AGRICULTURAL POLICY IN AFRICA

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS AND NOMINATIONS

Announcement in Brief

Course Type: Short Term Course
Programme Area: Agriculture Policy
Date: 18 February – 1 March 2019
Duration: 2 Weeks
Language: Bilingual (English & French)
Location: Dakar, Senegal
Fee: $2,500 (Excluding air travel and subsistence costs)
Scholarships: Yes (IDEP offers a limited number of partial and full scholarships)

Application Deadline: 11 January 2019

1 IDEP strongly encourages and supports the participation of suitably qualified female officials in its capacity development and training programme.
INTRODUCTION

Africa remains the continent with the highest PoU, affecting almost 21 percent of the population (more than 256 million people), while agriculture is the mainstay of nearly two-thirds of Africans. In addition to being an important source of individual and household incomes, it also constitutes the bedrock of most national economies. Agricultural production and the domestic trade in agricultural products are central to the functioning of local markets, the fight against poverty, the provision of employment, and the quest for greater national food security.

New evidence in 2018 year’s SOFI (State of Food Insecurity) report highlights that beside conflicts, climate variability and extremes are also a key force behind the recent rise in global hunger. They are also one of the leading causes of severe food crises.

African agricultural exports enjoy a dominant position in the international trade relations of the continent, including formal and informal intra-African cross-border exchanges. Furthermore, the agricultural sector serves as a key source of raw materials for the production of a variety of semi- and fully-processed commodities. Services connected to the promotion of agricultural production and productivity also occupy a significant position in most African economies. In sum, agriculture continues to offer one of the best opportunities for promoting overall economic development in Africa, including contribution to the growth of other sectors and expansion of the industrial sector.

Building and renewing a critical mass of domestic capacity for the design and implementation of sound agricultural policy in rapidly changing contexts is, therefore, absolutely necessary for the acceleration of Africa’s development. This is all the more so as the African continent remains an important and growing target for the export of subsidised agricultural commodities, including food products, that threaten to displace local producers from national and regional markets, and which carry implications for national and regional food security. At the same time, many new producers have emerged in the world market that compete vigorously with African cash crop exports, eroding the continent’s share of the global trade in a number of important primary commodities.

Consumer and producer demands are changing, and the market segmentation is increasing, due to globalization and territorialisation mindsets (national and local level) in the agribusiness value chains. The agricultural markets are quickly becoming globalized, and this phenomenon creates new consumption models and new production and distribution systems. The value chains, often controlled by multinational or national companies and supermarkets, seized of a growing share of the agribusiness systems in developing regions. They can provide opportunities for quality employment both for men and women, and yet they can also be a mean for transferring the costs and risks to the weakest links, particularly women.

These challenges come against the backdrop of new pressures on African small holders who constitute the bulwark of the agricultural sector in most of the continent and a massive scramble for - and grabbing of - arable land across the continent by a range of international commercial interests, including multinational agri-business firms. An agricultural policy which is fit for the challenges faced by African countries must capture the complex inter-connections between domestic and global processes if durable national development is to be delivered through the mobilisation of the opportunities offered by the agricultural sector.

In addition, it has been noted through years that the effective use of climate-related information is essential to helping governments build capacity to service needs across various sectors, including land-use planning, infrastructure planning, agricultural development, and power generation.
Furthermore, the mainstreaming of climate information and services will increase the ability of regional and national early warning networks to anticipate and respond to extreme climate events. Unfortunately, on the continent, policy and practice remains far behind in terms of integrating climate information (CI) and climate information services (CIS).

This is due in part to the paucity of CI and CIS on the continent, but also to the absence of planning frameworks that are designed to integrate CI and CIS into laws, policies and practices. Supporting decision-makers with climate-related information has become critical to advance agricultural development. Integrating of Climate Information (CI) and Climate Information Services (CIS) into development and practice has paramount importance to advance cross-sectoral climate resilient development in the continent. Consequently, a module on Climate Information (CI) and Climate Information Services (CIS) is introduced to address this issue.

OBJECTIVES

The course aims at providing training on agricultural policy with a view to strengthening and/or renewing the knowledge and capacity of African policy makers, including senior managers, negotiators, advisors, planners and analysts, to meet the core challenges of growing the agricultural sector as a central engine of national economic development and social policy. In doing so, the course will expose participants not only to the current state of knowledge and the comparative lessons which are available to Africa, but also some of the best practices that serve as pertinent examples of how an integrated and comprehensive agricultural policy regime has been used to promote economic transformation and social well-being.

