

Proceedings of the AATF 2020 Webinar held on 27th July 2020



Promotion
of Agricultural
Technologies and
Innovations for
Agribusiness Resilience
in Africa in the Wake of
COVID-19 Pandemic

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List of Abbreviations

NGOs	Non-governmental Organisations
CSOs	Civil society organisations
AFSTA	African Seed Trade Association
AFA	Agricultural Food Authority
AfDB	The African Development Bank
AFCRE	Africa Food Security Crisis Response
CGIAR	Consortium of International Agricultural Research Centers
EAFF	East Africa Farmers Federation
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IFAD	The International Fund for Agricultural Development
MOALFs	Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries (Kenya)
NAERLS	National Agricultural Extension Research and Liaison Services (Nigeria)
PPEs	Personal protective equipment
PPPs	Public private partnerships
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SMEs	Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
TAAT	Technologies for African Agricultural Transformation
EAFF	Eastern Africa Farmers Federation

Speakers and Panelists



Dr **Denis T Kyetere**, Executive Director, AATF



Dr **Martin Fregene**, Director of Agriculture and Agro-Industry, African Development Bank (AfDB)



Dr **Emmanuel Okogbenin**, Director of Programme Development and Commercialisation, AATF



Prof **Hamadi Boga**, Principal Secretary, State Department for Agricultural Research, Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, Kenya



Prof **Ruth Oniang'o**, Founder of Rural Outreach and winner of Africa Food Prize 2017



Mr **Justin Rakotoarisaona**, Secretary General, African Seed Trade Association (AFSTA)



Dr **Damien Ihedioha**, Interim Manager, Agribusiness Division/Chief Agro-Industry Officer, AfDB



Mr **Stephen Muchiri**, Chief Executive Officer, Eastern Africa Farmers Federation



Mrs **Nancy Muchiri**, Senior Manager, Communications and Partnerships, AATF

Chapter 1

PRELIMINARIES

1.1 Webinar overview

AATF held its first webinar for 2020 themed **'Promotion of agricultural technologies and innovations for agribusiness resilience in Africa in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic'**. The Webinar converged eminent professionals in the agricultural sector to discuss promotion of agricultural technologies that have the potential to help in building the resilience of farmers in Africa, with special attention on challenges and how they have been overcome, particularly in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. The event moderator was the AATF Executive Director, Dr Denis T Kyetere. A total of 164 people attended the webinar, and more than 1,300 social media users were recorded on AATF social media platforms thereafter. Audiences were drawn from the public and private sectors including seed companies, key agriculture sector players from research centers, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), academia, farmer groups, national research institutions and the media.

1.2 Objectives

The objectives of the webinar were to:

- i. share experiences in promotion of innovative agricultural technologies that enhance agribusiness resilience;
- ii. raise visibility of the successes and constraints around building resilience in agribusiness; and
- iii. cultivate relationships among key stakeholders in the agricultural sector.

1.3 Meeting design

The meeting was a moderated panel discussion led by Dr Denis T Kyetere. The panelists were renowned African agricultural experts, carefully selected based on their areas of expertise as in Annex 1. Key topics discussed by the panel included:

- i. Strategies for enhancing agribusiness resilience in the wake of COVID-19
- ii. Transforming Africa's agriculture through fast-tracking commercialisation of innovative agricultural technologies to enhance seed business resilience in the wake of COVID-19 pandemic
- iii. Cushioning agriculture sector players in the wake of COVID-19 pandemic impact on agribusiness at farm level and coping strategies
- iv. Sustaining extension services during pandemics



Chapter 2

OPENING AND WELCOMING REMARKS

2.1 **Mrs Nancy Muchiri**, Senior Manager, Communications and Partnerships, AATF



Mrs Muchiri highlighted that the webinar and others to follow were structured to cover areas of interest and specific to agricultural transformation for smallholder farmers in Africa, especially their access to innovative technologies. She pointed out that the renowned agricultural panelists who graced the occasion were carefully selected to make the conversation educative and to share information that would help make a difference to challenges being faced in the current COVID-19 situation and help sustain agribusinesses in Africa.

