

Investing in Agriculture

Competition for African journalists/media specialists

BACKGROUND

In 2003, African governments made a commitment in the **Maputo Declaration** to substantially increase their investment in agriculture to 10 percent of GDP. Since then, over 20 countries have completed country investment plans as part of the African Union's Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP). The flow of funds from donors has also risen.

However, much of this renewed attention to African agriculture has focused on the technical aspects of stimulating agricultural production and productivity. Much less attention has been paid to the political and institutional changes that are needed to realise these ambitious development goals.

To shine a light on these issues and what they mean for the future of agriculture in Africa, the Future Agricultures Consortium (FAC) is organising an international conference to debate research findings and policy options around the theme **"Political Economy of Agricultural Policy in Africa"**, co-hosted by the Institute of Poverty, Land and Agrarian Studies (PLAAS). During the conference, FAC will be re-launching as FAC Africa, which will be an Africa-led, highly influential source of independent, informed and innovative analysis relevant to agricultural policy debates and processes at national, regional and continental levels in sub-Saharan Africa.

The conference will take place from 18-20 March 2013 in Pretoria, South Africa, bringing together key figures from research, politics, donor organisations and civil society to discuss, amongst other issues, what motivates African governments to invest in agriculture. In particular, the conference aims to address these themes:

- What motivates African governments to invest in different kinds of agricultural development?
- What influence do domestic politics, external donors and pan-African networks have?
- How successful can civil society and social movements be in pushing for more pro-poor agricultural policy in Africa?

For further information on the conference see: <http://www.future-agricultures.org/events/policy-processes-conference>

MEDIA COMPETITION

This media competition aims to encourage journalists and media specialists to explore some of the factors that determine agricultural investment patterns in Africa.

Applicants must submit their entry in **English only** by email to b.ouma@future-agricultures.org. Your **journalistic piece** must reach the organisers by no later than **Friday, 8th February, 2013** to be considered for inclusion in the competition.

WINNING ENTRIES

The best print and best audio journalistic piece will be selected using established criteria. The top two finalists will be announced on **1st March, 2013** by email or phone. These two finalists will be **fully supported** (flights, visa and accommodation) to attend the international FAC conference on **“Political Economy of Agricultural Policy in Africa”** in South Africa and winners will each be presented with a certificate of recognition during the conference. In addition, the finalists will be invited to attend the launch of FAC Africa.

Besides the winning entries, the top 10 selected pieces will be published and promoted regionally, internationally and on the FAC website.

COMPETITION THEMES

Providing case studies and evidence from your home country, your journalistic piece should correspond to one of the following themes:

- **Investing in agriculture:** Only a few countries (Burkina Faso, Ethiopia and Malawi) have met the Maputo declaration commitment to invest 10 percent GDP in agriculture. With agriculture the backbone of the African economy, why is it that African governments do not invest more in agriculture for the benefit of their economies?

What are the political pressures leading African governments to increase investment in agricultural development? Do these favour smallholder agriculture or large-scale farming, food staples or export crops, state-led or private sector-led models, investment in public goods or transfers (such as subsidies)?

- **Influencing policy - the role of civil society:** How can a civil society organisation have an influence on agricultural policy making?

Using one or more examples, explore how CSOs can be effective in getting issues onto the policy agenda, influencing how policies are shaped (either from an external position, or by being involved in the policy making process), and/or how they can assist in making sure that policies are properly enacted on the ground. What are the key strategies for CSOs in being effective in influencing policy; why do they succeed or fail?

- **BRICS investment in Africa:** How are investments from China and Brazil and other ‘rising powers’ having an impact on African agriculture? And what impact will they have in the future?

What investments are Brazil and China making in agricultural production systems in Africa? What is their scale, nature (public and private) and focus? Are these investments supporting pro-poor development, and if not, how should governments respond to this?

For more information on Future Agricultures and the above issues see
<http://www.future-agricultures.org>

ENTRY CONDITIONS

Each candidate will submit **only one print (in Word doc or docx format) or audio piece (in mp3 format)** from any African country. Any accompanying photos for print articles should be sent as jpegs. The title and the name of the author should be clearly written on the cover page to the piece, or details included in email with audio piece. The **deadline for receipt of submissions is 8th February, 2013**.

Note: if you have difficulty submitting your audio piece by email, you can use YouSendit (www.yousendit.com) or a similar free internet service.

All applications should submit a **short biographical note** including name and full contact details; **email address, telephone number(s)**, postal address, town, country, and a **scanned photocopy of the applicant's passport**. Entries received after 8th February will **not** be considered. Notification of approved **selections will be announced on Monday 1st March, 2013**.

SELECTION PROCESS

A panel of judges from the Future Agricultures Consortium, WRENmedia, and Nick Perkins, director of Scidev.Net (www.scidev.net) will review entries and make their recommendations to the Steering Committee for the Conference.

The pieces should demonstrate that the author(s) understand the issues outlined above.

The main selection criteria for the pieces are:

- Originality and quality of analysis;
- Creativity (use of relevant case studies and examples to illustrate the issues);
- Relevance and responsiveness to development challenges;
- Quality of language (engaging writing style, good spelling and grammar, etc.);
- Presence of bibliography and/or other relevant references;
- Respect of the prescribed format:
 - ◆ Number of words/duration - Print: **max 1,200 words**. Audio pieces should **not exceed 5 minutes**.
 - ◆ Print format:
 - Font : Arial size 11 - Line spacing: 1.5
- **NB:** If an entry has already been published or broadcast, **the date of publication/broadcast must be included on the submission. Only original pieces that have been prepared after the announcement of this call will be considered.**

ADDITIONAL RULES

- ◆ FAC reserves the right to disqualify any entry if it does not meet the contest criteria and present regulations;
- ◆ By entering, participants warrant that their print/audio materials are original and do not infringe on any third party's rights;
- ◆ Entry to the contest constitutes an agreement to allow FAC to make articles/audio pieces, name, occupation and state of residence of applicants, public.
- ◆ In addition it constitutes an agreement to allow FAC to use the material in its publications and in the framework of promotional activities. Applicants will retain ownership and all other rights to future use of their texts;
- ◆ FAC will not be able to return submitted articles/audio to their authors;
- ◆ If, for any reason, the competition is not completed as planned, FAC reserves the right at its sole discretion to cancel, terminate, modify or suspend it;

- ◆ The decisions made by the panel of judges are final and beyond dispute;
- ◆ All participants in this competition implicitly accept the rules presented in this document.

Email address for submissions:

b.ouma@future-agricultures.org

Beatrice Ouma
Future Agricultures Communication
and Networking Co-ordinator

Susanna Thorp
Director, WRENmedia
www.wrenmedia.co.uk