



**AUDA-NEPAD**  
AFRICAN UNION DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

# Key insights and perspectives from the Food Systems Summit Dialogues and the CAADP 3rd Biennial review process

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*Briefing Paper*



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**About AUDA-NEPAD**

The African Union (AU) Development Agency-NEPAD (AUDA-NEPAD) is Africa's first-ever continental technical and development agency. The foundation of AUDA-NEPAD is built on the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) that was established as Africa's continental renewal and development programme by AU in 2001 and championed through the then NEPAD Secretariat, based in Midrand, South Africa. The NEPAD vision represented a common pledge by African leaders to eradicate poverty and foster Africa's sustainable economic growth and development through the promotion of regional and continental integration, through the inclusion of Africa in global processes and through the empowerment of socially disadvantaged groups, such as women and children.



**About AICCRA**

The AICCRA project contributes to the construction of an African future that is climate-smart and driven by science and innovation in the agricultural field. It is led by Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT and supported by a grant from the World Bank's International Development Association (IDA). AICCRA works to increase access to climate information services (CIS) and Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) technologies for millions of smallholder farmers across Africa. AICCRA investments are concentrated in six main countries namely Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Mali, Senegal and Zambia with the implementation of four components (i) Knowledge Generation and Sharing, (ii) Strengthening Partnerships for Delivery, (iii) Validating Climate-Smart Agriculture Innovations through Piloting and (iv) Project management. The sub-regional component of AICCRA in West Africa is implemented through the creation of multi-stakeholder partnerships of existing scientific and educational networks and centres in order to achieve results that cannot be achieved easily, or not at all, by engaging with individual partners at national level. Explore AICCRA's work at [aiccra.cgiar.org](http://aiccra.cgiar.org).



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# Acronyms and abbreviations

<b>4IR</b>	Fourth industrial revolution
<b>AfCFTA</b>	Africa Continental Free Trade Area
<b>ASAL</b>	Arid and semi-arid lands
<b>AUDA-NEPAD</b>	African Union Development Agency-New Partnership for Africa's Development
<b>CAR</b>	Central African Republic
<b>CCZ</b>	Consumer Council of Zimbabwe
<b>CSA</b>	Climate smart agriculture
<b>DRC</b>	Democratic Republic of Congo
<b>EWS</b>	Early warning system
<b>FAO</b>	Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations
<b>GAP</b>	Good Agricultural Practices
<b>GHG</b>	Greenhouse gas
<b>ICT</b>	Information and communications technology
<b>M&amp;E</b>	Monitoring and evaluation
<b>NGO</b>	Non-governmental organisation
<b>PPP</b>	Public-private partnership
<b>R&amp;D</b>	Research and development
<b>SDG</b>	Sustainable Development Goal
<b>SEKEB</b>	South Eastern Kenya Economic Bloc
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNFSS</b>	United Nations Food Systems Summit
<b>WTO</b>	World Trade Organisation

# Africa agri-food systems programme

Africa's food security was already on a downward trend prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the impact of which was substantial. As of August 2022, 140 million people across 35 African countries were living in crisis or worse (IPC 3 or higher) acute food insecurity, representing an annual increase of 17 percent (20 million people).<sup>1</sup> In addition, the effects of climate change on Africa's agri-food systems are systemic and projected to leave at least 30 million more people at risk of hunger by 2030. Efforts to strengthen the climate resilience of Africa's agri-food systems are therefore ongoing and critical.

The 2021 United Nations Food Systems Summit (UNFSS) presented the opportunity to apply an agri-food systems approach to Africa's existing agricultural and food security efforts. The dialogues provided platforms for governments, businesses, communities and civil society to identify pathways towards resilient and inclusive agri-food systems and to reflect on the benefits of the approach and propose strategies for its mainstreaming. Subsequently, the UNFSS and AUDA-NEPAD have joined forces to champion a continental programme to leverage momentum gained through the 2021 UNFSS and the Africa Common Position on Food Systems. The programme aims to accelerate the implementation of national, regional and continental initiatives towards transition to resilient and inclusive agri-food systems within the context of Agendas 2063 and 2030 goals. The Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) framework is to be the primary entry point for the programme to ensure country ownership and leadership.

This summary report provides insights and perspectives from the UNFSS dialogues and the CAADP 3rd Biennial Review process. Some of the main findings from the UNFSS dialogues include evidence that countries are adopting diverse approaches to move towards environmentally sustainable food production and consumption, a need to harmonise trade standards and improve access to market information, the generation of high levels of food waste, poor nutritional education and awareness including a lack of dietary diversity, a need for gender and social inclusion with a focus on land tenure and access to resources, a need for improved technologies and innovation and better access to credit and loans for food producers.

Key recommendations from the CAADP 3rd Biennial Review include the need to convene national dialogues to discuss the findings of the review, stronger political leadership and commitment to ensure financing and the implementation of key recommendations, a need to strengthen the capacity of regional economic communities to improve mobilisation of Member States, a need to strengthen mutual accountability systems, and the need to integrate the biennial review data collection process into existing national monitoring and reporting system, amongst others. These findings provide critical evidence for informing the development of a relevant, robust and inclusive Africa Agri-Food Systems Programme (2024 – 2034).

<sup>1</sup> Some of the key lessons from this review include a need to enhance coordination; build capacity; promote ownership and support, strengthen planning systems, inclusivity and partnerships; improve governance and financing; document lessons to inform implementation; and improve adaptive M and E.

# Food systems summit dialogue



## 1: Main findings



The United Nations Secretary-General called upon world leaders to take part in the Food Systems Summit to accelerate collective action for food systems transformation. This report synthesises the findings from the [African Member States' Dialogues](#), held to shape national pathways towards sustainable food systems.



### Climate change is adversely affecting regional and national food systems

contributing to low agricultural productivity and food insecurity;



### Countries are adopting diverse approaches to move towards environmentally sustainable production and consumption, but they

require capacity building and financial resources for implementation;



### To improve trade and market access

there is a need for improved infrastructure, the harmonisation of trade standards and better monitoring and dissemination of market information;



### Value chain development

is constrained by a lack of access to processing equipment, technical knowledge, financial resources and disconnected value chain actors;



**High levels of food waste** are attributed to poor handling, a lack of food processing and inadequate storage facilities (especially cold chains), poor road and rail infrastructure and limited access to markets;



**Health challenges** include poor nutritional education and awareness, a lack of dietary diversity, inadequate food safety standards and policy, unaffordable nutritious whole foods and low levels of consumption of local/indigenous food products;



### Gender and social inclusion

is recognised as essential to sustainable food systems but requires land tenure reform and improved access to inputs, including finances, by women, youth and vulnerable groups;



### Discussions on governance and policy

highlight the need for the maintenance/development of supporting infrastructure, improved alignment of policy, revised land use policy and better coordination and collaboration between and amongst government departments/ministries and other stakeholders;



**Public-private partnerships** are crucial for investment, training and knowledge sharing;



### There is a need to enhance investment in demand-driven food systems research,

and this can be achieved through private and public sector partnerships;



**Technology and innovation** are key for knowledge sharing, enhancing agricultural productivity and the generation of agricultural data for evidence-based decision making; and



**Credit and loan facilities** are largely inaccessible to food producers due to high interest rates.



## 2: Background

**In 2021, the United Nations (UN) Secretary-General convened a Food Systems Summit (the Summit) as part of the Decade of Action to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. The Summit presented new actions to progress towards the seventeen SDGs, each of which relies to some extent on more sustainable and equitable food systems.**



The Summit highlighted the need for global collaboration and participation to transform the way the world produces, consumes and thinks about food. Before, during and after the Summit, key stakeholders (e.g. from science, business, policy, healthcare, farmers, academia, environmentalists, consumers and vulnerable groups) worked together to action tangible, positive change in the world's food systems. Five Action Tracks were used to guide the process:



**ACTION TRACK 1**  
**Ensuring access to safe and nutritious food for all.**



**ACTION TRACK 2**  
**Shifting to sustainable consumption patterns.**



**ACTION TRACK 3**  
**Boosting nature-positive production at sufficient scale.**



**ACTION TRACK 4**  
**Advancing equitable livelihoods and value distribution.**



**ACTION TRACK 5**  
**Building resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks, and stress.**



## 3: The Dialogues

The ongoing Food Systems Summit Dialogues (the Dialogues) provide a standardised approach for purposeful events that enable a diverse range of stakeholders to collaborate and share their experiences with the goal of transforming food systems to sustainably meet the current and future needs of the global population.

