African Network for Agriculture, Agroforestry & Natural Resources Education

Agricultural Education News

Agricultural Education News *Volume 20.1* *March 2014*

ANAFE's agribusiness curriculum ready to be rolled out

Agribusiness experts and curriculum specialists met on February 24-28, 2014 at the Safari Park Hotel in Nairobi, Kenya, to put final touches on the eagerly awaited document

Tertiary Agricultural Education (TAE) institutions in Africa can now benefit from a new five-module agribusiness curriculum to enrich their education programs. The curriculum - one of its own kind – is set to transform agribusiness education in the continent.

Developed by the African Network for Agriculture, Agroforestry and Natural Resources Education (ANAFE), the curriculum promises to revolutionize agribusiness education and training in Africa. It encompasses the entire tertiary agricultural education spectrum with different modules for certificate, diploma, undergraduate and post graduate levels including PhD.

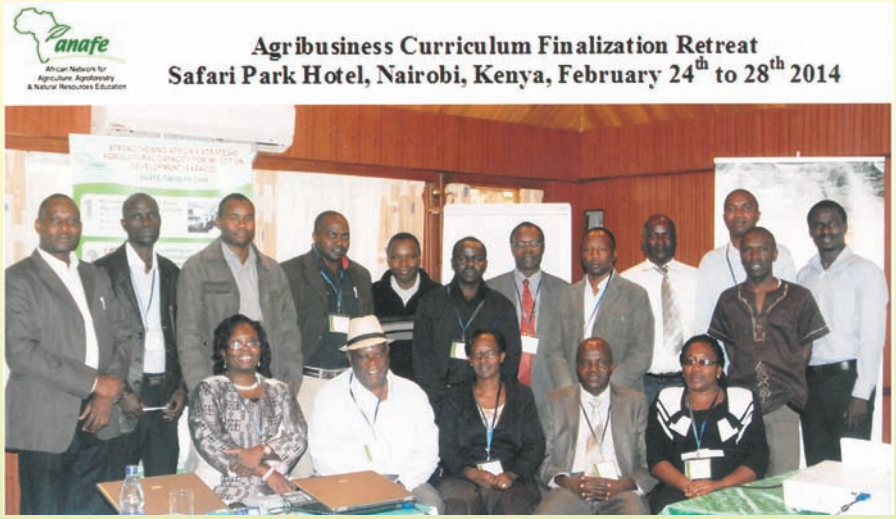
Agribusiness experts and curriculum specialists met on February 24-28, 2014 at the Safari Park Hotel in Nairobi, Kenya, to put final touches on the eagerly awaited document.

One of the unique features of the curriculum is its flexibility; whereas the different modules build on each other progressively, they can also be used independently depending on the type of institution and level of training required.

"Development of the curriculum is in line with the Network's continental mandate of leading curriculum review and reform in Africa" said Dr Aissetou Yaye, ANAFE's Executive Secretary during the retreat.

ANAFE will also mobilize expertise and resources from its member institutions and partners to support implementation of the curriculum.

According to Prof. Henry Bwisa, the Head of Agribusiness department at Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT), existing agribusiness curricula borrow heavily from agricultural economics, which does not augur well for agribusiness development in Africa.



Participants of the Agribusiness Curriculum review retreat held at Safari Park hotel, Nairobi, Kenya.

"Many existing agribusiness courses have lifted up to 70% content from agricultural economics" he said.

To address this anomaly, the new curriculum is deliberately structured to accommodate at least 70 per cent agribusiness content with an adequate dose of practical exposure and technological orientation. This is intended to train graduates who will not only fit into the private sector but also have the capacity to set up their own agribusinesses and create employment.

Developed using the ANAFE DACUM methodology, the curriculum is a product of wide consultation which took almost 2 years with over 100 agribusiness experts, curriculum specialists, lecturers, the private sector, policy makers, government officials, entrepreneurs and students.

Already, ANAFE has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Rongo University College, Kenya, to pilot the BSc agribusiness curriculum; Taita-Taveta University, Kenya, is set to follow suit. Other institutions in West, Central and Southern Africa have also expressed interest in piloting the BSc, MSc and PhD curriculum.

