

**AU-SAFGRAD's activities in
support to Combat Desertification
in Africa**

Dry Land Week 8-12 August 2016

Outline

- 1. Major Activities and Achievements
- 2. Role of Science and Technology in Combating Desertification in Africa



MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS

- Development of technologies;**
- Building National Research Capacities;**
- Networks / Publications.**





Development of technologies

In collaboration with NARS and IARCs, SAFGRAD played key role in facilitating the release of several early and extra early maturing food grain cultivars currently cultivated by farmers in Drylands of Africa.

Those technologies include **Maize, Sorghum and cowpea**





Building National Research Capacities

Networking:

Working in collaboration with CGIARs and NARS, AU-SAFGRAD has set functional networks that brings together all the actors on the same table.

Short term training More than 2500 scientists and technicians have also participated in various short training facilitated by AU-SAFGRAD. For instance, recently young researchers from 26 countries were trained on the *“The impact of Climate change and desertification on agriculture and food security in the semi-arid zone”*.

Long term training

Over the past two decades, AU-SAFGRAD has facilitated long-term training (M.Sc., Ph.D.) in agricultural research and management





Building knowledge base

AU-SAFGRAD also has contributed to building a knowledge base on Semi-Arid Agriculture through production/dissemination of over 500 publications;

In addition, information exchange between researchers was facilitated through workshops, seminars, technical meetings and conferences;

Some of the dissemination products included technical newsletters, reports, conference proceedings and books publications



Recently published study documents

- **Strengthening the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Africa**
- **Determining gaps in the CAADP-based National Agricultural and Food Security Investment Plans (NAFSIPs) in Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, and Senegal**
- **Climate change and agricultural input use in Africa with special emphasis on drought tolerant varieties: the case of the West African semi-arid zone**
- **Climate Change and Agricultural Input Use in East Africa with Special Emphasis to Drought Tolerant Varieties: Case Study from Ethiopia and Uganda**
- **Challenges and Opportunities for Strategic Agricultural Commodity Value chains Development in the IGAD region**
- **Strengthening the role of science and technology in combating desertification in Africa**
- **Etc.**

Strengthening the role of science and technology in combating desertification in Africa

Main objectives include

- **Main priorities of land degradation and desertification at National level**
- **Collaboration of National Focal Points (NFPs) and Science and Technical Correspondents (STC's) at National level and sub-regional levels**
- **Support by NFP and STC to the Committee on Science and Technology(CST)**
- **Activity and involvement of science and technology in National Action Programmes (NAPs) and Sub-regional Action Programmes (SRAPs)**
- **Establishment of new or reviving existing Centers of Excellence (CoE) to promote collaboration of science and technology in Africa**
- **Operationalization of Science and Policy Interface (SPI) of UNCCD**

Supporting structures of UNCCD

- A ten-year strategic plan (2008 – 2018)
- Objective 3 of the Strategic plan focusses on “Science, technology and knowledge” and urges the UNCCD “to become a global authority on scientific and technical knowledge pertaining to desertification/land degradation and mitigation of the effects of drought”.
- NFP, STC, Roster of experts – National level
- RCU, RAP, SRAP – Regional and sub-regional level

Support programmes by UNCCD

- 1. Land Degradation and Neutrality (LDN)**
- 2. Ad hoc Advisory Group of Experts (AGTE)**
- 3. UNCCD fellowship programme**
- 4. Land Degradation Assessment in Drylands (LADA)**
- 5. Joint Liaison Group (JLG)**
- 6. UNCCD's Scientific Knowledge Brokering Portal**
- 7. UNCCD Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) Panel**
- 8. Performance Review and Assessment of the Implementation System (PRAIS)**
- 9. Science and Policy Interface (SPI)**
- 10. Regional Thematic Programme Networks (TPNs)**
- 11. United Nations Decade for Deserts and the Fight Against Desertification (UNDDDD)**
- 12. other**