**The Dialogues provide an environment conducive to open debate, collaboration, consensus-building and shared commitment-making and are designed to offer valuable insights for shaping pathways to equitable and sustainable food systems by 2030.**

**The Dialogues follow a standardised approach involving the following:**

- Inclusion of diverse actors from across the entirety of food systems;
- Adherence to the Summit's principles of engagement;
- Discussions on the long-term visions for sustainable food systems;
- Sharing of reflections, building on knowledge, experience and wisdom;
- Reflection on the consensus and divergence of opinions amongst the stakeholders; and
- Identification of priorities for action within the context of current realities.



### Multi-stakeholder dialogue

Multi-stakeholder dialogue allows multiple actors to congregate and apply their combined knowledge and experiences to address a problem. The discussions are stimulated and guided by facilitators so that the desired outcomes are shaped and articulated. The outcome is a thorough exploration of the issue at hand, the development of shared positions and the emergence of joint action.

**A wide range of stakeholder groups are required to take part in the multi-stakeholder dialogues, such as:**

- Representatives from the entire food value chain (e.g. food producers and processors, distributors and retailers, caterers, marketers, traders, consumers);
- Health and nutrition professionals;
- Private sector;
- Community organisations;
- Education and research institutions;
- Vulnerable groups such as women, youth, indigenous peoples and migrants; and
- Those who help to govern territories, protect livelihoods, foster resilience, regenerate ecosystems, participate in climate action and manage freshwater, coastlines, seas and the ocean.

A successful multi-stakeholder dialogue event enables multiple stakeholders to connect, share ideas, understand each other's perspectives, develop propositions, examine their potential and nurture the shaping and emergence of pathways to sustainability.



# 4: African Dialogues

The Dialogues are convened by national governments and individuals from across all of society. Africa's common position is informed by existing continental and regional policy frameworks as well as outcomes from the National Dialogues facilitated by the African Union Development Agency-New Partnership

for Africa's Development (AUDA-NEPAD) across the continent. Once endorsed, Africa's common position will constitute the voice of the continent, demonstrating the commitment of the region to contribute as a partner in setting the agenda for global food systems transformation.

The Dialogues are convened by national authorities and take place in three stages:

- **Stage 1** - initiates the engagement of stakeholder groups at the national level;
- **Stage 2** - includes sub-national Dialogues (e.g. in cities, counties, states or other jurisdictions); and
- **Stage 3** - shapes the national pathway for sustainable food systems (in line with the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development) and consolidates country level commitments and actions.

This report synthesises the main findings from the African National Dialogue feedback forms submitted up until February 2022 (forms were not available for 20 African countries: Algeria, Angola, Libya, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Eritrea, Eswatini, Guinea-Bissau, Lesotho, Liberia, Mali, Namibia, São Tomé and Príncipe, Somalia, South Sudan, Togo and Zambia).

The main findings are presented by region (North, South, West, East and Central) and are categorised according to cross-cutting thematic areas, as follows:



- Climate change and shocks;**
- Environmentally sustainable production and consumption;**
- Trade and market access;**
- Value chains;**
- Food waste;**
- Health and nutrition;**
- Gender and social inclusivity (women, youth and vulnerable groups);**
- Governance and policy;**
- Partnerships;**
- Research and development (R&D);**
- Technology and innovation; and**
- Finance and investment.**

In addition, areas of contention or divergence recorded in the National Dialogue feedback forms are also synthesised and presented.



## 5: Regional dialogue summary according to cross-cutting themes



### Southern region (Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa, Zimbabwe)



#### Climate change and shocks

**Southern Africa** is commonly referred to as a climate change **'hotspot' with drought and extreme rainfall events** negatively impacting on the food systems of several countries. **Mozambique** is considered one of the **worst affected African countries in terms of extreme climatic events** and subsequently held a Dialogue focused on innovative solutions to climate change challenges. Climate change hazards were mentioned to have a devastating effect on the country's food systems by contributing to low agricultural productivity, an increasing occurrence of pests and diseases and a reduction in productive areas. Furthermore, stakeholders noted that climate hazards such as tropical cyclones have led to the destruction of infrastructure (e.g. irrigation systems, roads, warehouses, amongst others) thereby disrupting food value chains.



#### Proposed solutions from Mozambique's Dialogues included:

- The construction of robust infrastructure using modern technologies that ensure greater durability and resilience;
- Humanitarian assistance to displaced people, solidarity campaigns, resettlement, agricultural development and income generation projects for displaced and host families;
- The establishment of food banks across the different regions; and
- The identification and mapping of alternative production areas for affected people.

**Malawi, a neighbour of Mozambique, has also been adversely affected by climate change-related hazards such as erratic rainfall patterns** and an increase in natural disasters such as tropical cyclones. Stakeholders indicated that due to climatic factors and inadequate agricultural diversification, some regions are now better suited to the production of livestock.

The **South African Dialogues highlighted the need for improved Early Warning Systems (EWSs)** to disseminate information to all members of society. Crisis management methods such as an adaptation strategy, action plan and anticipation protocol were mentioned as key.

**Mozambique also considered food system resilience to other shocks such as the COVID-19 pandemic.** The COVID-19 pandemic and associated increased unemployment rate has resulted in lower purchasing power and a reduced demand for food. This, in turn, is resulting in food surpluses at the producer level, higher levels of post-harvest losses and food insecurity and malnutrition. Community-level education on contingency planning and risk management was proposed to address the issue of shocks. Stakeholders also mentioned the challenges surrounding armed conflict in the country's central region and terrorist attacks in the north resulting in the abandonment of productive areas further contributing to food insecurity.

**Mozambique's Dialogues drew attention to the fact that different regions of the country are impacted differently by climate hazards and shocks and that the impacts vary according to the type of sector**, i.e. crop, livestock or fisheries. This highlighted the need to manage and prepare for climate hazards at a more localised scale, e.g. provincial.



#### Environmentally sustainable production and consumption

The countries of the Southern region are implementing diverse approaches to move towards environmentally sustainable production and consumption such as by adopting Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs), enhancing renewable energy generation, capacity

building and improving water use management and land use planning. Botswana has adopted climate smart agriculture (CSA) and conservation agriculture practices and technologies to mitigate climate change, improve production and commercialise agriculture. However, it was noted that there is a need for scaling which requires adequate funding. The country has boosted aquaculture to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, such as methane from meat production. Botswana has also improved their water management through sustainable water use practices and enhanced wastewater management.

In addition, Botswana focused on renewable energy production and has conducted research on renewable resources. Malawi has also investigated renewable energy generation through the identification of hydroelectric power opportunities along the Shire River.

#### In terms of shifting to sustainable consumption patterns, Malawi has faced the following challenges:

- Lack of a comprehensive definition of sustainable consumption;
- Limited consumption of indigenous foods despite being highly nutritious;
- High food waste and pollution;
- Low dietary diversification;
- Low accessibility to some food types in certain parts of the country; and
- Increased post-harvest losses.

