

Webinar: Best-bet Solutions for Salinity Management under Climate Change in sub-Saharan Africa

Date: 29 February 2024

Time: 14:30 – 16:00 Dubai time (11:30 - 13:00 Rome time)

Platform: Zoom, **Language:** English

Background

Soil salinity is a major constraint on agriculture in parts of the world often characterized by water scarcity, drought, and other unfavorable factors. Globally, 1.128 billion hectares of land is degraded by salinity and sodicity to varying degrees, with the Middle East and North Africa having the largest area of salt-affected land, or roughly 34 percent of the total. Other regions like sub-Saharan Africa and Central Asia also face similar challenges with agricultural productivity increasingly constrained due to salt-related stress. And such crop losses are expected to rise due to climate change impact and inappropriate water management. For instance, sub-Saharan Africa is estimated to have over 19 million hectares of salt-degraded land. As these regions are experiencing steady population growth and increased food demand, it is important to mitigate and manage salinity to reduce its effects on agriculture and, by extension, food security, especially in the face of climate change.

RESADE project

In the spirit of South-South triangular cooperation, the International Center for Biosaline Agriculture ([ICBA](#)), with the support of the International Fund for Agricultural Development ([IFAD](#)) and the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa ([BADEA](#)), is testing and promoting the adoption of salt-tolerant and climate-resilient crops in combination with improved agronomic practices and sustainable irrigation practices. Such evidence-based solutions have already proved their effectiveness in other geographical contexts and are now being introduced in Sub-Saharan Africa. This is the rationale behind the “The Improving Agricultural Resilience to Salinity through Development and Promotion of Pro-poor Technologies” (RESADE) project, which has been implemented by ICBA since 2019 in Botswana, The Gambia, Liberia, Namibia, Mozambique, Sierra Leone, and Togo.

Objectives of the webinar

The webinar will discuss how salinity can be better mitigated and managed in different parts of the world, including sub-Saharan Africa, using RESADE as a case study. ICBA and its partners will present and review the key successes and lessons learned from RESADE and other IFAD projects and will showcase best-bet solutions designed to help small-scale farmers in salt-affected areas adopt new approaches that can increase their yields and incomes while building their adaptive capacity to climate change. The webinar will also look at how technical innovations for effective salinity and water management can inform the policy dialogue and culminate in the development of policy options.

Expected outputs

The webinar will disseminate technical knowledge on good agronomic practices and drought- and salinity-tolerant crops that can be introduced in areas where the land is degraded by salinity and sodicity. As a learning event, the webinar will provide development practitioners with an opportunity to observe the application of such technologies in actual project contexts. The speakers will emphasize how development projects can benefit from said innovations replicating and out-scaling the approaches

tested under RESADE in Sub-Saharan Africa. In addition, the webinar will encourage the use of the policy recommendations emanating from the policy analysis conducted under the project to reflect on the nexus between drought, salinity and water management and the role of public stakeholders.

Agenda and Speakers

The program will include speakers from ICBA, IFAD, BADEA, the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB), and NARES of project countries.

Time	Session title	Speaker	Session objective
14:30-14:35	Welcome remarks	Dr. Augusto Becerra Lopez-Lavalle, Chief Scientist, ICBA	Setting the stage and enumerating the key data and facts on anthropogenic and climate change causes leading to salinity
14:35-14:40	IFAD Remarks	Dr. Sara Savastano, Director of Research and Impact Assessment Division, IFAD	Illustrating RESADE project approach and its upscaling potential in IFAD portfolio and beyond
14:40-14:45	BADEA Remarks	Mr. Hatem Al Jabri, BADEA's Division Manager for Agriculture Value Chain	Providing insights on RESADE contribution in alleviating poverty and creating sustainable economic opportunities for farmers.
14:45-14:55	RESADE: Overview, Successes and Lessons Learned	Dr. R. K. Singh, Program Leader on Crop Diversification and Genetics, ICBA, UAE	Providing an overview of RESADE project
14:55-15:05	RESADE success stories from Liberia	Dr. James S. Dolo, CARI, Liberia	Hearing voices from the field: bridging farmers, researchers and extensionists
15:05-15:25	Deep diving into the functioning of a Best Practice Hub	Ms. Chantal Goto, Lab Director and Research Coordinator, ITRA, Togo	The adoption of salinity-tolerant crop varieties and improved agronomic practices for soil fertility: the case of Togo
	Exploring the possible benefits of innovation at scale for Mozambique	Mr. Sancho Cumbi, Project Officer, PROCAVA, Mozambique	Opportunities to outscale the RESADE interventions to other large agricultural development projects: the case of PROCAVA
	Lessons learned from IFAD experience in South-East Asia	Dr. Robert Delve, Lead Technical Specialist in Agronomy, IFAD	The problem of salinity in IFAD portfolio in SSA and lessons for development practitioners
	Climate smart crops for value chain development	Mr. Hatem Al Jabri, BADEA's Division Manager for Agriculture Value Chain	How the introduction of new crops is creating value in Africa
	The centrality of water in the fight against salinity and climate change	Mr. Ougfaly Badji, Lead Global Food Security Specialist, IsDB	Improved water resource management and the role of policy to ensure food security
15:25-15:55	Q&A		
15:55-16:00	Concluding remarks	Dr. Augusto Becerra Lopez-Lavalle, Chief Scientist, ICBA	

How to participate

The webinar is open to the public. If you would like to attend this webinar, please register at the link below. You can also watch the recording on YouTube.