



SOUTH AFRICA NATIONAL POLICY DIALOGUE REPORT

19 OCTOBER 2023





Acknowledgement

This report has been prepared by the National Agricultural Marketing Council (NAMC) the FANRPAN Node Hosting Institution in South Africa, with contributions from Ms. Nomantande Yeki, Mr. Bonani Nyhodo, Ms. Ricardo Smith, Mr. Bhekani Zondo and Dr Rachel Mkandawire (FANRPAN).

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Executive Summary

The FoSTA Health South Africa Policy Dialogue was jointly organized by the University of Pretoria, the Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network (FANRPAN), and the National Agricultural Marketing Council (NAMC) on October 19, 2023, at the University Future Africa Campus. Over 37 people attended the event, including representatives from the commercial sector, government officials, and stakeholders from three different African countries as well as colleagues from the United Kingdom (UK) and a wide range of local stakeholders. The objectives of the Policy Dialogue were to understand food systems and one health approaches in South Africa; and introduce and get inputs into Integrated Future Estimator of Emissions and Diets (iFEED), and the Representative Transformation Pathways (RTPs).

The event was opened by Dr. Wandile Sihlobo, Chief Economist of the Agricultural Business Chamber of South Africa (Agbiz), delivered the keynote address at the event. He highlighted the global economic challenges and focused on South Africa's agricultural sector. He further discussed the prospects for near-term growth in the South African context, projecting an increase in GDP growth rate from 0.7 percent to approximately 1.7 percent by 2025. He emphasized the impact of various factors on the agricultural sector, including geopolitical crises, market changes, economic constraints, and unpredictable weather. Immediate threats, such as below-average summertime rains, were also addressed.

Dr. Russell Cain, representing the University of Leeds, delivered a presentation focused on Representative Transformation Pathways (RTP) and Leverage Points. The presentation highlighted the critical role played by the Integrated Future Estimator of Emissions and Diets (iFEED) program. He emphasized the need of knowing the food system as a whole and combining expertise to generate a comprehensive model, stressing the need for models and figures to track processes and problem-solving.

Concerns surfaced regarding policy incoherence, notably the conflicting policies on conservation agriculture and synthetic fertilizers. This inconsistency poses challenges, with synthetic fertilizers overshadowing the emphasis on conservation agriculture. The workshop further explored the role of farm management and landscape structure in



vector-borne disease risk, featuring a case study on the Research-Extension-Farmer nexus.

Throughout the workshop, an overarching theme emerged – the critical need for alignment and coherence in policies to drive sustainable food systems in South Africa. Participants emphasized the importance of integrating evidence and research findings into policy discussions, and the potential applications of iFEED in South Africa were showcased in case studies. The workshop fostered a collaborative environment, setting the stage for informed decision-making and transformative actions in South Africa's evolving food systems.



Acronyms

- Agbiz: Agricultural Business Chamber of South Africa
- DALRRD: Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development
- FANRPAN: Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network
- iFEED: Integrated Future Estimator of Emissions and Diets
- NAMC: National Agricultural Marketing Council
- NDP: National Development Plan
- RTP: Representative Transformation Pathways



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1. Introduction

The FoSTA Health South Africa Policy Dialogue was jointly organized by the University of Pretoria, the Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network (FANRPAN), and the National Agricultural Marketing Council (NAMC) on October 19, 2023, at the University Future Africa Campus. Over 37 people attended the event, including representatives from the commercial sector, government officials, and stakeholders from three different African countries as well as colleagues from the United Kingdom (UK) and a wide range of local stakeholders. The goal of the Policy Dialogue was to learn about the many stakeholder views on food systems and how knowledge of them may guide future initiatives. The broad spectrum of participants attests to the event's importance in promoting an all-encompassing and inclusive conversation about the future of food systems in South Africa and abroad.

2. South Africa Food Systems/ One Health

A Country of Two Agricultures: The Disparities, the Challenges, the Solutions (2023) and Finding Common Ground: Land, Equity, and Agriculture (2020) author Mr. Wandile Sihlobo, Chief Economist of the Agricultural Business Chamber of South Africa (Agbiz), gave the keynote address. Mr. Sihlobo began by stating that the global economic environment remains challenging, with the world average growth estimated at 3.5 percent during the period from 1982 to 2019.