2.2 **Dr Denis T Kyetere**, Executive Director, AATF



Dr Kyetere welcomed participants to the first AATF webinar where he explained that the dialogue would focus on agribusiness resilience during the uncertain time when the world is struggling with the COVID-19 pandemic. He said the session was graced by some of the greatest minds in the agriculture sector on the continent, to share their thoughts on how to ensure stability and growth in agribusiness in the region, given the current challenge. He said that agribusinesses in Africa remain vulnerable to threats such as climatic change, rapid population growth, pests and diseases, among others and that the emergence of COVID-19 pandemic complicates matters further threatening farmer livelihoods.

Dr Kyetere pointed out that in the last 15 years, AATF had dedicated itself to empowering the smallholder farmers in Africa with a wide choice of agricultural innovations and strategies to transition into agribusinesses. He noted that the webinar was going to dialogue on the need to promote appropriate agricultural technologies and innovations that will help agribusinesses in Africa to be resilient in the wake of COVID-19 pandemic.

Chapter 3

KEY SPEAKER PRESENTATIONS

3.1 Transforming Africa's agriculture through fast-tracking commercialisation of innovative agricultural technologies to enhance resilience: **Dr Martin Fregene**, Director of Agriculture and Agro-Industry, African Development Bank (AfDB)



Dr Fregene noted that, that amid the COVID-19 pandemic, Africa's Food Security Crisis Response (AFCRE) is AfDB's framework for food security which is achieved through collaborative projects with multilateral partners and programmes targeting the nutrition and food security aspects. He said that AfDB responded with a 10million-dollar COVID-19 Rapid Response Facility to bridge the gap between innovative technologies and millions of farmers. The facility is intended to build a demand-driven approach

to development to support African countries not just with food but also with the necessary medical facilities to combat COVID-19 rapidly. He noted that the Bank has unveiled a roadmap to assist African countries in tackling the food and nutrition security threat foisted by the COVID-19 crisis through a number of immediate and longer-term interventions under the Feed Africa Initiative. In this scenario, AfDB plans to take measures through three actions: Immediate response (0-3 months); short term response (4-12 months); and medium term (13-24 months).

The immediate response includes creating green channels that allow free flow of foods, certified seeds, fertilisers and pesticides without any restrictions between borders. The response entailed providing safe storage facilities to store food products and provisions to emergency food relief to the most vulnerable population in the rural and urban areas. It also ensured safe labour practices, increased access to Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs) and the use of digital solutions to map farmers and other value chain actors for delivering information, coordinating access to mechanisation services, monitoring the production and food reserves, and disseminating the production to the markets.

The short-term response includes restructuring and realignment of ongoing Feed Africa portfolios and scale-up provision of improved varieties and fertilisers to increase production.

The medium-term response includes fast-track processing of lending programs such as trade credit guarantees and lines of credit to wholesalers, and hub agro-dealers to facilitate the movement of inputs downstream, and guarantee output market for crops. Developing policies on the rapid scale-up of food production technologies such as early maturing, high yielding, drought tolerant, pest- and disease-resistant staple crops, livestock and fish.

Dr Fregene noted that food security for Africans in all situations is at the core of the Bank's Feed Africa Strategy, adding that the Bank will coordinate its efforts with different stakeholders across the continent to effectively answer the needs of regional member countries including working with African governments to offer support to vulnerable communities during the pandemic. Lastly he pointed out that the Technologies for African Agricultural Transformation (TAAT) Maize Compact Project is one of the Bank's initiatives being implemented by AATF that aims at increasing uptake and use of proven high-yielding climate smart maize technologies by smallholder farmers in Sub-Saharan Africa.