Current networks and programmes

- 1. Regional Economic Communities (RECs) – eight**
- 2. African Union (AU) & New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)**
- 3. DesertNet International (DNI)**
- 4. CGIAR – Drylands research program on dryland systems (Many centers)**
- 5. Food and Agriculture Organisations of the United Nations (FAO)**
- 6. Sahara and Sahel Observatory (OSS)**
- 7. Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA)**
- 8. International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)**
- 9. others**

Main Funding and implementing agencies

- **Global Mechanism (GM)**
- **The Global Environment Facility (the GEF)**
- **The World Bank (WB)**
- **The African Development Bank (AfDB)**
- **UNEP**
- **UNDP**
- **IUCN**
- **FAO**
- **others**

Centers of Excellence (CoE)

CoEs are:

- **Physical or virtual entities of research;**
- **Concentrate on existing capacity and resources;**
- **Enable researchers to collaborate across disciplines and institutions;**
- **Work on long-term projects that are locally relevant and internationally competitive;**
- **Host institution where the CoEs is located must have existing capacity and resources.**

Methodology followed

Desk Review and Survey:

- Literature review from reports and websites.
- Collaboration with the UNCCD Secretariat in Bonn.
- Questionnaire sent to all STCs and NFPs in the 54 countries of Africa
- Data analysis.
- Conclusions and recommendations.

Questions asked

- 1. What are the priorities of land degradation and desertification in your country and how are you addressing them?**
- 2 (a) STC: Briefly describe your relationship and support to the NFP in your country. Please highlight the main constraints.**
- 2 (b) NFP: How does the STC supports your activities?**
- 3. Which of the three UNCCD scientific conferences have you as the STC or NFP of your country attended and did you make any inputs at the CST meetings?**