In Zimbabwe, stakeholders indicated that a manual was produced on resilient and sustainable agriculture covering issues on agroecology and other nature-positive production mechanisms. The manual was funded by the Zimbabwe Resilience Building Fund and is to be translated into different local languages. In Masvingo, the Zimbabwe Smallholder Organic Farmers' Forum is implementing soil fertility management and water harvesting schemes. Efforts are also being made to establish a local seed bank.

It was noted that land use planning aimed at reducing the overexploitation of natural resources is a key focal area in Mozambique, and in South Africa, former agricultural colleges have strengthened the capacity of local community-based centres of excellence to adopt sustainable agricultural practices.



## Trade and market access

**Countries in the Southern region highlighted a need for improved infrastructure to increase market access**, the harmonisation of trade standards and better monitoring and dissemination of market information. Stakeholders indicated that the Northern region of Malawi has poor road infrastructure and a hilly topography that affects the accessibility and distribution of food supplies within the region. The country has experienced market failures including unregulated contract farming agreements, uncompetitive prices and dysfunctional and unstructured markets.

**In Zimbabwe, Knowledge Transfer Africa/eMkambo is monitoring food-related market information.** They are working with the Consumer Council of Zimbabwe (CCZ) and other stakeholders to issue weekly reports on the quality of food in specific markets.

**Botswana is creating new markets and other distribution channels in the region as well as internationally through the Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and the African Growth and Opportunity Act**, respectively. The country has installed new infrastructure (roads, electricity, water and market infrastructure) and improved communication networks in places of deficit.

There is a focus on the creation of a transportation network that will ensure the timely delivery of food products and reduce wastage. It was noted that the Government, the private sector and farmers should be encouraged to collaborate to build food storage facilities in remote areas to reduce post-harvest losses. Furthermore, the Government is working to secure a market for local producers with healthy market competition.

**Several country Dialogues discussed the need for the harmonisation of trade standards.** For example, discussions in South Africa mentioned a need for

enhanced collaboration with neighbouring countries to ensure a coordinated approach to trade, especially in the face of the recently ratified AfCFTA.



## Value chains

**Key challenges faced in establishing sustainable value chains in the Southern region** included a lack of processing equipment and financial resources for value addition and the need to link value chain actors as well as producers with markets.

The **Botswanan Dialogues also indicated a need to increase resources and the skills base of agriculture extension officers.** Furthermore, transaction costs along value chains need to be reduced to offer consumers better food prices.

Stakeholders in **Malawi mentioned that agricultural industrialisation was inadequate** to drive processing and value addition and that there is a need for food processing equipment. **Mozambique recognised that their food value chains are fragmented**; and the **South African Dialogues discussed the inclusivity of their food value chains and the need to incorporate smallholder and subsistence farmers.**



### Actions proposed to strengthen food value chains in South Africa included:

- Mobilise investments in infrastructure and services as well as human and material resources to develop value chains that support sustainable end markets;
- Build data on food value chain actors, their profiles, locations, needs and actions;
- Strengthen public-private partnerships (PPPs) by promoting mechanisms for coordination; and
- Recognise informal markets and value chains as important components of the food system.



## Food waste

South Africa, Malawi and Zimbabwe highlighted the issue of food waste in their Dialogues. **Malawi recognised a food deficit due to poor handling and storage, inadequate budgeting, post-harvest losses and wastage.** Cultural celebrations such as weddings and funeral ceremonies were also considered major contributing factors to the country's food waste. In **South Africa, food wastage and loss are deemed prevalent in both the production cycle and during consumption.** In Zimbabwe, investment in post-harvest infrastructure and value addition was recognised as essential for reducing food waste and loss in informal markets.



## Health and nutrition

In the **Southern region, common health and nutrition challenges included poor nutritional education and awareness**, a lack of dietary diversity, inadequate food safety standards and policy, unaffordability of nutritious foods and low levels of consumption of indigenous food products.

**Stakeholders in Malawi recognised that the country's food safety challenges were mainly due to a lack of national-level food safety policies, standards and regulations** with limited coordination across the sectors on food security, nutrition and food safety (there is no delivery mechanism to enable this). A lack of diversity in local diets, which are dominated by the consumption of maize, was also noted. Stakeholders in both Malawi and South Africa noted that nutritious foods are too expensive.

Like Malawi, in **Zimbabwe, the Dialogues discussed a need for improved food safety through legislation**, i.e. a Food Safety Act, and this is the responsibility of the Ministry of Health and Child Care. It was indicated that the Government of Zimbabwe and partners need to promote and enforce food safety standards in both formal and informal food markets to protect consumers.

In **Malawi and Botswana, food and nutritional education is poor** resulting in a high rate of malnutrition particularly amongst children under five years of age. Funding in the nutrition sector is inadequate, thereby affecting the implementation of relevant programmes and strategies.

In **Malawi, Botswana, South Africa and Zimbabwe, there is a negative perception of local nutritious foods**, with most people preferring to consume ultra-processed and imported foods. The need for public education on balanced diets incorporating indigenous food products was highlighted as well as the inclusion of indigenous knowledge systems into policy. **Zimbabwe is working to improve interest in indigenous foods**, especially amongst younger demographics, which in turn should raise demand and stimulate production. **Zimbabwe aims to promote home grown school feeding programmes** incorporating at least five fruits and vegetables to enhance dietary diversity. The United Nations Children's Fund has expressed their willingness to engage with CCZ and other stakeholders on consumer nutrition and food safety awareness. **Mozambique also identified the need for nutritional awareness programmes using the media and food guides.**

In the **South African Dialogues, other potential means for improving nutritional intake included improved dietary data, school feeding programmes, the incorporation of nutritional education in school curricula**, the diversification of food production for more balanced diets, improved processing, fortification/enrichment methods and modern food storage practices.

The **Botswanan Dialogues indicated an improved use of agrochemicals and the promotion of organic farming through ongoing public education.** Central collection points have been established for fresh produce testing prior to distribution to consumers. It was noted by stakeholders that farmers require training on efficient farming practices, harvesting, storage and packaging to ensure that food arrives at markets in good condition.





## Gender and social inclusivity

**Botswana, Malawi, South Africa and Mozambique have made efforts towards improving their inclusivity both within the Dialogue process and in food systems.**

For example, Botswana has introduced inclusive policies to improve:

- Access to funding and land for production;
- Support for the elderly in food systems; and
- Mentorship programmes for the youth.

**Botswana has also installed infrastructure in rural areas to enable people with disabilities to lead active lives and gender equity has been introduced in the allocation of programmes**

for commercialisation with youth now able to access financing.

In **Malawi, it was recognised that gender inequalities persist in accessing safe and healthy food products.** Stakeholders discussed women and youth marginalisation in agri-food systems, which was attributed to a lack of access to land and resources which are traditionally controlled by men. Women and youth also have limited access to financial opportunities, due to the structural barriers associated with smallholder farmers' access to finances. The limited livelihood opportunities are forcing youth to migrate to South Africa which is resulting in labour shortages in some Malawian districts.

**South Africa ensured the inclusion of subsistence and smallholder farmers in the engagements for food system transformation;** this involved interpretation in 11 local languages. Over 1,000 farmers discussed, in their own languages, the major challenges they faced such as gaining access to land, water and energy. As the engagements were held virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic, extensionists and government officials used their laptops to convene farmers who did not have access to internet.

In **Mozambique's Dialogues the need for improved stakeholder diversity**, both at the national and local levels, was flagged. Stakeholders discussed the importance of including vulnerable groups (e.g. women, youths, individuals from remote areas) in the Dialogues.