3.2 Strategies for enhancing agribusiness resilience in the wake of COVID-19 pandemic: **Dr Emmanuel Okogbenin**, Director of Programme Development and Commercialisation, AATF



Dr Okogbenin pointed out that agribusinesses in Africa face unique challenges including high post-harvest losses, poor infrastructure and limited access to agricultural finance and insurance. In addition, he said, agribusinesses in Africa are vulnerable to varied shocks and this has been further aggravated by other challenges brought about by restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic including limited access to inputs, disrupted food production, shortage of labour and closed borders. He emphasised

that agribusiness should be viewed as an economic pathway for Africa where agriculture contributes substantially and significantly among other sectors to the total Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in most countries in the continent, adding that there is need to create an environment that will enable investment and adoption of best practices that are profitable in agribusiness and to rapidly modernise farming to integrate commercially successful innovative technologies for agribusiness resilience in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

He pointed out some of the shocks brought about by COVID-19 pandemic as reduced food supply and disruption of trade of agricultural products and supply-chain issues. To combat the problems, Dr Okogbenin shared the AATF partnership model that leverages public-private-partnerships (PPPs)

to develop innovative platforms and transform Africa's agriculture sector. He highlighted some of the innovations that could cushion smallholder farmers and agribusinesses against the negative effects of COVID-19 pandemic including smart agro-input subsidy programs by governments to support farmers without distorting market dynamics, use of the e-voucher system in Malawi that resulted in a surplus maize production, implementing policy support for effective regulation of input and output markets achieved through 'green corridors' for uninterrupted in-country and cross-border movement of goods and supplies throughout the continent, and digital agriculture to help smallholder farmers.

He further noted the array of available digital agriculture and mechanisation projects in Africa. These include e-Soko, a digital Ghanaian start-up that provides overall farm management support, Nigeria-based FarmCrowdy, an online platform that offers extension advice for farmers, and smartphone-based apps such as Tumaini and Nuru that track pest and diseases and provide recommendations and management for the detected problems. He emphasised that the digital era offers many innovations and breakthroughs every year that will allow Africa to unlock the full potential of its agribusiness sector.



Chapter 4

PANEL DISCUSSION

4.1 Cushioning agriculture sector players in the wake of COVID-19 pandemic: **Prof Hamadi Boga**, Principal Secretary, State Department for Agricultural Research, Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, Kenya



Prof Boga explained that the Kenyan Government had developed measures and strategies to ensure that food was available, accessible and affordable to the general population when the first case of COVID-19 was reported in March 2020. To further cushion citizens from the impact of the pandemic, Prof Boga said the government ensured food production, processing and marketing were maintained to protect citizens from exposure to hunger. Further, he said the government developed protocols for agricultural value chains to continue with business to avoid food crisis.

4.2 Seed business resilience in the wake of COVID-19 pandemic: **Mr Justin Rakotoarisaona**, Secretary General, African Seed Trade Association (AFSTA)



The seed sector is not an exception to the impact of COVID-19 pandemic. The restriction in movement of human and seed, reduction in labour availability and increase in cost for seed production were some of the challenges brought about by COVID-19 in the seed sector. All activities related to seeds such as seed certification and quality control were not done in timely manner because of restriction in movement of personnel. Most of the seeds in Africa are imported and operations at seaports and airports were slowed down due to COVID-19 pandemic. AFSTA communicated to the national seed members on the right action to take in their respective countries.

4.3 Impact of COVID-19 pandemic on agribusiness at farm level and coping strategies: **Prof Ruth Oniang'o**, Founder of Rural Outreach Africa/winner of Africa Food Prize 2017



When the first case of COVID-19 pandemic was reported, it occurred to Prof Oniang'o more than before that hunger was going to kill people more than the virus itself especially the vulnerable groups such as women and children. There would never be going back to normal after the pandemic. Still, the pandemic came with the silver lining for the African continent in that youth and women now understand that the 'soil is Africa's wealth', said Prof Oniang'o. She further added that food systems in the continent will emerge stronger post the COVID-19 pandemic subject to the adoption of sound policies and innovations. She noted that just like the creativity that has been witnessed in the healthcare sector during this COVID-19 period, such as personal protective gears to combat the spread of the disease, agriculture is likewise undergoing a revolution with the help of younger and innovative farmers. She pointed out that the COVID-19 pandemic has left a mark on all sectors including agriculture, which is the mainstay and backbone of the African economy. Finally, Prof. Oniang'o noted that African universities need to show their relevance in times of such pandemics, and this calls for the review of the curriculum to find out whether they are relevant or not.

