



SECRETARIAT GENERAL

GENERAL SECRETARIAT

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Preparations for the 2020 African Coffee Symposium

Host : Government of the Republic of Ghana

Location : Zoom Teleconferencing

Dates : 18-19 November 2020

(Part of IACO's 2020 Annual Meetings of 11,12,16-20 Nov 2020)

Proposed Theme for 8th African Coffee Symposium:

⇒ ***Ramping up Africa's Coffee Productivity and Enhancing the Efficiency in the Coffee Value Chain.***

Proposed Sessions:

Session 1: Coffee growing systems adapted to climate change.

About this session

Climate change is one of the most important factors influencing global coffee production today. It is already evident in many areas of production. In recent decades, there has been a shift in coffee production from degraded areas to more favourable climates.

In Africa, several studies have been conducted on the climate including in Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda and Cameroon, the results of which present the state of farmers' perception of the phenomenon of climate change and its effects on coffee productivity and therefore on the long-term sustainability of coffee growing in Africa. The impact of climate change on coffee production could be looked at as specific to each region. Eventually, traditional areas as we know will no longer be suitable for growing coffee though, some would still be favourable. Adaptations to new agricultural practices would therefore be necessary. Researchers who have worked on the effects of climate change on coffee growing will share the results of their research and the solutions envisaged for a resilience of African coffee growing to climate change.

Session 2: Financial and technical support to improving productivity.***About this session***

The African coffee growing is a family farming activity which plays a major role in the development of IACO Member States by its contribution to the GDP of these countries. However, the constraints to its sustainability are significant. Natural and climatic variations are increasing; the coffee market is uncertain with the volatility of global prices; the structuring of farmers is still inadequate; renovated agricultural policies are being hardly implemented in general despite some reforms in some states.

Despite these constraints, family farming is changing, farmers are equipping themselves with new knowledge, integrating products with higher added value, consolidating their economic organisations and strengthening their participation in public policies. In some countries, dynamics of setting up training for young farmers is a guarantee of hope and innovation and an embryo for the transformation of family farming. A significant constraint, however, is the poor access to affordable credit. To achieve the required transformation, farmers need to invest in modern techniques and appropriate technology. Unfortunately, farmers have inadequate resources but need to have access to suitable financial services, including farm-level insurance services.

Some farmer organisations have savings and credit associations, but these also have some constraints. These financial services and especially credit supply are inadequate to meet the demands of the farmers. The volumes of available credit dedicated to agriculture in the banks and other financial institutions are low compared to the demand size, mostly focusing on short-term credit. Medium-term and long-term credits are largely lacking; thus, young farmers and farm organisations are particularly disadvantaged in access to credit.

In addition, the interest rates offered particularly by micro-finance institutions are often difficult to reconcile with the level of profitability of family farming activities. The supply of financial services is poorly adapted to the systemic nature of the funding needs of family farmers who very often combine food and commercial agricultural production, different forms of livestock production and often non-agricultural activities. Family funding needs (food security, school, health, etc.) are closely linked to productive needs.

Finally, lack of knowledge and mistrust remain high between agricultural and financial sectors hindering innovation efforts. Expert Panellists are invited to share the experiences of their institutions and the perspectives they offer to African coffee farmers for the sustainability of the sector.

Session 3: Social dialogue between stakeholders in the value chain: What cooperation for improved productivity and competitiveness of African coffee?

About this session

Social dialogue is an essential instrument of governance advocated by the International Labour Organisation in general to promote economic development and social justice worldwide. Social dialogue is "essential to achieve effective, equitable and mutually beneficial results for governments, employers, workers and society as a whole", in particular to facilitate poverty reduction and sustainable rural development. However, rural workers are often excluded from the scope and processes of social dialogue at all levels. The African coffee sector is no exception to this practice. This gap is of great concern in terms of policy guidelines because the decent work deficit is particularly accentuated in rural areas.