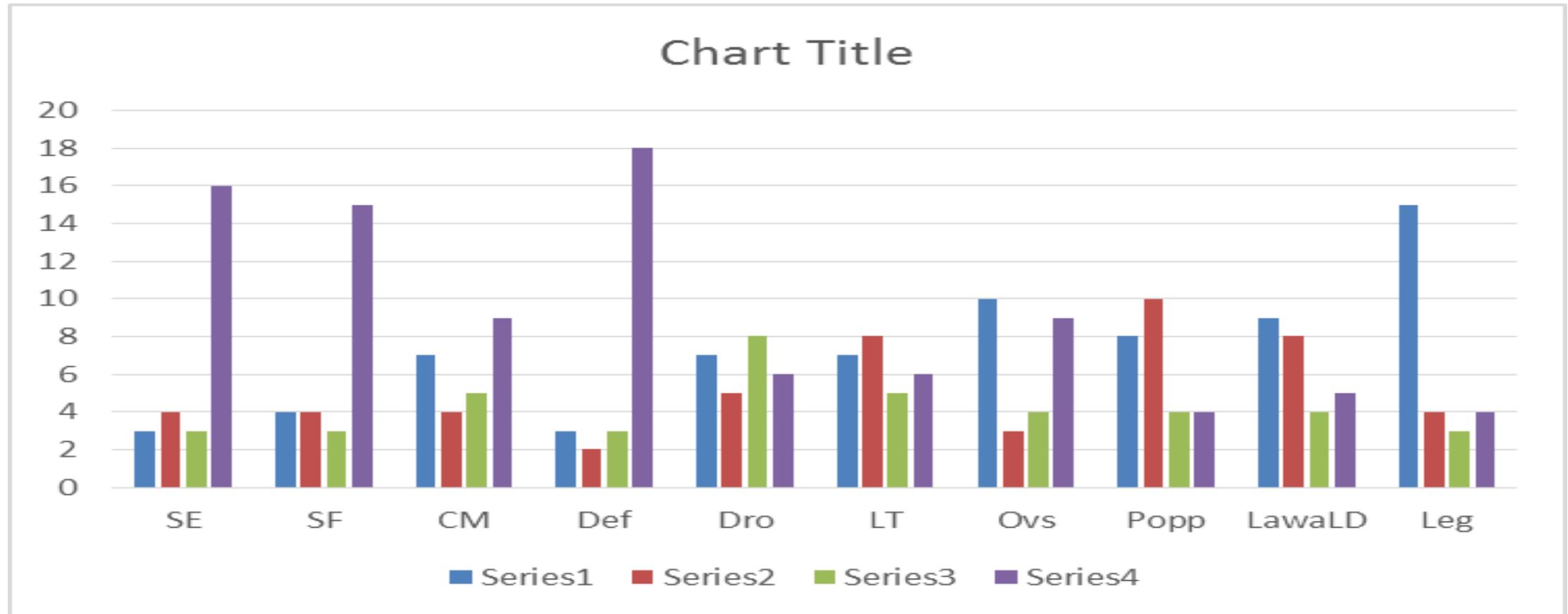
Questions asked

4. How do you as the STC/NFP in your country:
 - a. promote research and dissemination of research findings;
 - b. add value to desertification and desertification control research, and
 - c. facilitate and promote linkages and dialogue between science and development and policy?
5. What are the national Policies/initiatives to promote the role of science and technology in combating desertification in your respective country.
6. Do you have any recommendations how to enhance or strengthen your contribution as the STC to the NFP and possible CST?

Results and Discussion

- **Very little interaction and collaboration exists between scientists and policy makers at national, sub-regional and regional scale. Some responses included:**
- “policy barriers in addressing DLDD include a **lack of information and data** and that there is a need for a reform in implementing the science-based policy frameworks”,
- “a lack in policy/regulation formulation on sustainable land and water resources management”,
- “a lack of existing strategic- and development plans over short- and long-term”.

Question 1: Priorities of Land Degradation (LD)

