa
This panel will bring various perspectives to the debate on data use for improved agricultural transformation in Africa.
<u>Chair</u>: *Professor Eric Tollens, Chair, CTA Executive Board*
<u>Panelists</u>:
-   How better data use can increase resilience of food systems against crises
    Maximo Torero, Division Director of the Markets, Trade & Institutions, IFPRI

-   The benefits of Open data for agriculture
    Chris Addison, Senior Coordinator, Knowledge Management, CTA

-   The role of mobile applications in data use for agriculture
    Ben Addom, ICT4D Programme Coordinator, CTA

-   How can farmer's organizations contribute to data-driven farming?
    Perspective from PAFO, Theo de Jager, President, PAFO
    Perspective from Central Africa: Elisabeth Atangana, President, PROPAC
    Perspective from Southern Africa: Ishmael Sunga, CEO, SACAU
    Perspective from West Africa: Ousseini Ouedraogo, Executive Secretary, ROPPA
    Perspective from UMNAGRI, Abdelmajid Ezzar, President UMNAGRI

Debate

Expanding Knowledge, informing policy: Launch of the FS Portal
This short session will share the main features of the new Sub-Saharan Africa Food Security Portal features and tools of interest to policy-makers, farmers, researchers. An increased multistakeholder collaboration is foreseen, especially with the farmers' organizations, to increase the generation, use and sharing of data.

The way forward

13h00 Lunch