



POSITION PAPER ON PROMOTING CLIMATE RESILIENT SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE (CRSA) AS AN ALTERNATIVE TOWARDS ACHIEVING FOOD SECURITY AND THE RIGHT TO FOOD

The West African Food Security Network (WAFSN), from Ghana, Gambia, Burkinafaso , Seengal organised a 3-days workshop on “***Promoting Climate Resilient Sustainable Agriculture (CRSA) as an Alternative towards Achieving Food Security and the Right to Food***” from Wednesday, 30th November- Friday 2nd December 2016 in Accra and reaffirmed its conviction that Climate Resilient Sustainable Agriculture is the way to go to achieve food security and the right to food.

The WAFSN is therefore calling for the inclusion of CRSA at the national, sub-regional and regional level agriculture policies and practices.

CONTEXT ON CLIMATE CHANGE IN AFRICA

Rising sea levels, global temperature and high temperatures, severe and unpredictable weather patterns and many others are results of climate change, taking a toll on the lives and livelihoods of vulnerable groups and those living in poverty such as children and women, a critical mass in the agriculture industry. The fight to ensure food security has incessantly been challenged by climate change, with the 2015 Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) publication, “The State of Food Insecurity in the World” identifying about 795 million people who were undernourished. According to research from the World Food Programme (WFP), Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), the United Nations, and many others, climate change is one of the causes of the current food crisis.

Over the years, the effects of climate change on farming has gone from frequent to severe, with its devastating impact being felt by smallholder farmers across the world, who produce 85% of food in developing countries. According ActionAid, yields from rain-fed agriculture in Africa could be reduced to 50% by 2020, further agitating the poverty cycle and living rural families that depend on farming for their livelihoods grappling with food insecurity.

ISSUE OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND ITS EFFECT ON COMMUNITIES

The challenge of climate change is its assault on food production. Droughts, heavy rainfalls, non-organic fertilisers, and the use of Genetically Modified Organism (GMO) as well as depleted lands, all causes of climate change, have disadvantaged and marginalised smallholder farmers and have strengthen poverty chains amidst rural farmers.

Lack of effective policies to tackle effects of climate change by government and the international community has further enhanced this global inequality among the

world's poorest and richest, resulting in human-right abuses of people living in poverty, especially smallholder women farmers and making it crucial to formulate policies that sensitise smallholder women farmers on their rights and gives them the power to seize those rights at the community, district and national levels.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RESPONSE TO THE ISSUE OF CLIMATE CHANGE

CRSA practices that adopts in totality the Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA), a method that specifically deals with women's rights, equality and equity, especially at the community level. CRSA is the best alternative to ensure food security while mitigating climate change.

WAFSN therefore strongly recommends:

1. Land reforms that promote gender equality, women's rights and Right to food.
2. Promote soil-conserving technologies that reduce dependence on high external inputs; governments should consider subsidising the production and utilisation of locally-made organic fertilisers.
3. Aggressively promote sustainable water management at all levels.
4. Integrate agro-biodiversity preservation into agricultural systems, forestry and land management policies and practices.
5. Promote the diversification of livelihoods that enhance community resilience and share growth.
6. Processing and market access should be promoted as integral parts of sustainable industrial development strategies.
7. Supporting the growth and development of farmers' organisations as a basis for inclusive and participatory development.
8. Governments must promote pro-poor policies that reduces the transfer of wealth from rural communities to the urban areas

RECOMMENDATIONS TO CIVIL SOCIETIES

1. Engage in intense policy sensitisations, and create media partnerships to build a mass public following that will influence policies.
2. CSOs must connect effectively with grassroot organisations; enhancing engagements and participation at the grassroots and linking them to government policies that impact on their agricultural activities.
3. CSOs must continue to build capacity on policy campaigns and advocacy and building effective follow-up strategies.
4. CSOs, while investing in scientific research, must take advantage of existing knowledge to enhance their lobbying and advocacy strength .
5. Build the capacity of their grassroot to hold leaders accountable, within their jurisdiction.
6. Follow-up aggressively and enhance watch-dogs roles to ensure state institutions do not omit sections of submitted policies.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO COMMUNITIES

This refers to community members made up of Smallholder farmers, religious and traditional leaders, women and men's associations as well as children

1. Communities must be supported and educated to appreciate the role of Climate Resilient Sustainable Agriculture practices in addressing food security challenges.
2. Smallholder women farmers challenging cultural practices that deprives them of their rights; their control and ownership of land and other productive resources.
3. Traditional leaders must be an integral part of those organized at the community level for policy change.