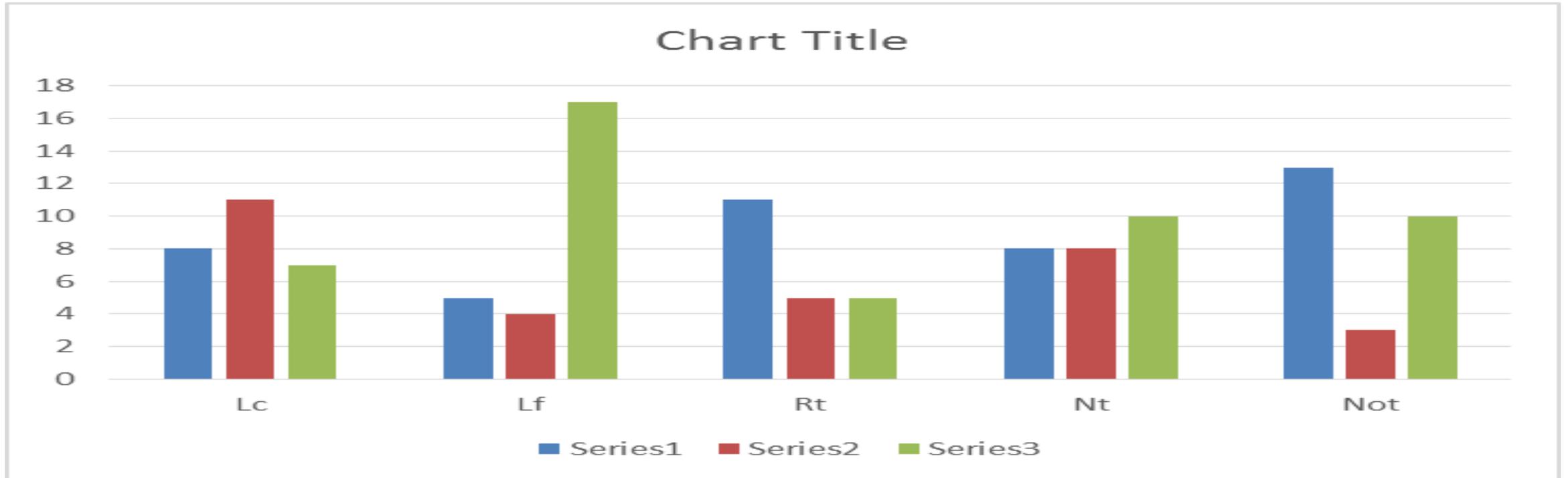


Soil erosion (SE); Loss of soil fertility (SF); Improper cultivation methods (CM); Deforestation (Def); Drought (Dro); Land tenure (LT); Overstocking (Ovs); Increased population pressure (Popp); Lack in awareness about LD (LawaLD); Lack in policy/legislation to prevent LD (Leg).

Series 1: Not important, Series 2: Mod important; Series 3: Important; Series 4: Very important

Draft results: SE, SF, Def = very important

Question 2: Relationship between STC and NFP

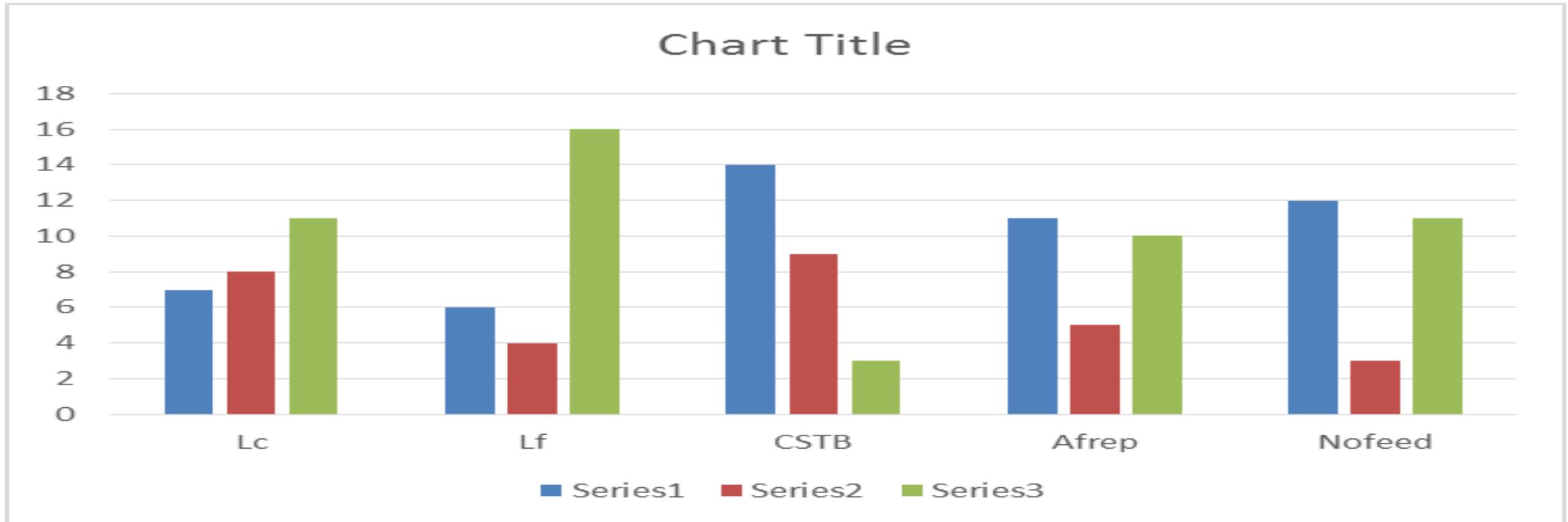


Lack in communication (Lc); Lack in funding (Lf); Rapid turnover of STCs/NFPs (Rt); No time (Nt); Not in same institution/organization (Not)