His presentation was focused on "Macroeconomic conditions, BRICS+, and policy developments that shape South Africa's agricultural sector." In the South African context, Mr. Sihlobo emphasized the chances for near-term growth, projecting an increase in GDP growth rate from 0.7 percent to roughly 1.7 percent by 2025. The agricultural sector is impacted by several factors, including geopolitical crises, changes in the market environment, economic constraints, and unpredictable weather. Additionally, Mr. Sihlobo talked about immediate dangers, such as below-average summertime rains.

Additionally, Mr. Sihlobo discussed various government initiatives aimed at stimulating the agricultural sector's expansion in South Africa. The Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) recently announced the Agro-Energy Fund,



an initiative to assist farmers with installing renewable energy solutions, as one of the interventions to alleviate the energy problem. Eskom customers who are supplied by the same feeder or substation can also participate in ongoing trials to apply for scheduled load-shedding or load curtailment as a group. The Road Accident Fund fee refund for diesel used in the production process, such as for generators, will be extended to food manufacturers for a two-year period to mitigate the impact of the electrical crisis on food costs.

Furthermore, he explained that work is currently being done to evaluate the network's reconfiguration to construct micro grids for key loads, particularly during crucial periods like harvesting, irrigation, and refrigeration, and to allow for isolation where feasible. Customers will need to determine the essential load to do this. Mr. Sihlobo recommended that to address the long-term growth constraints in agriculture, efforts should be focused on improving animal biosecurity, improving agricultural financing through a functioning Land Bank, and improving market access and export facilities to countries like Bangladesh, China, South Korea, Japan, the USA, Vietnam, Taiwan, India, Saudi Arabia, Mexico, and the Philippines.

Finally, there is an urgent need to address the effectiveness of the major rail and port systems in South Africa. The problem has been made worse by the criminality that has led to the destruction of Transnet infrastructure, putting export-oriented industries at risk. Sihlobo also provided an overview of the agricultural developments within the BRICS market, including the significance of the market and the main recommendations made by the BRICS agribusiness to the political leadership. The BRICS Business Council's agribusiness focus areas included knowledge sharing on agricultural technology, fertilizers, agricultural financing, trade and investment, and climate-smart agriculture.

Mr. Sihlobo emphasized in his concluding remarks the significance of keeping in mind that growth in agriculture generally reduces poverty by two to three times more effectively than an equivalent level of growth achieved outside of agriculture. Additionally, the benefit of agriculture over non-agricultural in terms of lowering poverty is greatest for the most impoverished members of society and extends to other welfare outcomes, such as malnourishment and food insecurity. Furthermore, a major factor



contributing to the benefits of agricultural expansion in decreasing poverty is the broad adoption of innovations that raise labour possibilities, boost producer returns, and lower consumer costs. Employment opportunities in agriculture and agro-processing are also very promising. Finally, the almost a million jobs that the 2012 National Development Plan (NDP) highlighted are still possible.

3. Food Systems Transformation in Southern Africa for One Health

Prof. Cecilia Onyango from the University of Nairobi delivered a comprehensive presentation of the FoSTA Health project. As a vital component of a consortium project involving 13 research, policy advocacy, and development organizations from Europe and Southern Africa, the initiative is committed to shaping inclusive and ambitious visions and solutions. Its overarching goal is to drive the transformation of food systems, aiming for positive One Health outcomes in Southern Africa from 2022 to 2026. Dr. Onyango delved into the intricate dynamics of food systems, recognizing their complexity from production to consumption and their profound influence on various outcomes.

The project's objectives encompass understanding the intricate relationships between the health of people, animals, and the environment within food systems. This involves modeling the implications of transformation over time, testing, and assessing management techniques for transformative change, collaborating with diverse stakeholders to achieve equitable transformation, and establishing long-term learning communities.

