

Food & Business Knowledge Platform Highlights 2017

The Food & Business Knowledge Platform (F&BKP) with its partners is committed to improving the Dutch contribution to Food and Nutrition Security (FNS) in emerging economies and developing countries. By facilitating the exchange of available knowledge, the co-creation of knowledge and as such by enhancing the use of knowledge, the Platforms aims to contribute to integrated and scalable solutions that make food production, distribution and access more sustainable and inclusive.

This flyer highlights the main results in 2017: the fourth year of the Platform. This year was marked with important achievements in all main activities: **Strategic partnerships**, **Research & innovation**, and **Knowledge Portal**. The boxes showcase examples of these activities.

Strategic partnerships

The F&BKP partners with other organizations and networks to reach their common goals. With the support of the F&BKP in 2017, 21 projects were supported, 16 seminars and workshops were organized, 5 webinars broadcasted and 30 reports, scoping papers and factsheets published.

The thematic focus of the F&BKP knowledge agenda in 2017 was on: food & stability, food systems, inclusive business for food security, inclusive finance in the agro-sector, landscape approaches, land governance, nutrition security, "feeding cities", social entrepreneurship and youth in agrofood systems. In addition, attention was given to agricultural innovation systems, extension services, green education and private sector development.

The F&BKP also facilitated the 2017 learning journey in Kenya for FNS staff of the Dutch Ministries of Foreign and Economic Affairs (MinFA and MinEA) including the embassies, and supported the learning review of the Embassy Support Programme and the improvement of the MinFA's FNS result framework.

The F&BKP continued to play a facilitative role in two strategic partnerships that are meant to reach synergy at international level and as such strengthen the knowledge system: these partnerships focus on improving research programs (CGIAR) and knowledge sharing (World Bank Group). The third public-private knowledge partnership is the Young Expert Programmes, which enables young professionals to gain international experience.

Research & Innovation

In 2017 the F&BKP Office continued to work in close cooperation with NWO-WOTRO to maximize research dissemination and uptake of the Food & Business Research (F&BR) funds - the Global Challenges Programme (GCP) and the Applied Research Fund (ARF). These funds focus on reducing hunger by private and public interventions worldwide within the context of the wider Dutch knowledge agenda for FNS.



Innovation Network Feeding Cities

Member (agrofood) companies and networks of MVO Netherlands have been increasingly active on the subject of "feeding cities". The belief is that the Dutch agrofood sector can be innovative and leading on this theme by having an inspiring pre-competitive strategy and vision on urban food security. The F&BKP works together with MVO Netherlands to shape an innovation network to foster learning and sharing between leading Agrofood-MKB companies and to facilitate matching Dutch innovative solutions to a local demand. A scoping exercise was conducted with key-players and companies to identify current initiatives and challenges in relation to theme "feeding cities". Findings were written down in a short report and will be used in preparation for a "feeding cities" event with the Dutch agrofood sector, government, knowledge institutes, and practitioners to inspire, learn and get ready for action.

Food & Stability

In 2017 half of all food insecure people live in fragile or conflict-affected states. Addressing food security in conjunction with promoting stability is therefore increasingly a priority for development policy. However, how exactly food security relates to conflict remains unclear. To address this knowledge gap the F&BKP initiated an exploratory knowledge trajectory on this topic. In 2017 the Platform supported the organization of two lunch meetings at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and developed a strategy paper on this theme. The Broker conducted a study on conflict sensitivity and stability within the practice of food security programming at embassy level, around which a network of policymakers, practitioners and researchers dealing with these issues starts to emerge. The F&BKP will continue to develop and support these activities in 2018 in the context of the new Dutch Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation policy.



Research uptake of research projects by Dutch Diamond stakeholders in the project countries and the Netherlands was supported through the development of 2-pagers, an ARF brochure, a special edition newsletter, organization of trainings as well as the launch of an online [world map](#) that locates all projects. Also, a country workshop for nine Ugandan ARF projects was organized in Entebbe.

In 2017, a joint GCP-CCAFS call was launched for scaling Climate Smart Agriculture. Furthermore a joint Call on "Seed System Development" was developed in the context of the Netherlands-CGIAR Strategic Partnership.