Series 1: Not important; Series 2: Mod important; Series 3: Very important

Draft results: Lack in funding is most important and not in same institution is least important

Question 3: Inputs by NFP/STC to CST (Committee of Science and Technology) of UNCCD

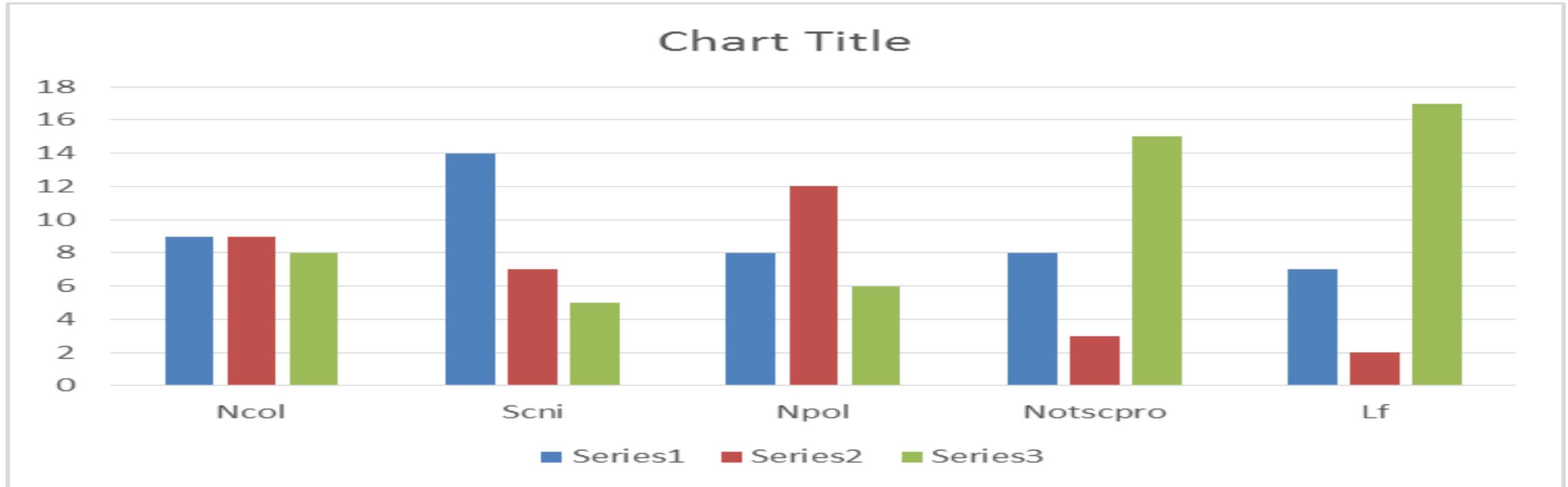


Lack in communication (Lc); Lack in funding (LKF); Do not know who the CST Bureau is (CSTB); Do not know who the African representative in CST Bureau is (ARep); No feedback from CST Bureau (No feed)

Series 1: Not important; Series 2: Mod important; Series 3: Very important

Draft results: Lack in communication and lack in funding are most important;

Question 5: Functioning of the science-policy interface regarding DLDD in your country