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Project Updates

New EU Funded Project on neglected and underutilized crops launched

The project aims to build the capacity of smallholder farmers and entrepreneurs in three African sub-regions – West, Eastern and Southern Africa – to more effectively deploy underutilized crops and fruits



Participants of the inception workshop for neglected and underutilized crop species (NUS) project held at the World Agroforestry Centre, Nairobi, Kenya.

The African Network for Agriculture, Agroforestry and Natural Resources Education (ANAFE) has teamed up with Bioversity International and other partners to implement a new project for enhancing the value chains of neglected and underutilized species (NUS) in Africa. The project was among the recently approved ACP/EU proposals.

The project aims to build the capacity of smallholder farmers and entrepreneurs in three African sub-regions – West, Eastern and Southern Africa – to more effectively deploy underutilized crops and fruits for food security, income generation and resilience to agronomic, economic and climatic shocks.

Specifically, the project focuses on bambara groundnut (*Vigna subterrana*) and the African leafy vegetable (ALV) amaranth (*Amaranthus* spp), serving as model crops for broader, regional capacity development, strategy revisions and policy advocacy. The two species were chosen because they are widely grown in Africa and considered priority crops for commercialization.

An inception workshop was held at the World Agroforestry Centre Nairobi, Kenya, on March 12-14, 2014, for the partners to build consensus on key issues relating to the project and develop a shared understanding of the current situation regarding value chains of the target crops in the project countries/sub-regions.

The project is expected to develop national action plans for value chain upgrading of the aforementioned crops in Benin, Kenya and Zimbabwe; design effective strategies and tools for integrating teaching on neglected and under-utilized species into higher agricultural education in the three sub-regions; and improve the capacity to design and conduct inter-disciplinary research projects on NUS value chains.

ANAFE is charged with the responsibility of coordinating relevant training courses in NUS for target beneficiaries in addition to developing curriculum guidelines and attendant learning materials. ANAFE will also facilitate the participation of its member institutions in the target countries.

Apart from ANAFE and Bioversity International, other implementing partners are: The International Foundation for Science (IFS) and four African partners: ExcelHort, a private business development organization based in Uganda; Global Horticulture Initiative based in Italy; and the West and Central African Council for Agricultural Research and Development (CORAF/WECARD).

Three higher education institutions in Benin, Kenya and Zimbabwe will lead national level activities, drawing on their experience in linking research with farmers, private sector players and policy. They are: Laboratory of Agricultural Biodiversity and Tropical Plant Breeding (LAAPT) of Abomey Calavi University (Benin), Africa University (Zimbabwe) and the University of Nairobi (Kenya).

Learning materials on risks management and agribusiness set to be finalized

Authors have already submitted their various chapters and the meeting is intended to thoroughly review and critique the drafts to ensure they conform to the required standards



ANAFE's Executive Secretary, Dr. Aissetou Yaye, Director of Science and Technology, Ivory Coast, Prof. Kati Coulibaly, the representative of the President of Université Houphouët Boigny, Prof. Atta Kofi and the Dean, Faculty of Bioscience Prof. Paul Essetchi during the first workshop held in Abidjan, Cote D'Ivoire.

Lecturers and experts on agricultural risks management and agribusiness drawn from across Africa will converge in Nairobi on April 8-11th, 2014 to refine and finalize contextualized learning materials on these subjects.

Under the umbrella of the African Network for Agriculture, Agroforestry and Natural Resources Education (ANAFE), the authors are expected to edit and collate the various chapters into two books which should be ready for publication by the end of April, 2014. The books will be launched during the ANAFE symposium planned for 25 – 29 August 2014 in Yaoundé Cameroon. This will also be an occasion to celebrate ANAFE's 20th anniversary.

The first meeting for this purpose was held on 9-13 December 2013 at the Universite Felix Houphouet Boigny Cote D'Ivoire, where the lecturers and experts were trained on collaborative development of learning materials and agreed on the general structure and content for the two books. They then identified authors for each of the chapters based on their personal interests, professional expertise and experience.

