

## REPORT of the 3<sup>rd</sup> INTERNATIONAL ARF-NWO WORKSHOP

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, February 13-16, 2018

### **Fresh Green Ghana ARF Project group Members:**

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- ✓ How do we ensure that practitioners and researchers in a consortium exchange and create knowledge together?
- ✓ How do we stimulate that research is taken up by a wider community of stakeholders? And how do we improve attention to nutritional enhancements within food security work?

These were the key questions during the third international workshop of the Food & Business Applied Research Fund (ARF) that took place from February 13 to 16, 2018, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The workshop was organized by NWO-WOTRO and the Food & Business Knowledge Platform (F&BKP), in collaboration with AgriProFocus and IFPRI Ethiopia.

Fifteen projects from the 3<sup>rd</sup> ARF call came together to learn and exchange on the topics of co-creation and research uptake. Additionally on the last day, to translate lessons into practice, a public seminar took place. The ARF project members were joined by 40 Ethiopian experts from research, NGOs, private sector and policy to exchange on the potential for nutrition-sensitive value chains.

## **Enhancing research impact**

Co-creation, knowledge sharing and research uptake, related to an Impact Pathway that indicates how the research will contribute to solutions for food security, are central features of the applied research projects of ARF. To ensure that their research is driven by practical challenges, the teams have a practitioner from business or society as their project lead. From the research project inception on they work together with researchers and sometimes policymakers in an international multi-stakeholder consortium. All groups have partners from one or more of the Dutch development cooperation policy partner countries and from the Netherlands. During the first two days of the workshop, the ARF approach was deepened and discussed to improve the project work.

During the first day the emphasis was on the process of co-creation of knowledge and joint learning as a way to relate knowledge to context, practice and actors. In an interactive session participants learned that continuous communication between members of the project is essential from the start, to clarify expectations and perceptions and to define roles. Confidence and equal engagement of all participant organizations is key. A neutral actor or platform could play a facilitating role in this process.

The project Impact Pathway (IP) and Theory of Change (ToC) show the steps that are necessary to stimulate the uptake and use of project output and outcomes by various stakeholders and end users. To make sure the IP is linked to the realities and needs of the target groups, and will be relevant for them and other stakeholders, a related research uptake strategy is supposed to be

developed and implemented throughout the ARF research. This research uptake (RU) was the central theme during the second workshop day. RU needs continuous planning, exchange with stakeholders, trying out various strategies, and adaptation to realities that are faced during project implementation. Activities should be developed on stakeholder engagement, capacity building and communication. In that regard, participants were trained in using tools such as stakeholder mapping.

To experience uptake of research in practice, a group field visit was undertaken to Selam Children's village at the edge of Addis Ababa. During a tour participants experienced a circular system of agriculture fed by knowledge. In the village more than 500 youths are trained (30 percent theory and 70 percent practice) to feed the more than 400 orphans and their caregivers who stay there permanently, amongst others by developing agriculture production, processing and packaging of vegetables, fruits, and livestock. In the village they also run a restaurant that is very popular with the people of Addis Ababa.

The internal workshop days were concluded with the formulation of plans to apply the lessons learned within the consortium teams and with stakeholders. Project members need to discuss and revise their Impact Pathways, combining their specific fields of expertise. They will analyse research outcomes and build new knowledge adapted to practices. As such, and partly supported by the F&BKP and NWO-WOTRO they will aim at improving food security in the countries they work in.

## **The potential for nutrition-sensitive value chains**

The public seminar on the third day was opened by representatives from the Ethiopian Ministries of Agriculture and Natural Resources and of Industries, and the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. All speakers confirmed the need for more attention to nutrition results in value chains. They also highlighted the strong policy framework in Ethiopia regarding nutrition-sensitive agriculture. A keynote address was given by Belay Terefe from IFPRI on possible interventions within value chains to improve nutrition, such as increased attention for fruits and vegetables, even as for transport, storage and cold chain infrastructure improvement. He also underlined the need for an enabling policy environment, and for applied research engagement. In addition, a panel with representatives from the Ethiopian private sector, NGOs, knowledge institutes, and the EU and FAO, shed light on the practical difficulties of making value chains more nutrition-sensitive. They also concluded that excellent policies and a lot of knowledge are already present in Ethiopia, yet for better operationalization actors should become more aware of priorities of others within contexts with many challenges (economic, health, environment etc.).

In the afternoon, Ethiopian experts from various small and medium enterprises, NGOs, research and government institutes, together with the ARF participants, had lively discussions in the "Open Space session". They explored the challenges and solutions for value chain actors which make efforts to integrate nutrition goals. Themes like joint attention for food safety and the reduction of postharvest losses were discussed. It was concluded that structural multi-stakeholder exchange and cooperation within a food system approach, as implemented in the ARF projects, would be a good way forward, also for more nutrition value in Ethiopia.

## Implications for the Fresh Green Ghana Project

Fresh Green Ghana Project is in line with ARF –NWO values of co creation, research uptake and knowledge sharing. The project seeks to address the need of improving nutrition by enhancing food security of fresh fruits and vegetables. And also to address the issue of post-harvest losses along the value chain

- The knowledge and research uptake would have to be look at as a team, so as to proper disseminate the knowledge with the other growers.
- Consortium members are to adopt a liner pathway in the co creation terms so as to meet the objectives of the project.
- Impact pathway should be regularly reviewed as to ensure all major stakeholders are proper aligned.



*Fresh Green Ghana representatives pitching the project and explaining the Project Impact Pathway and Theory of Change.*



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