

FAO presents a webinar on
EXTENSION AND ADVISORY SERVICES:
at the frontline of COVID-19 response for resilient and sustainable food systems in
Europe and Central Asia
Wednesday, 10 June 2020

At 10:00 in Rome and Budapest, 11:00 in Ankara, 12:00 in Baku, Tbilisi, and Yerevan, 13:00 in Dushanbe and Tashkent, 14:00 in Nursultan and Bishkek

Zoom link for registration

https://fao.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_usEXTue0QoKQ3Ot_ZUxwFw

YouTube link

<https://youtu.be/ixON8NHGzo4>



The global impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has generated extreme vulnerability in the agricultural sector. Governments around the globe are confronted with multiple challenges related to minimizing the devastating health impact and protecting human lives, livelihoods and ensuring sufficient food supplies and the functioning of services to those most in need.

Extension and Advisory Service (EAS) systems, through their network of actors (public, NGOs, private sector, Producer Organizations, farmer groups, etc.), can play an indispensable role in raising awareness of COVID-19 to reduce spread of the pandemic and assist in emergency operations, while ensuring that rural producers have relevant and accurate information, inputs and services to support their agricultural production, strengthen local value chains, both during and in the post-emergency period.

Recognising that the impact of COVID-19 and response measures are not uniform across the globe, FAO's Research and Extension Unit in collaboration with the Regional Network of Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services (GFRAS) is organising **a series of webinars to discuss the role EAS in the context of the pandemic in different regions.**

This webinar is jointly organised with the FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia will:

- Brief on the key challenges posed by COVID-19 in agricultural sector, markets and supply chains that affect EAS assessment and delivery
- Explore and discuss the potential roles of EAS actors and regional networks and policy aspects in providing essential services to the rural population in a short and medium term including socio-economic recovery;
- Share experiences of key measures that EAS actors are undertaking by adapting their capacity, activities, and operational mechanism to respond effectively to COVID-19.

- Highlight specific country examples from Azerbaijan, North Macedonia, Ukraine and Tajikistan and responses to overcome challenges of COVID-19 impact and related measures.
- Discuss the way forward in transforming EAS to provide effective support to sustainable and resilient food systems

Presentations:

- Impact of COVID-19 on food and agriculture sector in Europe and Central Asia
- Extension and Advisory Services (EAS): at frontline of COVID-19 response ensuring food security - challenges and adaptations needed
- SCAR-AKIS: 10 years of experience of collaboration among EU Member States
- Regional solutions to a global crisis: South east European Advisory Services Network (SEASN) experience
- Enhancing capacities and resilience of EAS in Caucasus and Central Asia (CACFRAS)
- Strengthening the pluralistic agricultural advisory system to respond to COVID-19 challenges: EU-funded project in Azerbaijan
- Remote EAS service provision in Tajikistan: a cooperative perspective
- Online platform: offer&demand of agriculture products in North Macedonia
- Turning the challenge into opportunity: examples from EAS in Ukraine

Speakers:

Pedro Arias, Economist, FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia (REU), working on food value chains. Previously he worked in FAO's Trade and Markets Division for almost 20 years, where he engaged in all aspects of agricultural markets and trade, notably in monitoring and projecting agricultural commodity markets, foreign investment in agriculture, smallholder market integration and responsible investment in agriculture. Pedro is a native of Uruguay and he speaks English, Spanish and French.

Nevena Alexandrova-Stefanova, Agricultural Extension Officer, FAO Research and Extension Unit (AGDR), PhD in Molecular Biology; 26 years of experience in agricultural research and biotechnologies, science-communication, extension services, agricultural innovation, digitalisation and agricultural innovation systems (AIS), 14 years of which are in intergovernmental organizations- ICGEB, Trieste and UNFAO. From 2008 to 2018, she has served at FAO REU as AIS and Knowledge Sharing Officer to increase access to demand-driven research, education and services to smallholder farmers, including through digital transformation. Since November 2018, she has joined AGDR at FAO Headquarters with global mandate to support countries in transforming their agricultural extension and advisory systems bring, facilitate and scale up innovations for enhanced livelihoods of rural communities.

Inge van Oost, Policy Officer, DG AGRI, European Commission (EC). She has created and now supporting the European Innovation Partnership "Agricultural Productivity and Sustainability" (EIP-AGRI). As a member of the DG AGRI Taskforce "Research and Innovation", she was instrumental in shaping DG AGRI's research and innovation approach and Horizon 2020 work programmes, and developed the new concepts "multi-actor approach" and "thematic networks". In her former post at EC, she was responsible for cross-compliance, the Farm Advisory System and interlinking with the Rural Development policy.