Mr Stephen Muchiri, Chief Executive Officer, Eastern Africa Farmers Federation (EAFF)



Mr Muchiri pointed out that the COVID-19 pandemic has caused a lot of disruption in production at the farmers' level. He observed that they have undertaken consultations among the members to help them cope with the emerging issues brought about by the pandemic. This includes working with the members to ensure planting was done. He noted that they are working closely with farmers to help them cope with the crisis by utilising e-platforms such as the e-granary, which is operational in Kenya, Uganda and Rwanda, to link farmers to agricultural inputs. Further, EAFF is leveraging on the e-granary to provide extension services to farmers. Through this effort, they can get pictorial reports from farmers on the progress of crops in farms. He pointed out that EAFF is in the process of accessing some resources to be used to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The funds, he said, would be used to create awareness among the members on the dangers of the pandemic and procure some PPEs for farmers.

Chapter 5

QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION WITH THE PANELISTS

Q: How has COVID-19 affected the Bank's vision of transforming agriculture and how is AfDB responding?

Dr Fregene explained that one of the impacts of COVID-19 was on food supply. He noted that there was lockdown in many countries immediately after COVID-19 cases were reported and countries depending on imported foods could no longer access food. The immediate effect of this was an increase in food prices and lack of access to improved nutritious foods like vegetables. The first thing the Bank did was to work with governments to ensure:

- i. Free flow of food supplies;
- ii. Identification of vulnerable populations to ensure they are provided with food by procuring and distributing foods to them;
- iii. Access to inputs through the Farming Input Resilience Support in 23 countries where the bank works with governments through registered platforms to ensure farmers are given seed and fertiliser subsidies to allow them to go back to farming; and
- iv. Availability to farmers of improved technologies such as drought tolerant wheat and maize varieties.

Q: What strategies/measures is the Government of Kenya putting in place to cushion the agriculture sector players during the COVID-19 period?

With respect to the measures the Government of Kenya rolled out to cushion the agriculture sector, Prof Boga explained that several strategies were put in place including:

- i. Ensuring the country was food secure by looking at whether the food was available, accessible and affordable to the citizens.
- ii. Guaranteeing production, processing and marketing were going on – both within and outside the country.

- iii. Evaluating how logistics were being affected to make sure there was flow of foods to market and flow of inputs to farms.
- iv. Working with different stakeholders such as the private sector, country governments and CSOs, figuring out challenges that could impact food availability and cost. Through this strategy, the team ensured that, despite the curfews and lock downs, protocols for each value chain were developed to enable the actors to continue with business to avoid food riot and crisis.
- v. Tracking food prices which largely remained stable and markets remained opened. The biggest challenge was on the export markets because the flights stopped – through Kenya Airways the government stepped in to support exporters to enable them to get their produce to the market.

Q: To what extent has the Government of Kenya considered technology in the process of resilience building?

Prof Boga highlighted that the Government of Kenya has considered using technology to build resilience as follows:

- i. The government is about to launch the e-voucher for input distribution for registered farmers. The e-voucher will facilitate distribution of seed, fertiliser and agrochemicals. It will also be packaged with soil testing and other post-harvest technologies.
- ii. Some farmers are already benefiting through funding from the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) which is also supplemented with funding from the Government of Kenya. There is ongoing conversation with agri-tech companies such as Jumuaia so that they can take food from farms to warehouses and distribute to consumers.

Q: What opportunities are available from AfDB and AATF/ CGIAR in the spirit of Public-Private Partnership (PPPs) to support the private sector in supporting digitisation of research and on-farm management during the COVID-19 pandemic?

Dr Okogbenin explained the opportunities at AATF to support the private sector in digitisation of research and on-farm management during the COVID-19 pandemic as follows:

- i. Through the Seed Assure Platform, AATF is working with the private sector around seeds systems to strengthen their capacity in terms of the quality of the seed they produce. Through the platform, a lot of activities can be done real-time and very quickly.
- ii. Supporting the private sector in the seed certification process, seed inspection and movement of seeds across the border.
- iii. AATF is also working with the private sector around policies in a holistic approach to improve seed systems.
- iv. AATF is exploring ways to extend digital tools not only within the seeds systems but also around markets.
- v. The organisation is providing in-house tools to guide farmers on mechanisation, implements in the field, and linking some of the stakeholders to markets.