Furthermore, the study outlines four pivotal changes to the food system, addressing diverse aspects such as maize production, land and water utilization, export markets, and diet diversity. The focus on South Africa involves assessing high-value crop production technologies, altering agricultural practices, enhancing food and nutrition security, and exploring the intricate connection between market engagement, women's empowerment, and food system change.



To adopt a transformative approach to address challenges in Southern Africa's food system, the iFEED for Representative Transformation Pathways emphasizes stakeholder involvement in developing provisional narratives and modeling future scenarios. Dr. Onyango's presentation underscores a commitment to collaboration, innovative thinking, and the active engagement of all stakeholders in shaping the future trajectory of the food systems in the region.

3.1. Representative Transformation Pathways (RTP) and Leverage Points

Dr. Russell Cain, representing the University of Leeds, delivered a presentation focused on Representative Transformation Pathways (RTP) and Leverage Points. The presentation highlighted the critical role played by the Integrated Future Estimator of Emissions and Diets (iFEED) program. He emphasized the need of knowing the food system as a whole and combining expertise to generate a comprehensive model, stressing the need for models and figures to track processes and problem-solving.

iFEED is a tool for comprehensive study and comparison because it is intended to project the food system thirty years into the future. Dr. Cain emphasized the model's story of transformation, which tackles wicked problems inside the food system iFEED provides flexibility, scalability, and ease of integration, underscoring the significance of comprehensive solutions. The approach facilitates the development of capacity and backs evidence-based policy decisions. According to Dr. Cain, there are a total of 16 RTPs for each nation, which might help with the writing of policy texts.

In addition to raising concerns regarding the planned changes, the ease or difficulty of executing them, and the future direction, the presentation emphasized the necessity of Representative Transformation Pathways. Dr. Cain described how different RTPs are made for South Africa while maintaining their credibility. Creating holistic food systems strategies that enable the examination of trade-offs and synergies along each pathway is the aim. After the lecture, there were breakaway groups that encouraged further conversation and cooperation while concentrating on planning and imagining the future of food systems.



Breakout Discussion - Gathering Stakeholder Feedback

Following Dr Cain's presentation, participants engaged in group work during, applying the iFEED tool to generate unfiltered lists. These group discussions enabled attendees to participate in exercises meant to help them understand how they personally frame these notions and promoted an in-depth conversation. The emphasis was also on identifying the essential changes to the food system required to advance One Health. The effectiveness of present policies was assessed, and participants critically addressed the circumstances and support needed for successful transitions. They also actively investigated related hurdles and challenges.

The group discussions unfolded with an atmosphere that captivated participants, sparking lively and engaging discussions. Despite the fascinating arguments and conversations that ensued, there was a unanimous acknowledgment that the allocated time fell short, underscoring the imperative for extended sessions in future workshops. The diverse composition of attendees, spanning academics, government officials, business representatives, and individuals from the agricultural sector, provided a balanced mix that highlighted shared challenges, fostering a collaborative effort to unearth solutions.

While the current ideas addressed immediate challenges, the collective realization emphasized the necessity for sustained engagement to confront potential issues over the next five to ten years and beyond. This underscored the importance of ongoing conversations, recognizing that the dialogue initiated in the workshop is an ongoing process. Despite the time constraints, the discussions revealed striking similarities among COMESA, other SADC countries, and South Africa, as they grapple with analogous challenges under different names.

Prof. Onyango expressed appreciation for the robust conversation and committed to its continuation in the future. Dr. Russell Cain acknowledged that more conversations were essential, viewing the session as merely the inception of a process set to unfold over two to three years. Breakaway groups from Tanzania and Zambia echoed these sentiments, demonstrating the interconnected nature of food system challenges in the region. The overarching focus of the event emphasized the critical role of continuous communication in addressing shared problems and fostering cooperative solutions, marking a pivotal step toward a more resilient and collaborative approach to food systems in the region.



