

2017 WORLD FOOD PRIZE SYMPOSIUM: THE BORLAUG DIALOGUE

MAKING FARMING COOL: INVESTING IN FUTURE AFRICAN FARMERS AND AGRIPRENEURS

Co-Hosted by

African Development Bank, Initiative for Global Development, Association of African Agricultural Professionals in the Diaspora, Michigan State University, Iowa State University & International Institute of Tropical Agriculture

Wednesday, October 18, 2017

Salon A, B & C @ 7AM – 10.45AM

Downtown Des Moines Marriott Hotel, 700 Grand Ave, Des Moines, IA 50309

Description of the side event:

This side event will bring together youth entrepreneurs, private sector representatives, policy makers and thought leaders to discuss expanding economic opportunities for Africa's youth throughout the agricultural value chain, from lab to farm to fork. During breakfast, a podcast/video/PowerPoint on youth, agriculture and training clip will run. Then the session will kick start creatively through a chat between two young agripreneurs, followed by formal welcome remarks by Dr. Mima Nedelcovych before a keynote address by Dr. Akinwumi Adesina, President of the African Development Bank and 2017 World Food Prize Laureate. Two panels of four people each will follow before concluding with a Q&A session.

Why the Side Event?

Africa has the largest concentration of young people in the world. According to the African Development Bank, about 60% of the population is below the age of 35. These young people represent the bulk of the unemployed population, and three-quarters of them live below the poverty line and over the next 15 years 300 million young Africans will be coming into the job market. Lack of good jobs for the youth has become a major political concern and can be seriously destabilizing. While the agriculture sector offers significant economic growth opportunities, lack of access to land, finance, markets, technologies and practical skills are major stumbling blocks to youth participation. Youth often perceive agriculture only as traditional hand hoe farming, an unattractive option featuring hard labor, long hours and poor returns. The average age of an African farmer is over 50 years, and attracting a new cadre of young, energetic and talented agripreneurs who will drive the adoption of new technologies throughout the value chain, raise productivity and meet rising food demand is an urgent priority.

Recent research from Michigan State University indicates that as African economies transform, there are expanding opportunities for youth employment and entrepreneurship throughout high-potential value chains where consumer demand is increasing, including horticulture, dairy, oilseeds, poultry and aquaculture. However, major efforts are needed to provide young Africans with up-to-date practical skills, and access to new technologies, land, equipment and finance that will allow them to transition from subsistence agriculture into higher-paying work. One of these initiatives is the African Development Bank's ENABLE Youth Program, a flagship of the Feed Africa Strategy, which empowers youth at each stage of the agribusiness value chain as agripreneurs by harnessing new skills, technologies and financing approaches so that the youth can establish viable and profitable agribusinesses, jobs and better incomes for themselves and their communities. For example, using ICT, young entrepreneurs have created digital

solutions to specific agricultural challenges and created successful business ventures such as Mobis in Uganda, FarmDrive in Kenya and Hello Tractor in Nigeria, which are currently used by thousands of farmers. With the right skills, improved access to finance and an enabling policy environment, young African men and women can become proud innovators creating new and profitable agribusinesses. These youth agripreneurs are critical players in the AfDB's other flagship initiatives such as the Technologies for African Agricultural Transformation (TAAT) and the Transformation of the African Savannah Initiative (TASI).

Objectives/Expected Outcomes of the Side Event:

1. Raise awareness, highlight and promote the expansion of employment and entrepreneurship opportunities for youth in African agrifood systems. Discuss challenges and provide recommendations for increasing youth participation in agribusiness and improving the effectiveness of policies and programs related to youth and agricultural development.
2. Increase the visibility of efforts by the partner institutions, AfDB, IGD, MSU, AAAPD, the MasterCard Foundation, IITA and other partners to address youth employment challenges by expanding knowledge and implementing innovative programs.
3. Link the Youth Agripreneurs to institutions, organizations and individuals in the US and elsewhere who can assist them to grow their businesses through partnerships and access to new technologies, finance, markets, etc.

Discussion points for presenters and participants:

1. What are the main challenges hindering extensive growth and engagement of youth in agribusiness in Africa?
2. What is the role of the Africa's private sector in expanding opportunities for youth in African agrifood systems?
3. How can the cost-effectiveness of current agripreneurship and enterprise development programs be improved and programs scaled up to reach more youth? How critical is access to finance, land, and an enabling policy environment in spurring growth for youth-based agribusinesses and agriculture-related enterprises? What are the best examples of how African countries have dealt with these constraints?
4. Lessons from current Agripreneur businesses in Africa.

Target Audience:

1. Youth in agribusiness/agripreneurs.
2. Agribusiness companies and enterprises.
3. Policy makers and academia.
4. Potential investors (equity funds, foundations, MNCs, etc.).

Focal points for the side event:

1. Edson Mpyisi, Chief Financial Economist and Coordinator ENABLE Youth, AfDB
2. Evelyne Ohanwusi, ENABLE Youth Coordinator, IITA
3. Daniel Karanja, Vice President and COO, IGD
4. Dianah Nkonyamo, President, AAAPD