## Governance and policy

**Governance and policy improvements for sustainable food systems varied by country.**

However, common needs included the maintenance and development of supporting infrastructure, improved alignment of policy, revised land use policy, and better coordination and collaboration between and amongst government departments/ministries and other stakeholders (e.g. non-governmental organisations (NGOs), finance institutions and civil society).

In **Botswana, stakeholders identified the need to review the National Land Policy to make fertile land available for the youth** and to centralise food standards at the Botswana Bureau of Standards for all sectors. A holistic review of policies is needed to align them with international obligations that support sustainable agriculture and food systems. The country further recognised the need for an inclusive approach to the development of policies i.e. from the bottom up.

In **Malawi, regulatory services are being strengthened and capacity building is taking place in key ministries** such as the Ministries of Health, Agriculture and Trade as well as district councils, community structures and institutions such as the Malawi Bureau of Standards.

In **Zimbabwe, stakeholders highlighted the need to address inadequate environmental governance** and impose strict penalties on people who start bushfires for clearing land.

In the **Mozambiquan Dialogues, the inclusion of Provincial Directorates of Agriculture and Fisheries in policy development** was mentioned as



key to sustainable food systems. It was noted that incentives are to be provided for locally produced inputs (e.g. fish feed) and focus is placed on processing at both artisanal and industrial scales. In addition, it was recognised that supporting infrastructure (e.g. irrigation channels and road networks) coverage and improvement/rehabilitation is needed.

The **South African Dialogues discussed the need for coordination across government departments** and the inclusion of municipalities, NGOs, finance institutions and other formations of civil society. A central coordination structure is required to monitor all food system elements and avoid the duplication of programmes aimed at fighting hunger. Clear legislative and regulatory guidelines are also needed to ensure the active participation of smallholders.



### Suggested actions from the South African Dialogues included:

- The maintenance and development of infrastructure, particularly related to water, electricity, roads, rail and ports;
- Comprehensive farmer support services, including mentorship, extension services and agricultural colleges;
- Effective land reform and tenure security in conjunction with rural safety;
- The revision of curricula to include food systems, indigenous knowledge, food security, food safety and nutrition, and to stimulate research in these areas;
- Revisiting, evaluating and up-scaling food security programmes;
- Re-educating agricultural practitioners and agro-processors with regards to sustainable practices; and
- Policy considerations for digital agriculture, embracing the fourth industrial revolution (4IR), advanced technologies and big data to expand smart farming practices.



## Partnerships

The importance of PPPs for investment, training and knowledge sharing was frequently highlighted in the Dialogues. **Botswana** has strengthened PPPs, which has **improved investment across their value chains**. In **Zimbabwe**, it was mentioned that the **Government needs to partner with relevant stakeholders** to incentivise smallholder farmers for growing healthy foods. In **South Africa**, emphasis was placed on **partnerships for equality**. In **Malawi**, the **Dialogues explored stakeholder engagement for collective action in transforming food systems**. It was noted that there are several partners working in the food systems, including NGOs (local and international), faith-based organisations, farmer organisations and cooperatives, government departments, private sector players, amongst other, but they rarely work together to share lessons learnt and best practices. The lack of collaboration was attributed to poor coordination at the regional and district levels, including between ministries, departments and agencies of the Government, despite the decentralised governance system. Opportunities, enablers and recommendations to transform food systems are multi-sectoral in nature and so require a coordinated approach at the regional and district level to be impactful.



## Research and development

The Dialogues of four countries emphasised the importance of agricultural and food system research:

- In **Botswana**, the **apiculture and aquaculture sectors need to be commercialised** and farmers require funding, training and stock (bees and fish). To expand entrepreneurship in these sectors, research is needed as well as the development of appropriate agro-food technologies.
- There is a **need for research in Malawi**, as there is a **deficit in data and evidence required** by policy makers and the private sector to understand the landscape better.

- In **Zimbabwe**, academia, the Zimbabwe Nutrition Association (ZimNA), eMkambo and other stakeholders are willing to **engage and research food systems and food consumption**.
- The **South African Dialogues highlighted the importance of researching organic agriculture and indigenous food production**, with a focus on heat- and drought-tolerant varieties and improved nutritional content.



## Technology and innovation

**Digital technology developments were recognised by Botswana, Mozambique, Malawi and South Africa as important for food system transformation.**

**Botswana has implemented food processing technologies for indigenous products.**

In **Malawi**, the **development of a digital technology strategy was highlighted as important for communication as well as enhancing agricultural productivity** e.g. through adopting agricultural technologies such as CSA, conservation agriculture, permaculture, intercropping, agroforestry, and land and water conservation measures.

**Mozambique's Dialogues also emphasised the importance of technology for communication in real-time, particularly in the case of warning mechanisms for extreme weather events.** In **South Africa** digital technology was recognised as key for providing data to municipalities on food needs and prices as well as supply chain efficiencies. It was noted that communication technologies can also be used to distribute food amongst users and create awareness on food waste.



## Finance and investment

**Botswana's Dialogues mentioned the need to introduce appropriate and equitable funding schemes** for agricultural programmes. Other actions include the implementation of financing tailored to value chains and the regularisation of market prices to reduce fluctuations. **Zimbabwean stakeholders identified the need to present budget allocations to enable other interested parties to collaborate.** **Mozambique is to introduce specific financing schemes, with bonified tax rates**, for agriculture, livestock and fisheries. It was mentioned in the Malawian Dialogues that funds are available for research/ academic institutions, NGOs and private sector players.



## Areas of divergence



### Governance and policy

In **Malawi**, the **Affordable Input Programme proved contentious**. Despite the country experiencing its highest yields in the last five years some stakeholders felt that the programme is an outdated social protection instrument that could be improved through diversification away from maize to other crops such as legumes and livestock. **It was suggested that in the Southern region, because of the frequent occurrence of natural disasters, communities are getting used to receiving aid**. For example, communities in Chikwawa district are affected by floods every year but are not willing to relocate to other areas. Some stakeholders suggested that the programme contributes to an increased dependence on the Government.

In **Mozambique**, **concerns were raised over the establishment of food reserves by the Government**. It was argued that the purchasing of agricultural products, their storage and distribution to vulnerable groups will come at a great expense considering the current availability of storage facilities and maintenance requirements.

In **Zimbabwe**, **trans-fat, sugar and salt taxation was a contentious issue**. It was stated that the taxes could create more problems than solutions and may not even change consumption patterns.

In **South Africa**, **stakeholders highlighted the lack of a clear food production and consumption mandate**, noting that responsibilities are split between different departments and at different levels of the governance system. There is no coordination and alignment of services and a lot of information is lost. Furthermore, the inexplicit mandate at the local level makes the allocation of financial and human resources difficult for municipalities.



### Environmental sustainability

The need for sustainable production systems such as agro-ecology and permaculture was discussed in the Malawian Dialogues. It was noted that the current food production system is near collapse as although conventional farming practices yield large amounts of produce, they utilise resources at an unsustainable rate. It was concluded that there is a need to incorporate both approaches.

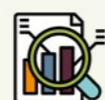
In Mozambique, environmental sustainability was identified as a major point of divergence as increased production and productivity is required to develop domestic industry, but an increased use of agrochemicals is damaging to the environment. It was concluded that a cost-benefit analysis is needed to assess the damaging effects of agrochemicals and it was suggested that the taxes applied to agrochemicals could be used for environmental restoration projects.

In South Africa's Dialogues, it was noted that the agro-ecological approach has not been fully optimised. Whilst land needs to be made available for farming, people also need to be taught sustainable land management practices, as land rehabilitation and restoration is costly.