Authors have already submitted their various chapters and the meeting set out to thoroughly review and critique the drafts to ensure they conform to the required standards expected of such learning materials.

This initiative is driven by the realization that Tertiary Agricultural Education (TAE) institutions in Africa do not have adequate contextualized learning materials that match continent's unique educational needs, especially within the realms of agricultural risks management and agribusiness.

The authors are drawn from different African universities and research institutions including University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta (Nigeria), Federal University of Technology, Akure (Nigeria), Kaduna State University (Nigeria), Mulungushi University (Zambia), Botswana College of Agriculture, Rongo University (Kenya), Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology (Kenya), Kenyatta University (Kenya), Universite Felix Houphouet Boigny University (Cote D'Ivoire), Bahir Dar University (Ethiopia), United Nations University (Ghana), Institut Polytechnique Rural de Formation et de Recherche Appliquée (Mali), University of Dschang (Cameroon) and Universite Nangui Abrogoua (Cote D'Ivoire).

Project Updates

ANAFE at the World Agroforestry Congress

ANAFE co-organized two key events at the Congress emphasizing the importance of tertiary education in agriculture, agroforestry and natural resources, especially in Africa



Keynote speakers from left to right: Dr Margaret Kroma *(standing) Mr. Rowan Reid, Dr Aissetou Yaye, Mr. Kiringai Kamau, Mr. Damase Khasa, Dr. Marie Louise Avana Tientcheu and Dr. Sebastian Chakeredza during the break-out session.*

Effective education and training in agriculture, *agroforestry* and natural resources has a direct correlation with socio-economic development. The African Network for Agriculture, Agroforestry and Natural Resources Education (ANAFE) sought to amplify this relationship at the World Agroforestry Congress held on February 10-14, 2014, in Delhi, India.

ANAFE co-organized two key events at the Congress emphasizing the importance of tertiary education in agriculture, agroforestry and natural resources, especially in Africa. First, ANAFE took part in a break-out session on '*Building development abilities through education and capacity development*' chaired by the Executive Secretary, Dr Aissetou Yaye. At this session, ANAFE's Deputy Executive Secretary, Dr Sebastian Chakeredza highlighted key challenges facing tertiary agricultural education in sub-Saharan Africa and how ANAFE has strategically positioned itself to address them.

Through its twin programs of Strengthening Africa Strategic Agricultural Capacity for Impact on Development (SASACID) and Universities, Business and Research in Agricultural Innovation (UniBRAIN), over 120 students have been supported to conduct research on agriculture, agroforestry, agribusiness and natural resources. Dr Chakeredza said ANAFE is finalizing production of learning materials in agribusiness and management of risks and uncertainty in agriculture while curricula frameworks for certificate level, diploma, BSc, MSc and PhD studies have been developed and will be tested by pilot institutions.

Mr. Rowan Reid enlightened participants on the *Master Tree Grower Programme* in Australia and Uganda supported by the Australian Agroforestry Foundation. The programme aims to build the capacity of farmers on technology, problem solving, education and human/community engagement.

ANAFE Board Vice Chair, Dr. Marie Louise Avana Tientcheu from the University of Dschang, Cameroon, stressed the need for experiential learning saying it is critical in reinforcing what students learn in class. She observed that although lecturers value experiential learning, they cannot apply it because of resource constraints.

Mr. Kiringai Kamau of NEPAD, highlighted the need for Integrating Knowledge Management and Information Technology for development (ICT4D) in building the capacity of farmers on Agroforestry and Natural Resource Management.

The session was also attended by Dr Margaret Kroma, Assistant Director General, Partnerships & Impact at the World Agroforestry Centre and ANAFE's chair for East Africa Regional Agricultural Fora for Training (ECA-RAFT) Prof. James Kung'u.