Dr Damien Ihedioha, Interim Manager, Agribusiness Division/Chief Agro-Industry Officer at AfDB, explained that the Bank was supporting the private sector in digitisation of research and on farm management during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Bank was doing this by:

- i. creating instruments to network the small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) into the Bank's operations and showing the private sector players the way to get into PPPs to find solutions to re-integrate SMEs;
- ii. developing the SMEs framework to support them so that they can get traction from what they are doing with support from the Bank's operations in respective countries;
- iii. working with seed companies and some private entities that have widespread distribution networks to help with the distribution of agri-inputs.
- iv. developing, through its nutrition department, family and community food processing methods to involve women in trainings on proper processing of quality food at local levels.

Q: Is there an initiative to register agribusiness practitioners so that in case of future lock downs they can be classified as essential service providers?

Regarding this, Prof Boga explained that there are initiatives the ministry has consolidated to register agribusiness practitioners for future consideration as essential service providers. These initiatives include:

- i. Registering the value chain actors. This is under Agricultural Sector Development Programme which is funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) and operates across the 47 counties in Kenya. It is key for gathering information about value chain actors.
- ii. Collecting registration information details, as is being done by the Agricultural Food Authority (AFA), to allow those dealing with foods to be treated as essential service providers.
- iii. Registering farmers and other value chain actors by a consultant to streamline and make interaction with them more efficient and predictable.

Q: Have farmers in East Africa experienced hiccups in accessing certified seeds?

Mr Muchiri highlighted challenges that farmers across the East Africa region have faced in accessing certified seeds since the start of COVID-19 pandemic as follows:

- i. Some of the countries within East Africa have bigger challenges in accessing not only certified seeds but also fertilisers and pesticides.
- ii. Through e-granary channel, Eastern Africa Farmers Federation (EAFF) built an eco-system of partners to ensure that the seeds farmers are interested in are actually certified such that if there is a challenges such as germination or otherwise, then farmers have a platform to present their grievances and follow up with seed producers.
- iii. The problem of COVID-19 pandemic has been compounded by the fact that even finance became a bigger challenge because of the virus, agriculture became riskier as far as the financial situations are concerned.
- iv. Farmers were not able to access seeds because the COVID-19 pandemic compounded logistic challenges. For example, in Uganda, EAFF's national farmer organisation was not able to partner with government to distribute seeds. This is still a major concern in the region in terms of unadulterated inputs, but this needs to be dealt with through the value chain approach where everyone is included.

Chapter 6

CONCLUSION

The COVID-19 challenge presents another opportunity for Africa to learn to develop its scientific capability even as it struggles with agri-tech technologies especially biotech, which is not too detached from synthetic technologies needed to do diagnostics. The challenge is to identify human resources available in the continent as far as technology around synthetic technology is concerned. Thus, there is need to evaluate infrastructure and equipment available to grow scientific capability to respond to this crisis in all its dimensions. Further, there is need to look at the silver lining on the COVID-19 pandemic which lies in how Africa can improve its trade and export activities with the rest of the world including African traditional foods.

In addition, African universities need to show their relevance in times of such pandemics and this calls for the review of the curriculum to find out whether they are relevant or not. Further, partnerships and collaborations are key in this situation since there is little an individual organisation can do alone. The pandemic is not only a public health challenge; it also negatively impacts food security and nutrition and organisations need to amplify the pandemic as such. There is more than ever before need to digitise agriculture since it is big business and should be treated as such. The destiny of many Africans lies with Africans including the leadership. It is very important that African governments create the right environment for smallholder farmers to transform from subsistence to commercial agriculture since food, and hence agriculture, is central in dealing with any type of pandemic. Lastly, there is need for African governments, seed companies and regional bodies to promote appropriate agricultural technologies and innovations that will help cushion smallholder farmers and agribusiness against the negative effects of COVID-19 pandemic on agricultural production and markets.