Furthermore, many of these workers belong to vulnerable categories: particularly women and young people who are excluded from social dialogue. The contribution of these categories to improved productivity of African coffee is undeniable, given the aging of coffee growers. Thus, in addition to their driving role in social dialogue, governments must rethink the horizontal links between state bodies responsible for coffee growing in order to integrate the concerns of the rural world in all public policies. Development issues should not be limited to rural employment policy and poverty reduction strategies, they must also focus on land reform, access to financial services, agricultural vocational education and training programs. As we can see, the coexistence of strong social partners is necessary for the sustainable development of the coffee sector in Africa. Hence the importance of setting up private sector associations that represent industry interests. How is this working in different countries? What are the challenges? Panellists from different countries are invited to present their experiences.

Session 4: Coffee quality and access to high value-added niche markets.

About this session

Coffee is widely consumed worldwide and in different forms. Several opportunities to add value to export products exist and are experienced all over the world. All its options are summarised in an improved quality of the green coffee. The quality of green coffee depends on agricultural practices, harvesting and post-harvest processing, and packaging.

Implementing these good practices gives the coffee a much-improved quality which is the subject of a premium of 5 to 15% above the normal coffee prices. In addition, it should also be noted that some African coffees, thanks to certification by specialised bodies, is gradually gaining the attention of

consumers who are more and more sensitive to environmental stewardship issues. According to estimates, the market for "sustainable products" now accounts for about 5.5% of coffee exports, against barely 1% in 2003 according to studies.

The development of special types of coffee provides access to increasingly structured niche markets. Some African producing countries have started the production of special coffees (Ethiopia, Côte d'Ivoire, Cameroon, Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Tanzania, etc.). These initiatives need to be promoted and developed at the level of small producers. Hence the importance of discussing this subject to share experiences.

Session 5: National policies conducive to improved productivity and competitiveness of African coffee.

About this session

The African coffee sector is facing significant challenges since the early 1990s. The liberalisation of the agricultural sector as recommended by donors in the early 1990s and its impact on the coffee sector has caused the withdrawal of States from direct participation in the coffee sector. This situation has led to the abandonment of the production support system, particularly the supervision and monitoring of services and activities in the coffee sector. Marketing structures that assured the control of products before export were dissolved in favour of a new system 'focused on the private sector'.

In addition, the inadequacy or lack of infrastructure to facilitate the transportation of products is one of the biggest challenges for all economic activities. Likewise, there are several technical problems facing the African coffee industry: the old age of coffee trees, the use of traditional varieties and ancient agricultural practices, diseases and pests etc. Thus, the coffee value chain is currently experiencing a real bottleneck that is hindering the efficiency of the sector and reducing the benefits as well as resources which should accrue to the poor small coffee producers.

In view of these challenges, IACO Member States have decided to revive coffee production through different programs, the implementation of which should enable Africa to regain its position as a major producer of exceptional coffees.

The overall objective of these revival programs is to revitalise the coffee sector to induce the creation of added value on the product by increasing:

- The volume of national production (specially to take advantage of the market opportunities in the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA));
- Coffee producers' incomes and national export earnings;
- Added value at the national level through processing and domestic consumption.

A few years after the implementation of these programs, what are the results? What are the difficulties encountered and the prospects? Stakeholders are called upon to share the experiences of their countries.

Draft Schedule of IACO 2020 Annual Meetings

Day	Morning	Afternoon
Wednesday 11 th Nov 2020	IACO Technical Committee meetings	IACO Technical Committee meetings
Thursday 12 th Nov 2020	IACO Board Members Meeting	
Monday 16 th Nov 2020	African Coffee Scientific Conference	African Coffee Scientific Conference
Tuesday 17 th Nov 2020	Official Opening Ceremony High-level policy forum*	
Wednesday 18 th Nov 2020	8th African Coffee Symposium (Session 1, 2 & 3)	
Thursday 19 th Nov 2020	8th African Coffee Symposium (Session 4 & 5)	The Africa Coffee Facility Partners Conference
Friday 20 th Nov 2020	IACO's 60 th AGA	

**The proposed high-level policy forum will allow an interaction between the Ministers from IACO Member States to comment on the various policy issues affecting the African coffee value chain- from research to consumption in Africa.*