Combating a triple threat to Kenya's food security

Climate change, unsustainable farming practices, and increased food insecurity are exacerbating a chain of destruction caused by Covid-19—a deadly combination that will exacerbate food insecurity in Kenya. Changes in weather patterns and high frequencies of extreme events such as droughts, floods, disease infestation and pest invasions like the desert locust and army worms are crippling the ability of many Kenya farmers to feed themselves. Scientists are aware of the need to change the number of human activities including deforestation, unsustainable livestock farming practices, improper use of nitrogen-based fertilizers, and poor manure management which increase the concentrations of carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide gases in the atmosphere.

Adding to the threat is the pandemic, which until the recent phased reopening, has disrupted food supply chains because the country's food system is weak and fragile on transport to consumers and smaller retailers in urban areas. The 2021 budget cut on the agriculture sector is also a threat amplifier that could jeopardize efforts towards a training food and nutrition security in the country by 2022.

For example, potato is one of Kenya's most important food crop at a time when its nutritional high value, high yields, and relatively short growth periods of about 90-120 days. It has progressively become a valuable source of cash for small-scale farmers, cooperatives, SMES and others along the value chain. Potato is grown by considerable numbers of farmers with over 800,000 farmers growing it, and an estimated 25 million people employed at various levels of the value chain include inputs, production, organization, marketing, processing, trade, and consumption. Despite its economic potential, potato production has continued to decline due to erratic rains, floods, droughts, and soil infertility. This has affected output and quantity of potato organization and availability of experts needed to be exposed to climate-related risks in food production and overall crop resilience to climate change.

Improving food security requires partnerships between private sector actors in various food value chains and government institutions to review and develop crop-specific climate-smart training manuals and aids that will be used by extension service providers and farmers. Climate-smart agricultural practices and access to certified seeds supported with extension services will more likely generate more productivity at far lower risk, improve food security and ultimately lead to increased income at all levels of the value chain. The increase in income will reinforce uptake of new technologies and improved farming practices that will boost smallholder farmers' resilience to climate change.

The Climate Resilient Agriculture Program (CRAF) project is one of the interventions working in partnership with private sector actors and the government to provide climate-smart training manuals on good agricultural practices as well as certified seed production in a changing climate. The CRAF project also provides agricultural services such as soil testing and mechanization in small-scale technology to protect soil quality.

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Firms must appreciate PR as a management tool

To earn maximum profitability, it is essential for firms to deploy PR to create, maintain, and enhance their brand image. This is especially critical in today's fast-paced and information-age-driven society. PR has become an essential tool for organizations to communicate effectively with stakeholders, build trust, and enhance their reputation. The role of PR is to help a firm earn a good name, and to ensure that the firm's message reaches the target audience. PR practitioners play a crucial role in shaping public opinion and influencing consumer behavior. By leveraging their expertise, they can help organizations navigate complex business environments and make informed decisions.