4. Conclusion

The South Africa National Policy Dialogue provided an invaluable platform for stakeholders to collaboratively shape the future of the nation's food systems. The insights gathered, coupled with the active engagement of diverse perspectives, will play a pivotal role in ensuring that the FoSTA Health project is not only informed by local realities but is also a catalyst for positive and sustainable transformation in South Africa's food systems. The dialogue marks a significant step towards building resilience, inclusivity, and sustainability in the country's evolving food landscape

5. Annexes

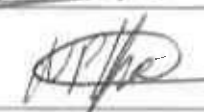

FoSTA HEALTH SOUTH AFRICA POLICY DIALOGUE










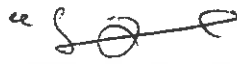
List of Participants






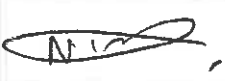
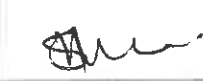
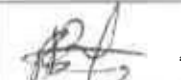


VENUE: UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA, FUTURE AFRICA CAMPUS

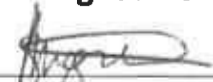











DATE: 19 OCTOBER 2023

TIME: 09H00 – 15H00

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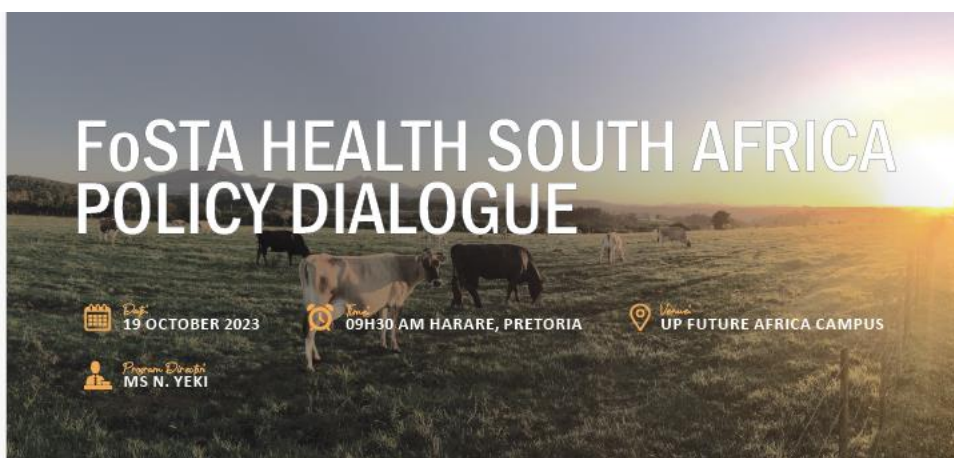
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Policy Dialogue Programme



TIME	DESCRIPTION	PRESENTER
09:30 - 09:40	Introduction to the day	Mr B. Nyhodo (NAMC)
09:40 - 10:00	Keynote introduction on South Africa Food Systems/One Health	Mr W. Sihlobo (Agbiz)
10:00 - 10:20	Presentation of the project, food systems, transformations and One Health, including insights from initial review work into framings therein	Dr C Onyango (University of Nairobi)
10:20 - 11:05	Discussion in (3-4) smaller groups about existing work on food systems transformation and One Health, including exercise to help understand how participants are framing these core concepts	Dr R. Cain (University of Leeds)
11:05 - 11:15	Tea Break	
11:15 - 11:45	Presentation: “Representative Transformation Pathways” Introduction to the iFEED (Integrated Future Estimator of Emissions and Diets) Integrated Assessment Framework and Representative Transformation Pathways (RTPs)	Dr R. Cain (University of Leeds)
11:45 -12:45	Exercise: Identifying critical food system transformations for One Health, associated obstacles and challenges, required support and conditions, current and future policies.	Dr R. Cain (University of Leeds) + Facilitators
12:45 - 13:30	Lunch break	
13:30 - 14:15	Exercise: Visioning a Front Page for 2050 Following One Health food system transformations, processes, and steps involved.	Dr R. Cain (University of Leeds) + Facilitators
14:15 - 15:00	Presentations: Front Page 2050 Groups present their front pages to plenary with questions and answers.	Dr R. Cain (University of Leeds) + Facilitators
15:00 - 15 :15	Feedback and Wrap Up	Dr C Onyango (University of Nairobi)