ANAFE also participated in a side event on '*Entrepreneurial partnerships and capacity development in agroforestry value chains*'. Dr Chakeredza, who represented ANAFE at the event, highlighted challenges facing Agroforestry education in Africa. He observed that the component of value addition is missing in most agroforestry curricula therefore, graduating students cannot easily start their own enterprises. In his view, there is need for supportive policies on agroforestry, for example having agroforestry research and extension positions within the Ministries of Agriculture and Forestry.

UniBRAIN PMT Meeting held in Zambia

The meeting brought together all UniBRAIN partners and incubators to review progress and discuss key issues pertaining to implementation of the program



UniBRAIN's Programme Management Team (PMT) members pose for a photo during the meeting held in Zambia.

The Universities, Business and Research in Agricultural Innovation (UniBRAIN) held its Bi-annual Program Management Team (PMT) meeting on February 12-14, 2014 in Zambia.

The meeting brought together all UniBRAIN partners and incubators to review progress and discuss key issues pertaining to implementation of the program.

While officially opening the meeting, University of Zambia Vice Chancellor, Prof. Stephen Simukanga emphasized the importance of business incubation saying it is a critical pathway for creating employment in Africa. Towards this end, he said the University of Zambia will liaise with the Agri-Business Incubation Trust (AgBIT), one of UniBRAIN incubators based in Zambia, to make incubation a core research and training component at the institution.

Prof. Simukanga's sentiments were echoed by Dr. Chris Muyunda who was appalled by the high rates of SMEs failure in Africa.

"Incubation is crucial in determining the trajectory of agribusiness development in the continent, which is largely characterized by low adoption of technologies, poor quality of farm produce and high post-harvest losses. These shortcomings can easily be addressed by a functional and well managed incubation based system like UniBRAIN" he said.

During the meeting, it emerged that substantial progress had been made in all program indicators by both partners and incubators. For example, all incubators now have a functional management component, incubatees had enrolled and start-up businesses and SMEs are starting to develop. The linkage between incubatees and training institutions is becoming stronger through internship and attachment programmes. However, much more still needs to be done if the desired outcomes and impacts are to be realized.

ANAFE, which is one of the key UniBRAIN partners, is a leading tertiary education network in Africa with a continental mandate to spearhead curricula review and reforms on agricultural education.

As a UniBRAIN partner, ANAFE is charged with the responsibility of catalyzing improvements in agribusiness education emanating from incubators and share the lessons, products and practices with its member universities and colleges.

Regional News

Sorghum value chain Incubator launched in Kenya

Sorghum Value Chain Development Consortium (SVCDC) aims to produce agribusiness graduates with hands-on experience



ICRISAT Director-General, Dr William Dar, Kenya' Principal Secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture Ms Cecily Kariuki, PanAAC CEO, Ms Lucy Muchoki, FARA Executive Director, Dr Yemi Akinbamijo, UniBRAIN Facility Coordinator, Mr Alex Ariho and ANAFE's Executive Secretary, Dr Aissetou Yaye taste a sorghum cake during the launch.

Agribusiness students and graduates in Africa now have a unique opportunity to actualise their entrepreneurial and business potential. This follows the launch of a sorghum-based agribusiness incubator with an express mandate to improve agribusiness education and catalyse the growth of sustainable enterprises for young people.

The consortium will provide hand-holding services to start-up business right from conceptualization; support fledgling start-ups and SME's with skills, expertise and facilities; provide services to commercial clients who want to expand, diversify, create new products or enter new markets; offer training and capacity building on agribusiness; and provide business advisory, technical backstopping, match-making and soft-landing services.

Launched on March 14th 2014, at the Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT), the Sorghum Value Chain Development Consortium (SVCDC) aims to produce agribusiness graduates with hands-on experience and support them to start SMEs capable of creating jobs and generating wealth.

The Executive Secretary of the African Network for Agriculture, Agroforestry and Natural resources Education (ANAFE), Dr Aissetou Yaye, noted that significant gains have been made in improving agribusiness education in Africa.