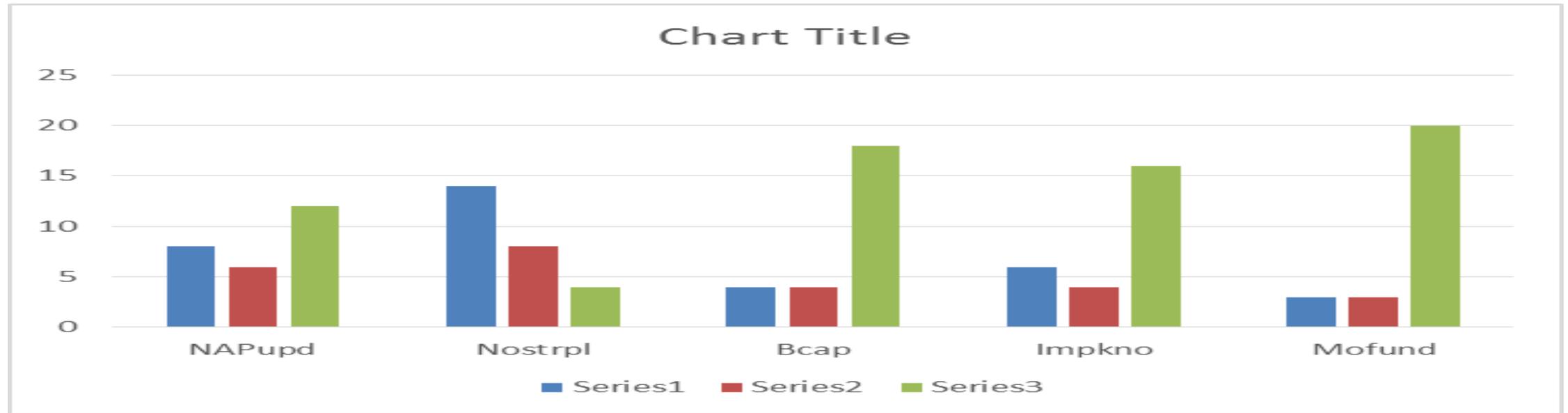


No collaboration between science and policy (Ncol); Scientists not interested in policy and vice versa (Scni); Not enough policy regarding DLDD (Npol); Not enough scientific projects regarding DLDD (Notscpro); Lack in funding (Lf)

Series 1: Not important; Series 2: Mod important; Series 3: Very important

Draft results: Scientists not interested in policy and vice versa (Scni)- is not important; Not enough scientific projects regarding DLDD (Notscpro) – is very important to have good projects; and lack in funding is a problem and is very important

Question 6: National Policies/initiatives to promote the role of science and technology in combating desertification in your country

