

# EU-ACP Networking for Academic Excellence in Agriculture and Food Security



Selling Siyakhana farm products.

## PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD

October 2013 – January 2017

## CONSORTIUM

- University of Witwatersrand (WITS), South Africa
- Center for Health Education and Appropriate Health Technologies (CESTAS), Italy
- Euro-Mediterranean University (EMUNI), Slovenia
- University of Namibia (UNAM), Namibia
- Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (LUANAR), Malawi

## Associated partners:

- Wits Health Consortium T/A Siyakhana Initiative for Ecological Health and Food Security, South Africa

## PROJECT CONTACT

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## SUMMARY OF RESULTS

Research and training in agriculture and food security have been designed that foster inter-institutional networking for southern African universities. An interactive multi-disciplinary online platform focused on food security has been established and three institutional reports and one combined report have provided specific overviews of women's access to education and food security status.

## BACKGROUND

The challenge of inadequate human capacity and few resources to meet training needs is a major hindrance in addressing pertinent issues within the subject of food security. Currently, staff are insufficiently trained and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) lack the capacity to adapt and incorporate emerging issues into existing curricula. These inadequacies are reflected in the quality teaching and a lack of innovation-orientated research. Developing these human and technological resources (including online courses) are necessary in order to effectively address food security issues in Africa.

As a response to the challenge, professional development and training programmes have been initiated and in order to incorporate emerging issues and take advantage of ICT tools, university curricula have been reviewed. A particular priority has been to improve access for women to quality information and labour market opportunities within the agricultural and food sectors.



Siyakhana food garden.

## METHODOLOGY

### Networking and joint programme design

Activation of online platform, selection of scientific committee members, structuring and validation of the online course.

### Teacher training course for HEIs academic staff

Selection of participants and implementation of the online course. Common problems tackled paying attention to requests by partner universities in terms of human capacity and ability to meet training needs at country level. A broader understanding of relevant issues through knowledge acquisition, intellectual enquiry, debate, and team/individual research will be promoted encouraging participants to explore factors influencing sustainability.

### Upgrading of curricula

Review of the existing curricula, re-formulation and organisation of curricula review by stakeholders.

### Research and tools for gender equality

Data collection, surveys on gender and food security interventions, labour market requests and women's access to quality information and learning, diagnosis and plan elaboration.

### Dissemination and demonstration of project best practices and models

Design of a dissemination plan, use of project platform for external users, creation of the Sub-Saharan Universities Network, organisation of closing seminars.

## RESULTS

### → Outputs

#### Capacity building

- Joint course structured and validated at WITS and LUANAR. 6 months duration and consisting of 4 modules: principles of food security and food systems; policy and intervention strategies; food security research and knowledge systems; and monitoring and evaluation. A strong cross-cutting theme in gender-related issues has been incorporated.
- 24 teachers selected and trained via the joint online course.
- 23 certificates issued for course completion.

#### Documents/Publications

- Women, Food Security and Education: Case Studies from South Africa.
- Gender Equality Research: Women, Food Security and Education in Malawi.
- Gender and Food Security Interventions, Labour Market and Women Access to Higher Education in Namibia.
- Women, Education and Food Security: Case studies from Malawi, South Africa and Namibia - Summary of findings.
- Brochure: Networking for Academic Excellence in Agriculture and Food Security.
- Poster presentation: 'EDULINK II – EU-ACP Networking for academic excellence in Agriculture and Food Security',

Sustainable Food Systems: Agriculture, Environment and Nutrition Conference, 20-21 June 2016 (University of Tel Aviv).

- Conference presentation: 'Walking the tightrope' – the balancing act between the funders and the researchers' goals and expectations, SARIMA Conference, 29-31 May 2018.

#### Databases/Websites

- 1 online platform 'CAMPUS' accessed via dedicated website contains courses with the necessary tools, course modules, literature and document repository.

### ↑ Outcomes

- Participating HEIs have the capacity to develop and implement online distance learning courses and online platforms.
- HEIs have capacities in developing curricula and conduct research and teaching on food security and agriculture
- Staff and students have knowledge of key concepts, theories and methods in food security and agriculture.

### 🎯 Impacts

#### Usage

- The project forged a solid network between the academic staff of the 3 HEIs in southern Africa.

#### Policy implications

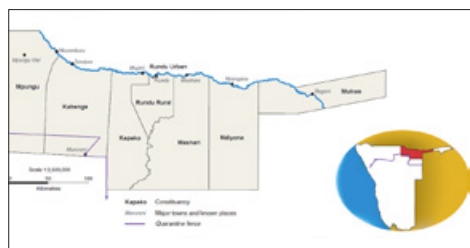
- The gender reports can inform evidence-based policy-making frameworks (gender, food security and education) in the 3 countries.

#### Sustainability

- The eLearning platforms will preserve and allow continuation of the course and generate scientific and general publications.



Online modules.



Kavango-study-area.



WITS Siyakhana Initiative.

## TESTIMONIAL



**Limson Kaluzi,**  
Lilongwe University of  
Agriculture and Natural  
Resources, Extension  
Department, Malawi

“The course offers good background to topics and contextualises the issues. I now have a broader understanding of these issues and how narrowly current policy handles food security by only focusing on food availability and ignoring utilisation and diversity. It has

enabled me to understand the gaps in the local food systems such as food safety and resilience to climate change.”

ACP-EU Co-Operation Programmes in the fields of Higher Education and Science, Technology and Research

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