### Public awareness and education

In Malawi's Dialogues, mention was made of the need to embrace and consume indigenous food varieties as a major source of nutrition. The promoters of the indigenous food varieties emphasised that such foods have a high nutritional status and are resilient to climate change, on the contrary those championing improved varieties accentuated the high yielding and drought resistant varieties of maize.



### Lack of knowledge or evidence

In Malawi, pesticide use in the Southern region was questioned, as there has been an increased use of pesticides due to the infestation of fall armyworm and increased cultivation of horticultural crops. Participants noted that if the pesticides are not handled and used properly, they can be fatal. For instance, the withdrawal periods on vegetables need to be strictly adhered to for safe consumption.

In South Africa, it was mentioned that food system discussions are not inclusive and there is a lack of understanding on the topic due to poor knowledge dissemination. Furthermore, a lack of information on the informal sector hinders food system transformation and resilience.



### Livelihoods

In the Eastern region of Malawi, contradictory discussions took place on the benefits of fishing as a major source of income in the region. Some stakeholders argued that an overreliance on fishing affects crop production as men do not have time to tend to their crops, thereby reducing dietary diversification. Another area of divergence in Malawi's Dialogues was the attraction of tourists to Liwonde National Park. It was argued that tourism positively impacts the district's economy and offers employment to young people. However, other stakeholders said that the tourists bring diseases.



### Eastern region (Comoros, Kenya Mauritius, Madagascar, Rwanda, Seychelles, Sudan)



### Climate change and shocks

Countries in the Eastern region discussed their vulnerability to climate change and other shocks such as COVID-19, and the associated impacts on their food systems. Accurate meteorological data and forecasts were mentioned as being key to good decision making and appropriate evidence-based approaches.

Rwandan stakeholders made special mention of the need for economic and financial support for climate change adaptation and mitigation and compensation for damages. In Rwanda, there was said to be low awareness of insurance products amongst smallholder farmers and underdeveloped data collection, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and knowledge systems on all aspects related to agricultural insurance, including historical data on yields, losses and weather-related data.

The South Eastern Kenya Economic Bloc (SEKEB) discussed how climate change has impacted the already fragile arid and semi-arid land (ASAL), disrupting the progress of labour output and farming systems. Livelihoods and farm investments were said to have been impacted and the food security of the region jeopardised. To build food system resilience to climate change, the Kenyan Dialogues outlined the need for strengthening data-led research on weather patterns, using an evidence-based approach rather than traditional practices, maximising the use of water catchment areas and resources, and the establishment of sustainable multi-sectoral platforms in shock-prone communities.

In the Seychelles, climate hazards such as higher than average temperatures, new rainfall patterns and distribution, frequent extreme events, floods and increases in pests and diseases were identified as serious threats to the local food production system. In Sudan, it was agreed amongst stakeholders that climate change and COVID-19 are currently the main drivers of food insecurity in the country. In Mauritius, farmers expressed their concern regarding their vulnerability to shocks such as COVID-19 and climate change and the need to develop climate- and health-resilient agricultural systems.



### Suggested actions from the Mauritian Dialogues included:

- Promoting the use of renewable energy;
- Adopting farming practices that prevent land degradation;
- Further promoting agroforestry;
- Adopting integrated management of pests and diseases;
- Ensuring water/irrigation efficiency; and
- Promoting soil health management.



## Environmentally sustainable production and consumption

Stakeholders from **Rwanda and Sudan** understood the importance of environmentally sustainable food production, but development was hindered by barriers such as a lack of suitable policies and legislation, inadequate knowledge on sustainable land management practices and a need for financial resources.

Stakeholders in **Rwanda's Dialogues** discussed the limited adoption of CSA practices and technologies despite the prevalence of soil degradation due to agricultural malpractices. It was noted that inadequate knowledge on the use of chemical fertilisers and pesticides is causing soil and water pollution and is negatively impacting pollinators.



### Suggested actions from the Rwandan Dialogues included:

- Promote tailored ecosystem-based approaches for smaller scales of production (e.g. micro-agriculture, urban agriculture and landless agriculture);
- Promote the recovery and reuse of organic waste to restore soil fertility;
- Appropriately manage the application of inorganic fertilisers to reduce GHG emissions;
- Enhance awareness on the importance of maintaining ecosystems and biodiversity at the local level;
- Scale up initiatives to restore/rehabilitate degraded ecosystems and promote indigenous species in agroforestry and landscape restoration in high-risk areas; and
- Protect biodiversity through awareness trainings at the community level.

In the **Sudanese Dialogues**, stakeholders agreed on the need for nature-positive production but highlighted the lack of appropriate policies and legislation. Large areas of land are available for organic farming, but farmers require financial resources and know-how.



## Trade and market access

With regards to trade and market access, the countries from the **Eastern region** focused on market access for small-scale producers, competition with imported products and a need for capacity building on trade standards.

The **Kenyan, Rwandan and Mauritian Dialogues** discussed the need to enhance market access for small-scale producers. In **Mauritius**, stakeholders highlighted the need for capacity building of agro processors to meet food safety standards and to be able to compete with imported produce. It was suggested that there should be a dedicated space in shopping malls and other retail outlets for locally processed food items.

**Competition with food imports was also noted as an issue in the Seychelles.** The local market is highly competitive due to the adoption of the fair, free and open market policy and the limited capacity of farmers to exploit economies of scale due to the small size of their farms (average farm size is 8,000 sqm). Producers indicated that global food trade is likely to limit local food production systems as they cannot compete with the prices of imported goods. Local produce is further inaccessible due to poor distribution networks and low levels of organisation of the local food production system.

**Rwanda highlighted a lack of awareness of regional compliance standards amongst stakeholders** and significant gaps in trade standards between East African countries. It was suggested that small and medium-sized enterprises undergo capacity building on trade standards.



## Value chains

In the **Seychelles**, stakeholders discussed the gaps in value and supply chains such as sourcing difficulties, access to technology, limited farm workers in the local market, regional temperature-controlled storage facilities, demand and supply management platforms as well as inadequate services from support institutions. The **Mauritian Dialogues** indicated a lack of adequate processing, storage and distribution facilities. Similarly, the Rwandan Dialogues made mention of a need for increased investment in food distribution channels (including cold chains), markets, post-harvest handling and processing.



### Suggested actions from the Rwandan Dialogues included:

- Mobilising investments in infrastructure and services as well as human and material resources to develop value chains that support sustainable end markets;
- Building data on actors in food value chains, their profiles, locations, needs and actions given the risks;
- Strengthening PPPs by promoting mechanisms for coordination; and
- Recognition of informal markets and value chains as important components of the food system.



## Food waste

**Food loss and waste was mentioned in the Dialogues of Rwanda, Sudan and Mauritius.** In **Rwanda**, stakeholders mentioned the need for warehouses and other storage infrastructure for times of surplus. In **Sudan**, it was argued that issues surrounding consumption and food loss are due to culture. In **Mauritius**, food loss and food waste were a major concern, and the development of postharvest processing was seen as key to improving shelf life, marketability and reducing postharvest losses. Support is being provided to agro-entrepreneurs in the development of value-added products from local fruits and vegetables such as gluten-free breadfruit and cassava flour, ginger paste, turmeric paste, lime paste, guava fruit paste, dehydrated papaya and fruit paste sorbet.



## Health and nutrition

**Nutritional education, food safety awareness campaigns, improved food safety standards and enhanced local production were identified as key action areas by stakeholders in Mauritius and the Seychelles.** The **Mauritian food safety standards are to be reviewed and slaughterhouses relocated.** Stakeholders noted a need for training, support from authorities and incentives to boost the sector. Consumers are encouraged to eat locally produced foods (e.g. cassava, potato, breadfruit, eddoes) and to undertake their own production such as roof gardening and urban agriculture.