Currently, ANAFE is finalizing an innovative agribusiness curriculum on Agribusiness for all levels of tertiary agricultural education including certificate, diploma, undergraduate and graduate levels. Rongo University College is already piloting the agribusiness curriculum with support from ANAFE. In addition, ANAFE is developing contextualised learning materials on agribusiness to be used by Tertiary Agricultural Education (TAE) institutions in Africa.

The SVCDC launch was also graced by FARA's Executive Director, Dr Yemi Akinbamijo; UniBRAIN Facility Coordinator, Mr. Alex Ariho; Kenya's leading industrialist and philanthropist, Dr Manu Chandaria; ICRISAT's Director General, Dr William Dar; Kenya's Principal Secretary for Agriculture,Cecily Kariuki and the Chief Executive Officer of the Pan African Agribusiness and Agro Industry Consortium (PanAAC), Lucy Muchoki.

SVCDC is one of the six Agribusiness Innovation Incubation Consortium (AIIC) in Africa funded by the Universities, Business and Research in Agricultural innovation (UniBRAIN), an initiative of the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA).

The West African Agribusiness Resource Incubator Launched in Mali

WAARI is one of the six agribusiness incubators being established under the Universities, Business and Research in Agricultural Innovation (UniBRAIN)

The West African Agri-Business Resource Incubator (WAARI) was officially launched on January 23, 2014 in the Selingue province of Mali.

WAARI is one of the six agribusiness incubators being established under the Universities, Business and Research in Agricultural Innovation (UniBRAIN) project of the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA). UniBRAIN is financially supported by The Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA).

The launch was also attended by UniBRAIN Facility Coordinator, Alex Ariho, ICRISAT Director-General, Dr William Dar and Dr Kiran Sharma, Chief Executive Officer AIP-ICRISAT among other dignitaries.

The African Network for Agriculture, Agroforestry and Natural Resources Education (ANAFE) is one of the key UniBRAIN implementing partners. Other implementing partners are the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) based in India, the Centre for Coordination of Agricultural Research and Development for Southern Africa (CCARDESA), West and Central African Council for Agricultural Research and Development (CORAF/WECARD), the Association for strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa (ASARECA), and the Pan African Agribusiness and Agro Industry Consortium (PanAAC).

Apart from WAARI, UniBRAIN also support other incubators which include: Creating Competitive Livestock Entrepreneurs in Agribusiness Consortium (CCLEAr), based in Ghana; Sorghum Value-Chain Development Consortium (SVCDC), based in Kenya; Afri Banana Product (ABP) Limited and Consortium for Enhancing University Responsiveness to Agribusiness Development (CURAD) both based in Uganda; and Agribusiness Incubation Trust (AgBIT) in Zambia.

Brinda Ramasawmy defends her PhD Thesis

Dr Brinda Ramasawmy, an Agricultural Economics and Management Lecturer at the Faculty of Agriculture of the University of Mauritius publicly defended her PhD thesis on February 27, 2014 at Montpellier Sup Agro, Montpellier, France.



Dr Brinda Ramasawmy defending her PhD thesis.

Her thesis titled *'Institutional work and the dynamics of agricultural value chains: The case of Mauritius'* focuses on sociological neo-institutionalism and its key concepts and institutional frameworks to understand the types and forms of initiatives undertaken by current and new actors in an agri-cultural value chain, specifically the vegetable value chain in Mauritius. Her PhD thesis earned rare reviews from Montpellier Sup Agro and was described as '*Very Honourable with Committee Praise*'. The members of the jury included: Professor Fatiha Fort (Supervisor), Emeritus Professor Jean-Louis Rastoin and Dr. Ronan Le Velly (all from from Montpellier Sup Agro); Professor Karim Messeghem (University of Montpellier); Profes-sor Didier Chabaud (University of Avignon); and Professor Bernard Leca (University Paris-Dauphine). Dr Ramasawmy also holds a BSc. (Hons) in Agriculture from the University of Mauritius and MSc in Agricultural Man-agement from the University of Reading, United Kingdon. She is involved in a number of ANAFE projects including HAAGRIM and SASACID.