Knowledge Portal

The Knowledge Portal was evaluated by means of an online survey. Overall, the respondents are positive about the Knowledge Portal in its current format. The Portal is mostly used to stay up-to-date on new developments of a specific topic or in a specific region/country and to deepen the understanding of a specific topic. Several scenarios will be developed in 2018 to anticipate on a next phase for the F&BKP Knowledge Portal. The results of the user evaluation will be used in the development of these scenarios.

Agrofood Broker of the Year

In 2017, the first Agrofood Broker of the Year Award was awarded by the F&BKP to pay attention to the importance of knowledge broker work for FNS outcomes. Suggestions for nominees could be submitted by the F&BKP community and over 2000 professionals voted through an online poll. Three final candidates were selected for the award. [Addis Teshome](#) (IFDC) came forward as the winner. Besides being honoured for his work, the winner also received a small financial contribution. Addis will set up a knowledge brokering activity in 2018 together with the F&BKP. He will also join the jury to elect the next Agrofood Broker of the Year 2018.

Future of the Platform

In February 2017, a report on a learning review of the five Knowledge Platforms of the MinFA was published: "[The Gold Standard. Exploring the added value of the Dutch knowledge platforms](#)". The report emphasized the added value of the convening power of the Platforms, their multi-stakeholder approach, and their unique ability to address emerging and contested issues. End 2016 the report of the stakeholder review of the Platform was received. Early 2017, the F&BKP Steering Committee (SC) welcomed the report as an important contribution to its reflection on how to further improve the Platform. The SC decided not to fundamentally change the ambitions and approach of the Platform, as it had been operating for only three years in a rather successful way. Furthermore, the goals, target groups and evolving thematic focus continue to correspond to the intentions of the MinFA, which finances the Platform. These lessons as well as the recommendations of an external evaluation will in 2018 be taken into account to work towards a next phase of the Platform on "strengthening policy and practice for Food and Nutrition Security".

Learning Platforms on land governance and FNS

In recent years, debates around land-based investments have focused on making investments more inclusive and sustainable. Within approaches of "inclusive business" or "shared value creation", the use of multi-stakeholder processes has been on the rise. However, it is not yet clear in the existing processes what the impact is of investments on local communities. Building on activities of LANDac and F&BKP, Learning Platforms were set-up in three countries: Tanzania, Mozambique and Uganda, in order to facilitate exchanges and dialogue between private sector partners and local stakeholders in investment hubs. In these Platforms collaborative learning and planning were central. Extended reports were developed per Learning Platform and shared with participants. These lessons will be brought together in a synthesis report in 2018.

Research & policy: two peas in a pod? Conference

The conference "[Research & policy: two peas in a pod?](#)" with 150 attendees in The Hague was definitely a highlight of the work around GCP & ARF Research Uptake. The aim of the conference was to strengthen the link between the GCP & ARF research groups, policymakers in the Netherlands and other stakeholders by discussing the interim results of the projects in the context of the Dutch development cooperation and food security policy. In total, 8 thematic workshops on various clustered project insights were organized. Two-pagers prepared by project and policy representatives served as starting points for discussion. Through various plenary presentations and interactions the day resulted in many new relations and ideas for continuing joint knowledge co-creation.

Research Uptake results of some finalized ARF projects

[Farmer-led soil innovations to sustain food production](#)

In Uganda, research results and new practices on conservation agriculture (e.g. zero tillage, crop rotation, and continuous ground cover) spread quickly to the neighbours of model farmers. The model farmers have become a focal point for farmer learning in their communities.

[Building on fertile ground in Burundi](#)

An improved crop cultivation method which reduced labour is adopted by governmental and non-governmental agricultural extension services in their advice to farming communities, as well as in planning and funding proposals.

[Rodent management for post-harvest loss reduction](#)

Insights from research on the impact of rodents on post-harvest losses have been used to create awareness among Bangladeshi people by showing strategies to reduce impact through trainings, meetings, and learning materials. As a result, farmers are changing their rice store practices.

Better knowledge
contributes to
sustainable food systems

