

**PRESS RELEASE N° 135/2016****FAO' AGRICULTURAL WATER FOR AFRICA (AgWA) DELEGATION VISITS AU- SAFGRAD OFFICE IN OUAGADOUGOU, BURKINA FASO**

Ouagadougou, BURKINA FASO. April 8th, 2016. A delegation of FAO Agricultural Water for Africa (AgWA) has paid a visit to AU-SAFGRAD. The team, made up of three experts, was received by the Coordinator, Dr. Ahmed Elmekass, with Dr Mure Agbonlahor, Senior Production and Marketing Officer. The visit was an opportunity to identify areas of collaboration between the two institutions mainly in promoting small irrigation schemes in Africa.



Dr. Ahmed ELMKASS, AU SAFGRAD Coordinator, with Dr. Mure AGBONLAHOR, Sr Production and Marketing Officer, receiving the FAO Agricultural Water for Africa (AgWA) delegation

The FAO Agricultural Water for Africa (AgWA) delegation was namely composed of : Mr Maher Salman, Technical Adviser, Land and water Division, FAO-Rome; Mr Fethi Lebdi, Coordinator, Agricultural water for Africa, AgWA, FAO-Addis and Mr Moussa Konate, Resident Engineer, FAO-Ouagadougou.

Taking the floor, Mr Salman gave a brief of the activities of AgWA in promoting agricultural water use efficiency in Africa. He informed on the technical and policy/planning approach of AgWA in achieving increased irrigation water use efficiency in Africa and that the team was in Burkina Faso to access the *Suru* irrigation water scheme.

In his side, Dr Elmekass gave a brief of the activities of AU-SAFGRAD and projects implemented in strengthening policies and Institutions toward building livelihood resilience in the dry parts of Africa. The importance of agricultural water was reiterated as of cross-cutting concern that defines livelihood activities and welfare in the dry parts of Africa.

Areas of collaborations were identified in the AU-SAFGRAD' initiative in promoting small irrigation schemes in Africa. The facilitation of a virtual platform on small irrigation schemes, which is to be the start point, was found to be part of AgWA strategic focus in promoting agricultural water use efficiency. The strategic advantage of AU-SAFGRAD as a specialized technical office of Africa Union Commission was highlighted as a potent means for informing national and regional policy makers.

It was agreed that the collaboration should produce concrete policy-focused outcomes that would serve as input at the next Specialized Technical Committee of Agriculture, Water, Rural development and Environment.

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