MICsTraining held in Nairobi

Universities, Business and Research in Agricultural Innovation (UniBRAIN) partners and incubators have been trained on a new version of the Management Information and Collaboration System (MICS). The training was held in Nairobi on February 26-28, 2014.

MICS is a unique electronic interface developed by the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) for managing UniBRAIN's incubation facility and related activities. It is specifically tailored to manage knowledge generated from the incubation process with a view to enhancing decision making, collaboration, information sharing, monitoring, evaluation and reporting.

The training was officially opened by the UniBRAIN facility Coordinator, Mr. Alex Ariho, who stressed the need to have the system working and asked participants to populate it with relevant information relating to their respective activities.

SASACID progress review meeting in Nairobi

SASACID progress review meeting will be held in Nairobi, Kenya, on April 22-23, 2014. The review meeting will bring together representatives of all the 16 Pilot Institutions implementing the program.

Participants will specifically discuss findings of institutional self-assessments and other studies conducted by each institution; they will also share details and experiences regarding implementation and status of SASACID student grants.

SASACID Pilot institutions are: University of Thies, ENSA and University of Gaston Berger, (both from Senegal) IDR Bobo Dioulasso (Burkina Faso), Abdou Moumouni University (Niger), University of Abomey Calavi, (Benin), University of Cocody, (Cote D'Ivoire), University of Nigeria, Nsukka, University of Dschang (Cameroon), University of Kordofan, (Sudan), Nyabyeya Forestry College (Uganda), Kenyatta University and University of Nairobi (both from Kenya), Botswana College of Agriculture, Mulungushi University,

(Zambia) Zimbabwe College of Forestry and University of Pretoria (South Africa).

ANAFE Symposium attracts great interest

ANAFE's international Symposium on Risks Management and Agribusiness has attracted a lot of interest from potential participants in Africa and Europe. Already, the ANAFE Secretariat has received more than 70 abstracts for the Symposium slated for August 25-29, 2014 in Yaoundé, Cameroon.

The Symposium committee will now sift through the abstracts and select those which meet the set standards as outlined in the call for abstracts. Successful applicants will then be required to send full papers by June 30, 2014. The symposium specifically aims to:

1. Discuss the elements of risk and uncertainty in agriculture and the roles of TAE;
2. Strategize on mechanisms and policies for coping with risk and uncertainty;
3. Discuss policy and institutional issues for building appropriate capacity for the implementation of agricultural practices which minimize the impact of climate change risks;
4. Discuss curriculum reforms and the need to strengthen agribusiness education in Africa;
5. Reinforce the concept of profitable agriculture through agribusiness and to interest youth and women to advance in agricultural sciences.

Risks Management curriculum meeting in Nairobi

ANAFE has begun the process of developing an MSc curriculum on Risks Management for Tertiary Agricultural Education (TAE) Institutions in Africa. The first meeting will be held on April 24-25, 2014 in Nairobi, Kenya.

ANAFE is currently conducting a survey of existing curricula on management of risks and uncertainties in agriculture at undergraduate and postgraduate levels in Africa whose findings will inform discussions at the meeting. The study will also review curricula in management of risks and uncertainties in agriculture outside Africa and distil best practices that can enrich training in this area.

Prof Byrne Passes on



It is with profound sorrow and sadness that we announce the death of Prof Gabriel J. Byrne of Strathmore Business School, Kenya. Prof. Byrne was part of a delegation from Strathmore University who participated in a workshop to launch the piloting of an Agribusiness Curriculum at Rongo University College. His sharp intellect and vast experience in matters related to agribusiness was valuable in refining the curriculum, which is almost ready for publication. Prof, Byrne had a PhD in Culture and International Marketing from the National University of Ireland, an MBA from Trinity College Dublin and a BE from University College Dublin. On behalf of the ANAFE fraternity, we ask God to grant his family, friends and professional colleagues the strength to bear the loss. May God rest his soul in eternal peace!

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This document has been financed by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida). Sida does not necessarily share the views expressed in this material. Responsibility for its contents rests entirely with the author