

International course

Local economic development: Towards agribusiness cluster development



Catalysing vibrant rural economies

Midrand, South Africa, 22 October – 02 November 2018



Market driven approaches towards local economic development and rural wealth creation, whereby agribusinesses play a vital role, have become mainstreamed over the past years. The main focus of these approaches is on global and niche markets, large corporations and sustainable international trade. For most smallholder producers and rural poor, however, local economies driven by the dynamics of rural fresh produce markets are far more important.

Three out of four of the world's poor live in rural areas. Opportunities for economic growth in these areas are changing rapidly due to declining natural resources, continuing rural-urban migration and reduced access to productive land. On top of this, local economies are impacted by global forces like market liberalisation, expanding global production systems and the changing terms of trade. Amidst these dynamics, local governance structures, civic society and research institutes are expected to come up with effective strategies to revitalise rural areas into vibrant local economies. This regional course, organised jointly with the Agricultural Research Council (ARC) of South Africa, is doing just that: assisting these organizations to design strategies that can catalyse rural economies through smallholder inclusion and employment creation.

Stakeholders shaping the environment in which rural economies can be revitalised and thrive, will increase their knowledge, improve their skills and enlarge their toolkit in this field by following this highly interactive course. Specifically, at the end of the course, participants will have increased their abilities by:

- being exposed to and having practiced with new conceptual frameworks and models that assist to

Fee:	3,500 Euro
Deadline subscription:	10 September 2018
Deadline OKP fellowships:	To be determined

- identify development opportunities of rural localities and spin-offs for rural wealth creation;
- having gained a better and more comprehensive understanding of the critical linkages that exist between smallholder production systems, local market systems, agribusiness development and effective service delivery that can revitalise and catalyse rural economies;
- having practiced with participatory approaches and methodologies, and tools and instruments for analysis, and a strategic action planning process that, taken together, initiate positive and innovative change.

This regional course is beneficial for mid-career professionals of government departments, non-governmental and civil society organisations, business associations, development agencies, universities and colleges of higher education, and other professionals responsible for shaping the enabling environment within which rural economies can develop. Typically, the course is designed for:

- policy staff responsible for drafting strategic development policies and/or the implementation of these, in particular related to local economic development planning in rural areas;
- development practitioners and managers of organisations responsible for drafting and/or implementing rural development projects;

- staff of institutes of higher education and (applied) research, especially those involved in community outreach and/or research uptake;
- staff of local service providers, civil society organisations and business associations.

Participants' cases are the starting point

from which the course departs. It builds on the participants' own experiences and situations. A selection of these cases will be further analysed and elaborated throughout the course. In a learning by doing and step-by-step process, strategic action plans are developed to improve these situations. The resulting action plans are the 'take-away-home' outputs of the course.

Sub-sector or territorial approaches is the question with which the content part of the course program kicks off. The 'pros and cons' of these two main paradigms of local economic development planning will be discussed first.

To meet the objectives of the course, while taking the rural setting into account, a deliberate and motivated choice for the sub-sector approach is made. Here, the focus of development is centred around a particular produce or commodity that has a competitive advantage over other sub-sectors or products produced in the same locality. The next question than is, of course, how this advantage can be exploited best.

It is at this junction where the course is really making the difference. Where contemporary policies, programs and instruments form the hart of economic development planning, in the course the focus is on targeted, action oriented interventions. Five types of interventions are introduced and discussed that, on their own or in combination, can kick-start local economic development. An adapted version of "Porter's Diamond" will be used to appreciate and asses both the competitive advantage of particular sub-sectors over others, and the potential of one, or a combination of more, of the five types of interventions.

Requirements Applicants should meet the following requirements:

- relevant tertiary education;
- three years of professional experience;
- proven competence in the English language.

The course is a life platform for learning: The five proposed, generic interventions will all be illustrated by real live cases that are still in progress. Better still, the very case owners themselves will be presenting their cases! The cases are:

- Linking women groups to a supermarket in Kwa Zulu Natal Province (KZN), Rep. of South Africa (RSA);
- Sustainable sourcing by a multinational sugar processing company in KZN, RSA;
- Improving the performance of the cassava value chain in Kumasi, Ghana;
- Commercial broiler production with locally processed feed in Limpopo Province, RSA;
- A school feeding program sourcing its inputs among smallholder producers in KZN, RSA.

Further practical information

- **Application**, the procedure is:
 - 1) Apply at the website of Wageningen Centre for Development Innovation:** www.wur.eu/cdi. You will receive a confirmation and more information within a week. Candidates approved by our selection committee will received an admission letter.
 - 2) WCDI** is unable to assist you in obtaining financial support, however if you want to apply for a **OKP Fellowship**, WCDI will provide you with the full instructions and the web address for registration in **ATLAS**. You can check the eligibility at www.nuffic.nl/nfp. A limited number of scholarships is available. As this application process takes time and requires several documents, we recommend that you **start as soon as possible**.
- **OKP Fellowships include** travel and full board and lodging.
- **Fee** includes all course related costs (materials, excursions, administration).
- Participants will be awarded with a **Certificate** of attendance. The programme of the course might be changed to incorporate new insights.