The course will serve the policy concerns which most African governments share of, among other things, improving agricultural output and productivity, nurturing the linkages between agriculture and other economic sectors, increasing national food security, combating poverty, expanding employment, promoting environmental sustainability, and enhancing sustainable rural livelihoods, including gender equality. Another objective is to sensitize on the importance and the cross-sector approach in the formulation of policies.

EXPECTED RESULTS

- A better understanding of the multi-faceted nature of agricultural development in Africa, and an exposure to a range of alternative approaches to growing the agricultural sector for sustained national development;
- Enhanced capacity to formulate, implement, monitor and evaluate domestic agricultural policy for improved output and productivity, and the attainment of other strategic national development objectives;
- An updated comparative knowledge of agricultural policies and practices from other regions of the world;
- An improved capacity to apply practical tools and methods to the diagnosis and resolution of agricultural development problems; and
- An improvement of the capacity to participate effectively in international agricultural trade negotiations.
- An improve knowledge on climate information (CI) and climate information services (CIS) and their mainstreaming into development and agricultural planning.
COURSE CONTENT

Among the themes that will be covered in the course and which are expected to contribute to the achievement of its objectives are: (i) Agricultural Policy Process in Africa: Issues and Challenges *(setting agricultural policy as the core of development strategy for Africa; logical framework for planning and implementing agricultural development actions, programmes and projects etc.)*; (ii) Tools of Agricultural Policy Analysis *(agricultural policy analysis variables and associated indicators; environmental impact analysis of agricultural projects and programs etc.)*; and (iii) Introduction to Climate Information and Services *(awareness among various development actors of the value and centrality of CI and CIS to the planning process; and (ii) their capacities to integrate CI and CIS into development planning, policies and programmes, etc.)*.

PEDAGOGICAL APPROACH

IDEP’s pedagogical approach is built on the assumption that course participants are, in their own right, knowledgeable professionals who bring experiences that could be effectively tapped for the benefit of all trainees. To this end, a highly interactive approach is encouraged between resource persons and trainees and among the trainees themselves. Also, IDEP’s capacity development and training activities aim to provide participants with a range of alternative approaches for thinking about and addressing the core, strategic challenges which development planners and economic managers are required to address in their work.

Furthermore, an effort is made to strike a balance between theory and practice. Special attention is, therefore, given to relevant policy and practical issues, and formal lectures are combined with case studies, field visits, group discussions, and an exchange of experiences among participants. At the end of each session, a comprehensive evaluation of the course is carried out to enable IDEP to continuously improve its capacity development and training activities.

Participants will be assessed throughout the programme by various experts/trainers. Based on overall performance for each participant, three (3) types of certificates will be awarded: (i) **Certificates of Competence** (with a classification of Excellent, Very Good or Good), (ii) **Certificates of Participation** or (iii) **Certificates of Attendance**.

MODE OF DELIVERY

- **Language:** The course will be delivered in English and French (simultaneous interpretation services will be available).
- **Duration:** Two (2) weeks.
- **Number of participants:** A total number of twenty-five (25) participants are admitted into each IDEP short course.
- **Resource persons:** The course will be delivered by a group of resource persons invited by IDEP to lead the programme. The resource persons are top-level professionals and experts with a deep knowledge of, and experience in African agriculture.
METHOD OF APPLICATION AND NOMINATIONS

Applications and nominations are on the basis of a form which all interested participants are expected to complete and send back to IDEP along with their CV and copies of the main pages of their passport. The forms are available on the IDEP website and can be downloaded for transmission by fax or as e-mail attachment. Alternatively, candidates can complete an online application form which also accessible on the IDEP Website. Candidates are advised to complete all the relevant sections of the forms as incomplete applications will not be processed.

TARGET PARTICIPANTS

The course is designed to appeal to the needs and interests of senior and middle level public sector policy officials concerned, inter alia, with promoting agricultural output, productivity and marketing; designing and managing extension services to farming communities; improving household incomes, reducing rural poverty, and achieving national food security; negotiating and managing inter-state agricultural trade accords; and formulating and monitoring policies with regard to intra-African trade in agricultural commodities. The main target audience for the course is eligible candidates from the public-sector officials and senior officials of para-governmental organisations involved in the agricultural sector.

COURSE TUITION & SCHOLARSHIPS

The cost of this course is USD 2,500 (this fee excludes air travel and subsistence costs). Please note that IDEP offers a limited number of partial and full scholarships to those admitted to participate in its programs. Thus, self-sponsored candidates are also encouraged to apply to this capacity development and training programme. Please note that priorities are given to self-sponsored applicants.

IMPORTANT DATES

- Deadline for Applications and Nominations: Friday 11th January 2019
- Course Period: 18 February – 1 March 2019

CONTACT INFORMATION

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