



CTA TOP 20 Innovations

Press Release

Innovations from ACP countries are solving complex problems and transforming small-scale farmers lives.

The Netherlands, June 12 2014 – Innovation is driving change in farmers' livelihoods in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific (ACP). Knowledge from multiple sources is being used to transform the agricultural enterprise and there is no exception. Farmers, researchers, extension, non-governmental organizations are innovating but their efforts and successes remain below the radar.

To capture the ideas and harness the potential of ACP innovators, the Technical Centre for Agriculture and Rural Cooperation ACP-EU (CTA) launched a call for proposals, in December 2013, to unearth and award **20 TOP innovations** that are transforming smallholder farms in Africa, the Caribbean and The Pacific. Judith A. Francis, CTA Top 20 innovations coordinator says ***“Smallholders Farmers are ACP « Bright minds » and their innovations are contributing to advancing scientific Knowledge and making local knowledge better integrated into research and development processes thereby ensuring that it is carried-on from generation to generation”***. And as Francis insists ***“Innovation is taking place in ACP regions and it should be supported and promoted so that we can take it to scale for the benefit of small holder farming and agricultural transformation”***.

More than **250 submissions** were received from **49 countries**. These reflect solutions and options that small-scale farmers, private sector, non-governmental organizations, engineers and scientists have thought about and employed to solve the problems and challenges in the agricultural sector. It also reinforces the fact that there is need to promote ***“Innovation for adding value to knowledge for social and economic development”***.

Out of those 250 submissions, **75 projects** had past the initial screening undertaken by CTA and an external consultant. On April 28th until 30th 2014, a first panel of international experts (scientists/academicians, extension agents and farmers) from the ACP regions elected 40 projects that will further be discussed and voted by small-scale farmers.

One of the panellist, M. Jethro Greene, Chief Coordinator of CAFAN, shares that ***“by initiating this innovative project , CTA is creating the space and environment not only for academia but for ordinary persons, young and old small farmers to think differently and be creative in solving old problems with new and improved ideas.”***

As the next phase of this competition now concerns the vote of farmers, Greene states that ***“this validation process sought from the farmers, represent a new approach of giving equal rights to farmers in line with that scientists and innovators.”***

About CTA : CTA is a joint international institution of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of States and the European Union (EU). Its mission is to advance food and nutritional security, increase prosperity and encourage sound natural resource management in ACP countries. It facilitates access to information and knowledge; supports evidence-based, multi-stakeholder development of agricultural policies and strategies; promotes inclusive value chain development and use of ICTs; and strengthens the capacities of agricultural and rural development institutions and communities. **Visit us at :** www.cta.int



Lack of funding being identified as a major barrier to innovation and its scaling-up in ACP countries, Judith Francis concludes that ***“this competition highlights the potential of the marriage between the knowledge of scientists, engineers and farmers/agri-entrepreneurs as well as taking advantage of simple ideas to improve the livelihoods of smallholders farmers for agricultural growth and prosperity in ACP regions”.***

Journalists from ACP countries are welcome to engage in this one-of-its-kind contest by interviewing both innovators and end-users.

For more details on the competition

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