In the **Seychelles, education is needed on the nutritional value of whole locally produced food**, particularly as fast food consumption is increasing to the extent that it is a default option for lunch in most schools, and in many food outlets. Stakeholders indicated that there has been limited to no investment in promoting local farm produce and very few campaigns to address fast food advertising. Without action it is expected that fast food consumption will increase along with associated dietary problems.



### To increase local food production in the Seychelles it was suggested to:

- Increase investment in turnkey farms and allocate them to young farmers;
- Establish an innovation fund; and
- Revise legislation and submit the food system transformation policy and strategy to the National Assembly for final discussion, alignment and consolidation by mid-October 2021.



## Gender and social inclusivity

**Gender and social inclusivity was a major topic in the Dialogues with focus placed on women and youth inclusion.** In **Mauritius, the need for training and awareness of producers on GAPs was identified** with special mention made of the inclusion of vulnerable groups. It was also noted that youth need to be better integrated into agriculture by providing free training.

In **Rwanda and Sudan, stakeholders discussed the role of youth and women in achieving sustainable, equitable and resilient food systems.** The **Mauritius, Rwandan and Madagascan Dialogues all highlighted the important role of the private sector in achieving inclusivity,** and the need for improved coordination between parties. **Madagascar's Dialogues focused on empowering women in food systems** and strengthening the commitment of the private sector and civil society to support family farms and farmers' organisations.

The **Kenya Youth in Agriculture Strategy includes robust measures to meaningfully engage young people in agriculture.** In SEKEB, it was noted that agro-processing and value-addition initiatives can be used to enhance the capacity and skills of young people as well as provide meaningful employment for them. It was noted that to leverage such opportunities, the vulnerable groups require ownership rights and access to productive resources such as land, finance, digital agriculture and technological solutions, training and access to data and information.



### The Rwandan Dialogues also identified barriers around creating employment for marginalised groups and the following actions were proposed:

- Establish appropriate credit funds to address the limited access to finance for small-scale entrepreneurs and marginalised groups; and
- Promote inclusive consultation processes and participatory assessments of land degradation for the design of effective ecosystem restoration strategies.



## Governance and policy

**Intergovernmental collaboration, the control of imports, and policy coherence and implementation were identified as common challenges** to food system governance amongst the Eastern region's countries.

In the **Seychelles, stakeholders indicated a need for better coordination and action to implement and drive agricultural and food system-related policy decisions.** The benefits of elevating key policy objectives and strategic choices in the form of a legal instrument were debated at length. There was bipartisan alignment and agreement in favour of the proposal to draft a Food Security Bill to ensure policy continuity. Furthermore, there was general agreement that sector activities should be taxed but according to a different taxation regime.

The **Comoros Dialogues focused on improving livestock health** through improved control of imported animals at borders. Mauritius addressed animal product importation policies that are disadvantageous to local farmers.

In **Kenya, it was noted that major discrepancies exist between the national and county functions** with agriculture being a devolved function and policy making still the responsibility of the national government. Policy needs to be coherent and the overlapping roles and division of policy making responsibility between the two levels of government needs to be clarified. Furthermore, within the counties, there is a lack of alignment in agricultural policies. Intergovernmental cooperation, institutional coordination, public participation and stakeholder involvement is required. **Kenya is also working to develop legislation and policy frameworks to anchor pastoralism as a component of sustainable food systems** as well as strengthen the policy environment to enhance and protect agricultural land in the Central Region Economic Bloc.

In **Sudan, policy on food security exists but the implementation of the action plan requires the mobilisation of resources.** Furthermore, stakeholders agreed that food security policy and legislation need to be developed with a focus on prices which form the main barrier to accessing nutritious food.

The **Rwandan Dialogues focused on land use planning and the introduction of commercial farming** through the implementation of the Land Use and Development Master Plan, 2050. Discussions were also held on increasing the reach of extension services to smallholder farmers, the promotion of small livestock husbandry and the lack of a coordinated multi-sectoral approach for promoting CSA practices. It was mentioned that CSA practices could be incentivised through subsidies and tax breaks as well as by creating stronger partnerships with institutions such as the Rwanda Institute for Conservation Agriculture. Enhanced inter-ministerial coordination amongst the different sectors to determine the trade-offs between agriculture and the environment was highlighted as well as the need to strengthen policy coherence and implementation. Rwanda also put in place legislative frameworks to promote healthy diets and policies to reduce food waste at all levels. Coordination mechanisms were established at both national and local levels.



## Partnerships

**Kenya's Dialogues focused on partnerships** to enable small-scale farmers to access credit, training and to boost innovation to enhance self-sufficiency and reduce dependency.



## Research and development

The Dialogues of **Rwanda and Mauritius mentioned research and development (R&D) as key areas for enhancing food production and processing. Rwanda identified a need for further research on improved seeds and breeding programmes,** and for better communication and synergy between agricultural stakeholders, researchers and government departments.

### Mauritius promoted R&D in the following areas:

- New technologies to increase productivity;
- Digitalisation of local agriculture;
- Use of information and communications technology (ICT) tools for improving extension and training services;
- Developing information systems to align production and marketing;
- Acquisition of new technologies, e.g. vertical farming and controlled environment agriculture; and
- Value addition, e.g. producing flour from local starchy crops.



## Technology and innovation

The focus of discussions on technology and innovation were on **the importance of agricultural data for evidence-based decision making and the need to strengthen and improve access to ICT.**

The **Comoros Dialogues discussed the importance of strengthening advocacy** and the need for government, together with other technical and financial partners, to mobilise funds to support technological innovations and the modernisation of agriculture and fishing.

Stakeholders indicated that **Kenya's Agriculture Sector Transformation and Growth Strategy 2019-2029 commits to ensuring agricultural data is available and usable.** It recognises the importance of having both traditional data such as censuses and surveys in addition to other innovative data sources. In addition, the Government of Kenya's Agriculture Coordination and Digitisation Strategy seeks to address three key challenges:

- Catalyse the research and innovation space in agriculture, including the use of big data and advanced analytics;
- Enable more reliable access to usable and shareable data; and
- Conduct quality analyses to support evidence-based decisions on performance management, M&E, research and policy.

It was also noted in **Kenya's Dialogues that access to ICTs in both urban and rural areas is growing rapidly,** but progress is unequal both geographically and socioeconomically. For example, in many areas women and youth have less access to smartphones and digital services. In SEKEB, it was determined that investment is needed in innovation and technology such as irrigation, the use of digital agriculture tools in extension services and managing post-harvest losses through food processing technologies.

The **Rwandan Dialogues also focused on the modernisation of agriculture** and the need to strengthen ICT. Special mention was made of the need to:

- Leverage innovative technologies, such as satellite/drone technologies, to enhance data systems linked to agricultural insurance;
- Adopt technologies that improve yields whilst reducing GHG emissions and land degradation; and
- Use labour-saving technologies along the whole value chain.



## Finance and investment

**A lack of investment in agricultural interventions and unaffordable interest rates were common themes in the Eastern region's Dialogues.** The **Seychellois Dialogues indicated a difficulty in accessing development grants and low interest financing instruments.** Stakeholders discussed the need to review the investment strategy to facilitate sectoral development planning.

In **Kenya, the SEKEB Dialogues mentioned the need for private sector investments and financing tools** to de-risk food systems in the ASAL counties. It was further noted that the creation of an SEKEB Bank could boost the interest of young people in agri-businesses by providing access to much needed capital.