Chapter 7

APPENDICES

7.1 Panelists' Profiles

Dr Martin Fregene, Director of Agriculture and Agro-Industry, AfDB



Dr. Fregene is a plant geneticist and molecular breeder with 20 years of experience in genetics and breeding of cassava. He developed the first molecular genetic map of cassava and started the first cassava molecular breeding program to accelerate development of improved cassava varieties for various agro-ecologies of Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Dr Fregene began his career at the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), Ibadan, Nigeria, in 1991 as a cassava breeder. While at IITA, he was a recipient of a Rockefeller Foundation post-doctoral fellowship on genetic mapping (1993–1996) that took him to the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT) in Cali, Colombia. After CIAT he joined the BioCassava Plus project at the Danforth Center, a multi-national development program funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, where he rose to the position of Director of the project. Dr Fregene received his BS and MS degrees from the University of Ibadan, Nigeria, graduating at the top of his class. His PhD in plant genetics and breeding, also from the University of Ibadan, Nigeria, was in collaboration with IITA, the John Innes Center, Norwich UK, and CIAT.

Dr Emmanuel Okogbenin, Director of Programme Development and Commercialisation, AATF



Dr Okogbenin is a well-trained scientist in plant breeding, genetics, and genomics with a good background in agronomy and physiology. He has experience spanning over 23 years working in and leading several research projects in cassava at both international agricultural research (IAR) centres and national agricultural research institutes (NARS). He holds a PhD in molecular genetics/plant breeding from the University of Ibadan. At AATF, Dr Okogbenin identifies opportunities for agricultural

technology interventions, assesses the feasibility and probability of success of project concepts, identifies sources of appropriate technologies, negotiates their access and deployment, and provides overall leadership in the implementation of AATF's project portfolio.

Mr Justin Rakotoarisaona, Secretary General, AFSTA



Mr Rakotoarisaona is a seed systems specialist. Prior to joining AFSTA, he worked as Seed Production Manager in the Ministry of Agriculture in Madagascar where he helped seed producers and facilitated seed multiplication centers. He also worked as the head of the Seed Certification Service in the same Ministry. Mr Rakotoarisaona also served as a Farming Division Chief at Fanalamanga (Madagascar). He is an engineer of agronomic sciences and holds an MSc in agribusiness management from the University of London, Imperial College. Further, he holds various certificates in seed systems from the University of California at Davis (USA).

Prof Hamadi Boga, Principal Secretary, State Department for Agricultural Research, Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, Kenya



Prof Boga is the former founding Principal of Taita Taveta University College and was later its Vice Chancellor between 2007 and 2017. He is a professor in the Department of Botany at the Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology. His skills and interests are in biology, agricultural science, microbiology and molecular biology. He specialised in microbial ecology of insects' guts, soils and soda lakes and has worked with termites, the soda lakes of Kenya, mangrove swamps, agricultural and forest soils and also on Mount Kenya glacier. He has a PhD in biology from Universität Konstanz in Germany and had a post-doctoral stint at the Max Planck Institute for Terrestrial Microbiology in Marburg, Germany.

Prof Ruth Oniang'o, Founder of Rural Outreach Africa and winner of Africa Food Prize 2017



Prof Oniang'o is the Executive Director of the Rural Outreach Africa, a non-profit development organisation that empowers women through agriculture and entrepreneurial projects. She was a nominated member of Kenya's ninth Parliament from 2003-2007 and served as Shadow Minister for Education. Before becoming a member of the Kenyan Parliament, she was Professor of Food Science and Nutrition at the Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology in Nairobi, Kenya. Her areas of research and consultation are household food and nutrition security, women's nutrition, child health, and community level agro-processing and related enterprises. She is the founder and editor-in-chief of the *African Journal of Food, Agriculture, Nutrition, and Development (AJFAND)*. She serves on a number of boards including HarvestPlus and IRRI.

Mr Stephen Muchiri, Chief Executive Officer, Eastern Africa Farmers Federation



Mr Muchiri has been working in the agriculture sector for the last 16 years. He is the CEO of EAFF, a regional network of national farmer unions, federations and co-operatives in ten countries. EAFF is a non-political, not-for-profit, regional umbrella network of smallholder farmers of Eastern Africa. Its role is to promote the interests of farmers on issues touching on policies, markets, productivity, capacity, information and regional integration as well as to voice farmers' concerns in socio-economic development.

Mr Muchiri holds both a Bachelor and Master of Science degree in horticulture and a Postgraduate Diploma in business management.



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