

Rural Entrepreneurship (Africa)



Driving innovations in agrifood value chains

Online course starting 21 March 2022

Trust among actors in agrifood chains is often not very high. This is caused by the low number of transactions between actors of agrifood value chains, the long distance between producer and end markets, and the general lack of understanding and, therefore, appreciation of each other's roles. In these situations, all chain actors first of all try to protect their own interests as much as possible. As a result, opportunistic behaviour among chain actors is rampant, and cooperation virtually non-existent. The costs of marketing in these types of fresh produce value chains are extremely high, resulting in a combination of very high price levels and very low margins at almost all levels of the chain!

Addressing protectionist behaviour in local fresh produce value chains is a must. If things are left to their own, all kinds of undesirable situations continue or worsen, like high incidence of poverty, food insecurity, unemployment, rural-urban migration, etc. Conventional interventions are no option either because these tend to focus on particular target groups or chain functions, and, hence, most often result in lower instead of higher levels of trust among value chain actors.

Stakeholders shaping the environment in which private sector driven innovations in agrifood value chains can take shape that improve food & nutrition security, will increase their knowledge, improve their skills and enlarge their toolkit in this field by following this highly interactive course. In particular, participants will have increased their capabilities by:

- understanding and practicing with refreshed conceptual models and frameworks that assist in identifying innovative and inclusive development opportunities in agrifood value chains;

Fee:	4,300 Euro
Deadline course registration:	7 February 2022
Deadline Orange Knowledge Programme:	1 November 2021

- being alerted and sensitized to imbalances and imperfections within value chains at large and those of locally traded produce in particular, as well as on how these issues can be addressed;
- having practiced with participatory approaches and methodologies, tools and instruments for analysis, and a strategic action planning process that initiate innovative and positive change.
- having been introduced to a business performance assessment model, integrating the critical variables and cost-price calculations in a sound manner.

This regional course is beneficial for mid-career professionals of government departments, non-governmental and civil society organisations, business associations, development agencies, universities and colleges of higher education, and other professionals responsible for shaping the enabling environment within which rural economies can develop. Typically, the course is designed for:

- policy staff responsible for the planning and/or design of strategic development policies that are in support of rural wealth creation;
- development practitioners and managers of organisations responsible for the (operational) management of rural development projects;
- staff of institutes of higher education and (applied) research, especially those involved in community outreach and/or research uptake;
- staff of local service providers, civil society organisations and business associations.

Participants' cases are the starting point

from which the course departs. It builds on the participants' own experiences and situations. A selection of these cases will be further analysed in the first week of the course.

Reducing transaction costs in local fresh food chains

is the focus of the course. To be able to unlock the potential value of locally traded & processed fresh food products, transaction costs will have to be reduced first. Else, small and medium entrepreneurs will not be able to invest, add value and create employment. In this context, market and chain concepts, dynamics and institutions will have to be understood first. Hence, the course kicks off with an introduction to the relevant concepts of market engagement, access and governance and its impact on smallholders, entrepreneurs and resource-poor consumers.

Chain-wide learning is a participatory tool used to improve the performance of fresh food value chains. It will be practiced with in the course. The Chain Wide Learning (CWL) methodology consists of 3 components:

1. a multi-stakeholder workshop of representatives of locally, daily traded and/or processed fresh produce value chains will gather to share and discuss the structure, issues and opportunities of a particular value chain;
2. a strategic action planning process in which the outputs of the workshop are used as inputs;
3. a set of action plans to reduce transaction costs and/or exploit opportunities in the selected agrifood value chain.

Once implemented, the plan of actions will build the trust and reduce protectionism and opportunistic behaviour in the selected value chain. As a result, marketing costs and prices at end-markets will come down, chain integral margins go up, while investments productive assets will increase. The improved performance forms the basis for private sector driven innovation in the chain.

Agribusiness development approaches is another important subject that will be addressed in the course program. To sensitize the participants to business rationale and attitude, they will practice with a simple, single product focused business planning tool in a step-by-step and hands-on manner. With the help of this tool and process, all the principal variables that relate to cost-pricing will be discussed one by one, while their interconnectedness is shown. The business planning model can be used to assess different scenarios while it can easily be extended to one or more products.

Requirements for applicants:

- relevant tertiary education;
- three years of professional experience;
- proven competence in the English language.

Further practical information

Application, the procedure is:

Apply through the link [WCDI Online Learning REA](#). You will receive a confirmation and more information within a week.

Because of the prolonged Covid-19 situation, the course *will be organised in an **online, mostly interactive manner***. Our experience is, based on feedback by participants that, despite the set-back of online facilitation, the training is still highly relevant for one's individual learning.

Wageningen Centre for Development Innovation (WCDI)

is unable to assist you in obtaining financial support, however if you want to apply for a **OKP Fellowship**, WCDI will provide you with the full instructions as well as the link to the **DELTA** registration system. DELTA is the online registration platform to administer one's application for an OKP Fellowship. You can check your eligibility at www.studyinholland.nl.

Please be aware that there is only a limited number of scholarships available. As this OKP application process takes time and requires several documents, it is recommended to **start the application procedure as soon as possible**.

- **Location:** Facilitation from our offices in Wageningen, The Netherlands or, alternatively, from abroad by our non-Dutch, and foreign-based experts.
- For prices, see the cost estimate on our website.
- **OKP Fellowships include** full and prolonged access to all course material.
- **Fee** includes all course related costs (materials, administration, etc., but not for costs of local internet connections).
- Participants will be awarded with a **Certificate of attendance**.

The ultimate programme of the course might be changed to incorporate latest and/or new insights.