Similar to the **Seychelles, Rwanda emphasised the need for financial services at affordable interest rates.** Stakeholders mentioned that farmers' cooperatives and organisations could be used to increase awareness on good agricultural extension and advisory services as well as to establish a commercial/agricultural bank. A need for banks to provide financial literacy programmes and insurance services was also highlighted. Stakeholders indicated that current subsidy programmes are inadequate for building short-term resilience in smallholder farmers and there is a lack of funds for innovative initiatives for improving ecosystems and biodiversity.

The **Mauritian Dialogues indicated a need for investment to modernise farming practices and stakeholders.** In Sudan, stakeholders noted a need for investment in infrastructure in both the agriculture and industry sectors with special mention made of the need to finance smallholder farmers.



## Areas of divergence



### Governance and policy

In the Rwandan Dialogues, stakeholders disagreed on the percentage of insurance premiums that should be paid for by the Government. It was mentioned that in some parts of India, 80%-90% was required to attract interest compared with only 40% in Rwanda. Others noted that this was not feasible in Rwanda and that emphasis should instead be placed on integrating crop insurance into existing social protection programmes.

In Mauritius, the granting of import permits for vegetables that are produced locally proved to be an area of contention for stakeholders.



### Finance and investment

In Rwanda, there were disagreements on the role that insurance companies should play with some arguing that they were not doing enough whilst others indicated that the issue lies in farmers' lack of trust in the companies. This fed into a larger discussion on PPPs and the balance that must be found between business interests and social protection.



### Environmental sustainability


There was some divergence over the promotion of biodiversity in the Rwandan Dialogues, as well as the use of more nutritious and drought-resistant crop species.



### Climate change and shocks

In **Madagascar**, some stakeholders insisted on the urgency of adapting existing techniques to address climate change challenges whilst others stressed the need to carry out in-depth studies on the actions to be implemented and the need to transfer knowledge to the primary players concerned.

In the **Rwandan Dialogues**, the use of technology to disseminate EWS information was mentioned as a possible 'game changing' solution, however, there was divergence on how to make it user-friendly and accessible. The successful case study highlighted a smartphone application developed by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations. The application provided weather information to improve farmers' decision making. However, it was argued that such an approach may not work in Rwanda as not all farmers, particularly the most vulnerable, have access to a smartphone. Simple SMS messages were suggested as an alternative solution, but the effectiveness of transmitting complex information in such a limiting format is likely to prove challenging.



### Regional trade standards

Rwandan stakeholders argued on the importance of harmonising trade standards across East Africa and raising the awareness of smallholder farmers to regional standards. It was noted that some countries, such as **Kenya**, have higher standards than their neighbours.

The consultation of experts on issues related to policies, food safety regulations and post-harvest handling to harmonise policy was suggested. Others noted that while differences in standards exist, there are legal and economic frameworks in place, notably the East African Community trade forum, to address trade disputes in the interests of vulnerable stakeholders. It was deduced that raising farmers' awareness of standards is key so that they can export to other markets competitively.



### Western region (Benin, Burkina Faso, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Niger, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Nigeria)



### Climate change and shocks

The countries of the **Western region discussed the climate hazards they faced and the resulting impacts on both natural and human systems.** Conflict was identified as another driver adversely impacting upon food production in the region.

The **Ghanaian Dialogues highlighted reduced yields due to water scarcity in the dry season and flooding in the rainfall season.** A continuous decline in soil fertility was also noted. The need for improved and localised irrigation systems was emphasised, as rain-fed agriculture can no longer sustain the levels of food production needed.

**Nigerian stakeholders noted that the food system experiences shocks and stresses such as flooding, soil erosion and conflict.** Poverty, unemployment and insufficient food reserves were recognised to further increase the vulnerability of local food systems. Areas to the south-east of the country have been affected by insecurity due to farmer-herder conflict, which has led to the destruction of crops, forced migration, death and forms of sexual violence. The Dialogues highlighted the need for social protection mechanisms and agricultural insurance.

In the event of shocks affecting smallholder farmers in **Sierra Leone**, it was recognised that the **Government and partners should establish**

**seed banks to support farmers in reviving their activities.** The seed banks were also noted as being important for preventing the loss of crop varieties and certain species of animals.



### Environmentally sustainable production and consumption

It was noted in the **Western region's Dialogues that environmental degradation and pollution due to human activities is already prevalent and adversely affecting food systems.** It was suggested that rebates be issued to producers who adopt sustainable land management practices and policy be revised, especially in relation to land tenure and use.

The **Gambian Dialogues emphasised the considerable degradation of the country's resource base over the years.** This was attributed to deforestation, overfishing, inappropriate fishing nets, the poisoning of marine life, land degradation

and frequent bushfires. Some of the adaptive measures undertaken to mitigate the degradation include sensitisation on bushfire control measures, agroforestry, regulated fishing and fishing nets and the creation of appropriate policies. It was further noted that poor agricultural practices on slopes have contributed to soil erosion leading to a loss of topsoil and a subsequent decline in soil fertility.

In **Ghana's Dialogues**, focus was placed on **cocoa which is a major cash crop in the Ashanti region** and a key source of income for farmers. Cocoyam was noted as an important indigenous crop, but production levels keep dropping due to the use of herbicides on cocoa farms. In addition, it was indicated that local fishermen use a lot of chemicals in their fishing activities and this, coupled with other factors, has caused a decline in fish stocks.



#### Key action areas from Ghana's Dialogues included:

- Improving the productivity of small-scale farmers in a climate-smart and nutrition-sensitive way;
- Adopting improved farming practices to increase food production and productivity;
- Promoting practices that prevent a loss of indigenous and traditional foods and promote the natural regeneration of trees; and
- Avoiding destructive farming activities that degrade natural resources such as the uncontrolled use of agrochemicals.

**Senegal's Dialogues highlighted a drive for local consumption and key areas for improvement** included the construction of cold rooms, enhanced processing of local products and improved marketing. To ensure the resilience and sustainability of food systems it was proposed that a rebate be paid to companies for actions to preserve the environment. It was also noted that water management needs to be promoted, particularly rainwater harvesting, to allow for out of season production.



#### In Nigeria's Dialogues, key actions given by stakeholders for protecting the environment included:

- Promoting the use of organic fertilisers;
- Appropriate use and management of herbicides and pesticides;
- Enforcement of existing laws and regulations to prevent further environmental degradation;
- Protection of ecosystems against agricultural expansion;
- Efficient recycling of waste;
- Use of cover crops to reduce soil degradation and erosion;
- Investing in the development of improved crop varieties for higher yields and improved attributes including biofortification;
- Facilitating the sustainable management of food production systems to benefit the environment and people through GAPs;
- Restoring degraded ecosystems and rehabilitating the soil for sustainable food production through renewed afforestation efforts; and
- Scaling up the use of organic soil practices, crop rotation and intercropping.



#### Trade and market access

In **Ghana, Sierra Leone, Nigeria and Niger**, stakeholders mentioned that **poor road networks** (and rail in Nigeria) limit market access and contribute to post-harvest losses. Additionally, the need for appropriate transport such as refrigerated trucks for perishable products and other cold chain components was noted by stakeholders in Niger's Dialogues.

Stakeholders in **Ghana identified the need for vulnerable small-scale farmers to be protected from the importation of foreign goods** and **Sierra Leone's Dialogues discussed the need for a robust commodity market system** to ensure price stability.



#### Value chains

The **Western region is working towards sustainable food value chains, common areas for improvement included an increased access to good quality inputs** (especially seeds), enhanced mechanisation to maximise production and the establishment of processing facilities to reduce post-harvest losses.

