



4th Annual ReNAPRI Stakeholder Conference

“Unfolding Agricultural Transformation in Africa: Strategies for sustainable development”

30th November – 1st December 2017 | Cape Town

Concept Note

Introduction

At the turn of this century, scholars agreed that Africa’s development crisis was largely characterized by policy failure. However, the combined effect of African governments’ commitment to transformation (as embodied in CAADP) and the rapid rise in economic growth rates in resource-abundant economies was a change in global perspectives on Africa within the first decade of the 21st century. The visions shifted from a “[Hopeless Continent](#)” towards “[Africa Rising](#)” as emerging evidence documented the major transformations in the region’s agricultural sectors and broader economies.

Today, the pace and scope of agricultural transformation will rest on enlightened policies informed by solid evidence. The fundamental questions at the core of the future of agriculture transformation in Africa are linked to issues of political governance – whether governments will adopt policies and spend their scarce resources in ways that truly promote broad-based agricultural productivity growth. For this reason, ReNAPRI’s 4th Annual Stakeholder Conference will focus on identifying policy strategies that can generate the incentives for system-wide private investment in food systems that contribute to broad-based growth.

Conference Theme

The overarching theme of the 4th Annual ReNAPRI Stakeholder Conference is; “***Unfolding Agricultural Transformation in Africa: Strategies for sustainable development***”.

Conference Objectives

The purpose of the conference is to create a platform for strategic dialogue around evidence of agricultural transformation. Our premise is that an evidence-based understanding of unfolding transformation and the challenges that it raises can assist African governments, private firms and civil society groups to anticipate and respond proactively.

The key objectives of the 4th Annual ReNAPRI Stakeholders’ Conference is to:

1. Examine constraints to transformational investment in the Agri-food system
2. Unpack the emerging trends in land distribution and the implication on governance structures
3. Explore agricultural productivity trends/options considering climate change and increasing resource constraints
4. Investigate the potential employment opportunities for youth in the agri-food system

5. Anticipate the 10-year outlook for maize, wheat, rice, sugar, and soybeans within the context of rapidly changing agricultural systems both regionally and globally
6. Enhance engagement of African parliaments in issues pertaining to African agricultural transformation; and
7. Assess the operational feasibility of alternative policy options by clearly identifying concrete strategies that address the challenges to transformation – i.e. focusing on the “how” questions.

Our Approach

The ReNAPRI conference will be held over a day-and-half period and will comprise the following activities;

- Keynote Presentations focused on “unfolding” agricultural transformation and highlighting the key challenges, and;
- Panel Discussions including industry experts/stakeholders, charged with identifying concrete strategies that address the challenges and ensure sustainable development.
- Dialogue with parliamentarians on how best they can support agricultural transformation efforts at country and national levels.

Participants

Conference participants include a range of stakeholders actively engaged in the African Agricultural sector. These include;

- Regional Economic Community and relevant government ministries representatives
- Farmer organizations
- Private sector organizations and companies
- Academics
- Development think tanks
- Research organizations (national and international)
- Development agencies and donor community

Expected Outcomes

- Awareness of the challenges to agricultural transformation
- Identification of concrete strategies aimed at addressing the challenges
- Increased understanding of parliamentarians on agricultural transformation dynamics and their role in supporting increase of national budget allocation to the agricultural sector
- Linkages and partnership among the various stakeholders

Planning/Organizing Committees

The planning and organizing for this conference is coordinated by the ReNAPRI Secretariat and the host institution BFAP.

Finance and Technical Support

Financial and Technical support for the conference is provided by key partners including, Food Trade, University of Pretoria - Gates Foundation, Michigan State University, University of Missouri – FAPRI, European Union, African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF), University of Stellenbosch and the Western Cape Department of Agriculture.