Pascal Bergeret, Director CIHEAM IAMM, AKIS-SCAR Co-Chair, Doctor in agricultural economics, Montpellier University (1986). He worked in agricultural research and development programmes in Nepal, Cameroon, and Vietnam. He was Head, environment and sustainable development, for GRET, a French NGO involved in international development work, and was later appointed as Director, Innovation Department, in the French Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forest;

Aniko Juhász, Deputy State Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture Hungary, AKIS-SCAR Co-Chair. Eighteen years of experience in food supply chain and related policy research, especially the relevance of short food supply chains and quality schemes in Hungary. Chief Planner of the Short Supply Chain Thematic Sub-programme of the 2014-2020. Member of the Traditional Food Group of the Hungarian National Committee of the European Organisation for Quality. Director general of Research

Institute of Agricultural Economics between 2015 and 2017 Co-chair of the European Union's Standing Committee on Agricultural Research (SCAR) Strategic Working Group on Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems in 2017.

Milan Husnjak, Head of SEASN main office. Milan has 40 years of work experience, 32 years as veterinarian with practical experience with pandemics of zoonoses, such as Mad cow disease in the 1990s and bird flu 2005/2006; 8 years agricultural advisor in Croatia; SEASN co-founder and first president, GFRAS General Assembly, and IALB Executive Board Member, Works on EU projects on the topic of digitalization of agriculture.

Josipa Arapović, SEASN volunteer. She is agronomist, specialized in Agribusiness and Rural Development. She has been the President of the International Association of Students in Agricultural and related Sciences (IAAS World); currently is working in SEASN as a volunteer. Her experience covers a broad range of areas, some of which are smart farming, digitalisation of agriculture, climate smart agriculture and youth involvement in agri-food business.

Botir Dosov, Chairperson CAC-FRAS, Vice-Chair of APIRAS, GFRAS Board member. Botir has experience in institutional development, particularly in agricultural extension and rural advisory services, agricultural innovation systems and public-private partnership platforms, digital agriculture, networking and facilitation. He has worked in project analysis and management, proposal development, monitoring and evaluation, food security / nutrition studies, socio-economic surveys, experience capitalization and knowledge sharing. He worked in projects and programs funded by GFRAS, FAO, CTA, World Bank, ADB, SDC, UNDP, CFS, GFAR, CGIAR/ICARDA, IFPRI, GIZ, JICA, ECFS, USAID, public and private sectors, CSOs and he is currently Head of AKIS Department in the Ministry of Agriculture of Republic of Uzbekistan.

Melek Çakmak, Head of the FAO Partnership and liaison office/ FAO representative, Azerbaijan. She has a Master degree in Agricultural Economics from Stanford University, USA, has worked as Researcher/Economist in Marcus and Millichap Real Estate Company, USA and in the Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC), Ankara, Turkey; served as Secretary General of the NGO Association for Solidarity with Asylum Seekers and Migrants, Turkey. She joined FAO in 2003 as Assistant FAO Representative (Programme) in the FAO Representation in Turkey. From 2008 to 2016, she has worked as FAO-SEC Field Programme Support and Monitoring Officer, FAO Subregional Office for Central Asia (SEC), Ankara, Turkey. In 2016 she became FAO Representative in Azerbaijan.

Tahmina Sayfullaeva, Programme manager, Service cooperative Sarob, Tajikistan. A value chain expert, with 12 years of experience in rural development in Tajikistan, Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Kirgizstan and Uzbekistan. She has worked in the projects funded by the CIDA, SDC, EU, DFID, BMZ, and USAID. Since 2011, she is working in the extension service cooperative Sarob, Tajikistan. In 2016 she was granted the award Best women extension agent for Caucasus and Central Asia region.

Yuriy Bakun, National Association of Advisory Services, Ukraine. He has 20 years of experience in agricultural extension and advisory services, research, rural community support and agricultural projects such as sustainable integrated community development and access to markets for small producers, creating new, or improving existing value-added chains, supporting the creation and development of family farms, non-rural business, communities mobilization, partnerships with international donor organizations, government and business, education, participation in improving the regulatory framework for agriculture and rural development, methodological provision of small and medium-sized agricultural producers in rural areas, their associations, businesses, etc.

Aleksandar Musalevski, Head of Unit Agriculture Policy Analyses, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy, North Macedonia. Aleksandar has agricultural economics background and strong experience in farm data accountancy and funding agricultural development.

Target audience:

All those engaged in the response to the impact of the COVID-19 on the agriculture and food systems, rural development, including policy makers, EAS providers, donors and development and humanitarian practitioners.

The webinars will be in English with Russian interpretation, for duration of 100 minutes.

We hope you join us at the webinar and please feel free to circulate this invite within your network!