

AGRICULTURAL POLICY IN AFRICA



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Call for Applications

Announcement in Brief

- Type** : Short Term Course
- Programme Area** : Agricultural Policy, Climate
- Date** : November 11 – December 22, 2019
- Duration** : 4 Weeks
- Language** : English
- Location** : Web Based E-Learning
- Fee** : No Fee
- Date Published** : 15 October 2019
- Application Deadline** : 03 November 2019
- Specific target audience** : No
- Website** : <http://services.unidep.org>
- Applications** : <https://www.unidep.org/?apply>

PROGRAM RATIONALE

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 Africa 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 Agric 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.

LEARNING 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. 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,
- Enhancing sustainable rural livelihoods, including gender equality.

These are concerns that have also been embraced by the African Union, the Regional Economic Communities (RECs), the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the African Development Bank (AfDB), and NEPAD.

CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

The course consists of the following modules:

- **Module 1:** Agricultural Policy Process in Africa: Issues and Challenges
- **Module 2:** Tools of Agricultural Policy Analysis
- **Module 3:** Application of Climate Information Service in Development Planning: Focus on Agriculture Policy and Infrastructure

METHODOLOGY

This self-paced course will be delivered from November 11 to December 22, 2019. The course will be moderated asynchronously on a weekly basis and participants are required to

participate in the weekly on-line discussions. In addition, each module has interactive lessons that provide the core content around the topic for that module. The lessons are designed in a way that learners are also able to self-assess their understanding through built-in quizzes. Additional resources such as bibliographies, web links and optional readings are provided for participants who wish to deepen their knowledge of the course topic.

TARGET AUDIENCE

The course targets groups and individuals who wish to strengthen their capacities in agricultural policy.

They include:

- Senior-level and middle-level public sector policy frameworks, including promotion of agricultural production, productivity and marketing; design and management of extension services for rural communities; improving household incomes, reducing rural poverty and achieving national food security; negotiation and management of inter-state agreements on agricultural trade; Policy formulation and control of intra-African trade in agricultural products.
- Eligible applicants from the main Regional Economic Communities (RECs),
- Senior management of non-governmental organizations involved in the agricultural sector, and those of the formal private sector deeply rooted in the agricultural sector.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Acceptance to the Course

Applicants to the course are expected to have, as a minimum, a bachelor's degree preferably where courses related to agronomy, agricultural economics, agribusiness, climate and energy. In addition, two years of work experience will be required. Women candidates are also strongly encouraged to apply.

Until the registration deadline, participants are accepted to the course on a rolling basis and subject to availability of slots.

Applications must be completed exclusively on IDEP online application platform at <https://www.unidep.org/?apply>

Certificate of Completion

A Certificate of Completion will be issued by IDEP to all participants who successfully complete the course-related self-assessments presented for each module.

Technical Requirements

Access to internet is an essential condition for participation. The following specifications, as a minimum in terms of hardware and software, are required to take this e-Learning course, please consult your Network Administrator or Systems person to ensure that you have the following:

- Platform: Windows 95, 98, 2000, NT, ME, XP or superior; Mac OS 9 or Mac OS X; Linux
- Hardware: 64 MB of RAM, 1 GB of free disk space
- Software:
 - Adobe Acrobat Reader
 - Adobe Flash Player
 - Microsoft Office (Windows or Mac) or Open Office
 - Browser: Internet Explorer 7 or higher or Firefox 36 or higher
- Modem: 56 K
- Note that JavaScript, Cookies and Pop-ups must be enabled

CONTACT INFORMATION

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