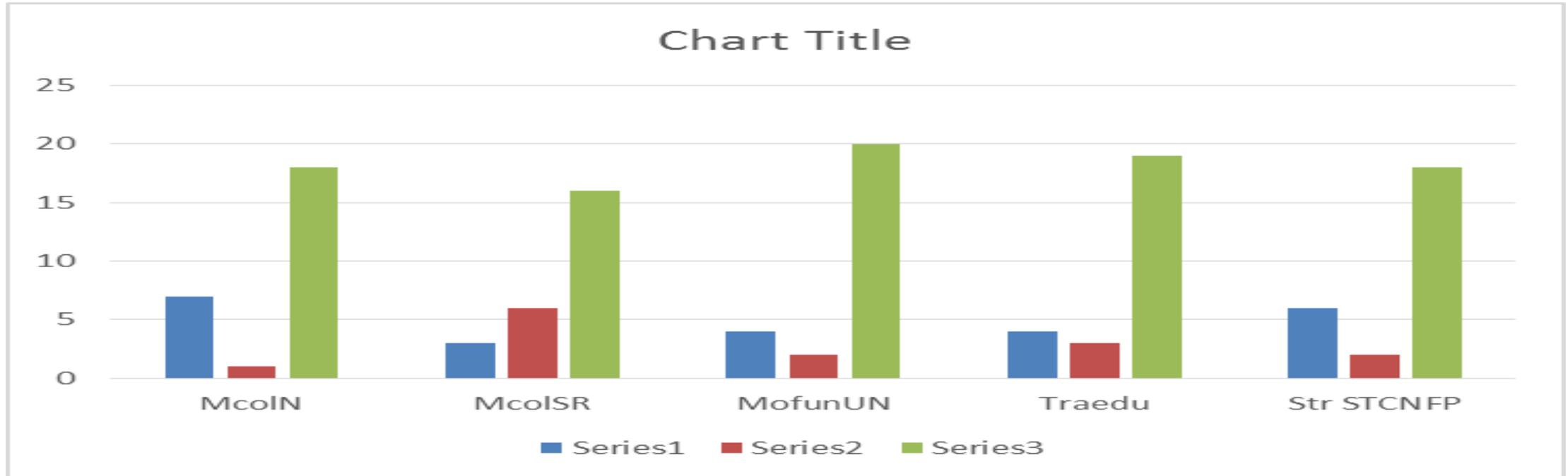


NAP has to be updated (NAPup); No strategic plan (Nostrpl); Build capacity of NFP and/or STC (Bcap); Improve knowledge about objectives of UNCCD (Impkno); More funding needed (Mofund)

Series 1: Not important; Series 2: Mod important; Series 3: Very important

Draft results: Important is 1- NAP has to be updated, build capacity, Improve knowledge and need more funding;

Question 7: Recommendations how to enhance or strengthen of science and technology and contributions to CST



More collaboration at national level (McoIN); More collaboration at sub-regional level (McoISR); More funding from UN agencies (MofunUN); Increase DLDD in education and training (Traedu); Role and administrative, as well as decision-making powers of the STC and NFP should be strengthened by the UNCCD system (StrSTCNFP)

Series 1: Not important; Series 2: Mod important; Series 3: Very important

Draft Results: Everything is VERY important and needs attention

Question 8: Which National/International network(s) do you currently use? Name 3

UNCCD

UNEP

FAO

Question 9: Name the most important funding agency(cies) of your project(s).

GEF - 13	OSS - 2	GOVVT - 4
UNDP - 8	FAO - 5	UNEP - 4

As above for question 8.

This shows that delegates do not really know what the funding organizations are but rather refer to the implementing agencies.

Results and Discussion

- The **collaboration of scientists** that investigate similar problems and impacts leading to land degradation **should be promoted** at sub-regional scale.
- **Lack of inputs to the CST** - representation for Africa in CST Bureau.
- **Poor attendance** of STCs and NFPs to UNCCD-CST **scientific conferences**.
- **Slow updating** of NAPs, SRAPs and Roster of experts.
- **Lack of resources** (including funding) to encourage and facilitate natural resource management, Sustainable Land Management (SLM) and policy studies, and
- Lack of **interventions at training and research** institutes.

Recommendations ⁽¹⁾

- 1. Promote the collaboration between STCs, other scientists and/or policy makers for the UNCCD at National, Sub-regional and Regional level.**
- 2. Have regular meetings (at least once every two years) of especially STCs at sub-regional and regional level.**
- 3. The Regional Coordination Unit (RCU) and RCC should be more active and promote the collaboration and dialogue between STCs and NFPs.**
- 4. Evaluate the scientific activities and initiatives, and how they form part of the policy plans that are specified in the NAPs and SRAPs more regularly and adjust where necessary. This includes the economic valuation of inputs and activities by project implementers.**

Recommendations (2)

- 5. Improve the awareness and capacity building of all stakeholders about the goals and objectives of the UNCCD and make sure that all information and technical material is made available to all people, especially at grass roots level.**
- 6. Make sure that the resources (including funding) that encourage and facilitate SLM and policy interventions to combat desertification are used effectively at different levels.**
- 7. STCs, NFPs and SRAP representatives should have a “common position” at CST meetings and COPs (Discuss matters at regional level first)**

Recommendations ⁽³⁾

- 8. Develop a new or revive at least one Center of Excellence (CoEs) per sub-region in Africa - to stimulate the exchange of scientific data and enhance the collaboration between scientists and policy makers in the region.**
- 9. Find funding sources through the proper and prescribed requirements, at e.g. the AUC, RECs, MS and development partners to facilitate and provide necessary funding for strengthening the role of science and technology in combating desertification in Africa.**

Thank you