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Newsletter Vol.10

Message to ASARECA stakeholders and partners in the face of COVID-19 pandemic



Dear AR4D colleagues,

There is no doubt to ASARECA management that all of you our esteemed partners are right now dealing with the life-threatening effects of COVID-19 pandemic.

It is clear that the outbreak of the disease has caused lock-downs of cities, towns and villages and as a result grounding your operations and rudely interrupting livelihoods.

To all those who have lost loved ones, our heartfelt condolences; to those who have been hospitalised, we share our sympathies and pray that you will emerge victorious; and for interruptions to planned activities across the globe, and in particular by our partners, we share a common affliction and would like to join you in finding solutions.

We are aware that in the Agricultural Research and Development (AR4D) sector, the disease has compromised labour productivity and demoralised value chain actors from farmers to consumers; reduced access to agricultural inputs and services; disrupted markets and even worse, pushed the already food insecure populations to the brink. A case in point is the disruption of efforts to combat the desert locusts, which are devastating our farms and vegetation.

ASARECA would like to state our commitment to work with all our stakeholders and development partners in providing leadership in efforts to mitigate the drastic effects of the disease. We evoke our mandate to support national governments in setting AR4D priorities associated with recovery actions; and coordinating stakeholders to engage in the appropriate discourse to enhance the resilience our people and systems to deal with immediate, medium, and long-term effects of the disease in Agriculture.

In light of the guidelines issued by the government of Uganda and the Governments of other ASARECA member countries, management has considered adjustments in the mode of

operations to ensure the safety of the Secretariat staff and preservation of our operational readiness once the situation improves. To this effect:

- All activities whose delivery requires travels and meetings with stakeholders both locally and regionally shall be temporarily suspended;
- The Secretariat's offices shall be closed and staff shall be working from home with effect from 27th March 2020 until the 15th of April 2020;
- Management has isolated critical activities and operations from the Financial Year 2020 Work-Plan that can still be delivered through home-based desk work;
- Communication support has been offered to essential staff and a plan was put in place to ensure that critical systems stay operational under prevailing situation;

Finally, management is scanning the global environment for areas where our help is most needed as the world charts the way out of COVID-19.

We sincerely thank you for your continued support.

Prof. Jean Jacques Mbonigaba Muhinda
Executive Secretary—ASARECA

Updates/perspectives



[Opportunities for Agriculture Amidst COVID-19](#). As new statistics of infections, death and recovery of the novel Covid-19 global pandemic continue to stream into our homes, one thing remains certain. We must all eat healthy during these times, now more than ever. [Read this insight into the place of food and nutrition in the response to COVID-19.](#)



[Dealing with food security in the face of COVID-19: Where Governments should focus](#) : A genuine fear that the worst is yet to come in regards to food and nutrition security is looming. The months of April, May and even the proceeding ones could pose some of the worst disruptions in food supply chains ever since the Global Food Crisis of 2007-2008 sparked off by rising food prices.



[How will COVID-19 affect Africa's food systems?](#) As the [COVID-19](#) pandemic takes hold in [Africa](#), many governments have begun to tighten borders, restrict gatherings and close schools. The crisis has already fundamentally changed people's lives not just with regards to public health but in terms of politics, the economy and public services. What about food systems? How will the pandemic affect Africa's supplies? How will it impact people's ability to buy necessities and subsist? [Find out in this insight.](#)

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[ASARECA, AFAAS, CCARDESA, CORAF, FARA meet to harmonise project implementation.](#) "Africa has never had a problem coming up with good policies. Africa's problem is how to implement these policies," experts from the Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP) Pillar 4 (CAADP-XP4) institutions have been told.

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