In **Sierra Leone's Dialogues, the high cost of agricultural inputs (particularly agro-chemicals)** was highlighted, as well as the need for improved regulation. Special mention was made of the need for affordable quality seeds, with a preference for input dealers not only at the chieftom level but at the district level.

In **Nigeria, stakeholders indicated a need for value chain and development financing by the Central Bank of Nigeria** to increase food accessibility and safety. The need for mechanisation in all value chain activities was mentioned as key to enhancing efficiencies, improving productivity and encouraging youth inclusion. It was also noted that Nigerian food systems could be enhanced, and food safety improved, through the provision of high-quality inputs, the adoption of good agronomy practices and the management of post-harvest activities.

In **Niger, stakeholders indicated that legume, fruit and vegetable value chains are weak**. Processing was noted as inadequate, forming the weakest link of the value chain and resulting in post-harvest/post-production losses. Major investments are deemed necessary to strengthen food value chain links and improve food preservation, e.g. through cold chains. Milk collection and processing units need to be created and promoted in each region. The millet value chain is limited by the unavailability of suitable seeds, soil degradation, poor access to agricultural inputs and low levels of mechanisation. Vegetable value chains, particularly for tomatoes, are also affected by poor access to suitable seeds. The fish value chain was noted as having great potential but needs to be strengthened with the development of inland aquaculture, which could be achieved by popularising national fisheries policy.

A lack of access to food processing facilities was also highlighted in the Ghanaian Dialogues.





**Stakeholders in Ghana recognised the need to strengthen their fragmented food value chains, with actions such as:**

- Mobilising investments in infrastructure and services as well as human and material resources to develop value chains supporting sustainable end markets;
- Building data on actors in food value chains, their profiles, locations, needs and actions given the risks;
- Strengthening PPPs by promoting mechanisms for coordination; and
- Recognising informal markets and value chains as important components of the food system.



## Food waste

**The Western region's food waste was largely attributed to a lack of storage facilities, limited food processing and poor food handling.** In **Nigeria, stakeholders discussed the reduction of food loss and waste through innovative food storage and processing methods** from the point of harvest to the point of consumption. The rehabilitation of, and use of, silos in each Local Government Area was suggested. In addition, to reduce environmental impacts and health and safety it was suggested that the recycling of food waste products be improved.

Stakeholders in **Ghana described the need for warehouses and other storage infrastructure in times of surplus.** Key areas of discussion included hermetic bags to reduce post-harvest losses of cereals and legumes and healthy food processing techniques to increase the shelf life of locally produced agricultural commodities. In Sierra Leone, stakeholders suggested that the Government improve access to affordable electricity supply to reduce food waste, particularly in urban areas.



## Health and nutrition

In **Gambia's Dialogues it was noted that a lack of access to quality health services in rural areas** has led to high under five, infant and neo-natal mortalities.

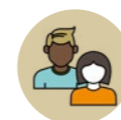
In **Sierra Leone's Dialogues it was noted that there is a lack of food reserves,** highlighting the need for formation of food banks, the provision of improved storage facilities and the manufacturing of key foods for improved preservation.

In **Ghana, there are no standards for regulating produce especially those for local markets.** Food safety standards and labelling need improvement by following guidelines such as the Codex Alimentarius. The Ghanaian dialogues also mentioned the improper use of agrochemicals in farming, processing and retail and the need for adherence to safe practices. With respect to consumption, there is no screening for food vendors on diseases such as typhoid, which puts consumers at high risk. Furthermore, there is a lack of education and low nutritional literacy amongst the population. Ghanaian stakeholders also described an absence of food-based dietary guidelines, a lack of nutritional standards and the unaffordability of nutritious food. A need for recognition of the value of healthy indigenous foods and a return to their consumption was further highlighted.

In **Sierra Leone, poor dietary diversity is a major concern for both children and adults** and proposed actions included improved nutrition education and scaling up sensitisation on the country's Food-Based Dietary Guideline for Healthy Eating. It was identified that the health system is weak, and health system strengthening can assist in improving the health status especially of women and children under the age of five years.

The **Nigerian Dialogues focused on the adoption of healthy diets through the production and availability of healthy and safe foods.** To ensure agricultural systems produce good quality and nutritionally adequate food, stakeholders recommended the promotion of the use of high yielding crop varieties and livestock breeds to increase productivity and subsidies for farmers. To enhance consumption of

nutritious, safe, and diverse foods, stakeholders suggested a nutrition awareness programme to assist consumers in making healthy food choices against the dangers of contaminated food either through harmful chemicals, poor processing methods, or poor health and safety practices. It was also indicated that nutritional education in schools, hospitals and marketplaces needs to be strengthened.



## Gender and social inclusivity

The **Western region recognised the important role that women play in food systems,** despite their unequal opportunities (e.g. access to land, financial resources and information), and the need to empower them for transformational change. In addition, stakeholders from **Ghana and Nigeria highlighted the need to attract youth to food systems through improved technology.**

In the **Gambian Dialogues, stakeholders indicated that women form more than 50% of the farming population and in some regions they are the main producers of vegetables, rice and groundnuts.** However, despite their contributions, they are disadvantaged by a lack of access to key production components and inputs, particularly land, financial resources and technical know-how. It was noted that due to cultural norms and traditions, women in Gambia typically do not own land and so do not have collateral to obtain bank loans.

In the **Ghanaian Dialogues, women's access to credit was identified as a key challenge in the agricultural sector.** There is also a lack of access to gender-sensitive equipment especially for small-scale processing. Furthermore, food production is currently unattractive to the youth who are not replacing the aging farmer population. Suggested actions to address this included the deployment of mobile agricultural extension services and digitisation. It was also recommended that the Government purchase/subsidise land for agricultural purposes and engage traditional landholders to address land tenure challenges for easier access by women and youth.





In **Sierra Leone**, it was also noted that **women play an important role in food production** and have unequal access to agricultural inputs. As was mentioned by Ghanaian stakeholders, there is a need for gender-friendly processing tools and equipment. Furthermore, there is a need for the inclusion of women in policy formulation and implementation along the food system chain and linkages.

The **Nigerian Dialogues highlighted the importance of including youth in the agricultural sector using technology and e-commerce**. Nigerian stakeholders noted that over 60% of the farmers in the south-east are women, and that they have unequal access to productive resources. It was recommended that the south-east develop and implement Social Investment Programmes that take vulnerable groups into consideration. Improving women farmers' access to land was seen as a key means for enhancing food production and security. Women groups should be created and encouraged to participate in food system decision-making.



#### The following actions were suggested for improving gender and social inclusion in Nigerian food systems:

- Encouraging and supporting the establishment and functioning of cooperative societies for women and other vulnerable groups;
- Promoting the 'Village Savings Association Model' to facilitate access to credit, inputs, and trainings;
- Providing access to land for cultivation by vulnerable groups at the community level;
- Addressing social norms and practices that systematically provide privileges to some groups over others;
- Eliminating access barriers to markets, and social exclusion for vulnerable groups;
- Ensuring social protection schemes reach the intended beneficiaries;
- Promoting the use of clean energy; and
- Identifying alternative sources of funding for interventions, other than government.



#### Governance and policy

In **Gambia**, the **effective coordination of relevant policies on food systems was highlighted as a major issue in the attainment of the SDGs by 2030**. Existing policies need to be reviewed and aligned ensuring equity, justice, empowerment and sustainability for all. It was noted that the Government needs to honour its commitments to national and international agreements/treaties such as the Malabo Declaration (committing 10% of public expenditure to agriculture). The need for national and regional level food reserves for building resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stresses was also emphasised.

It was highlighted in the **Sierra Leone Dialogues that the land tenure system is affecting commercial farming** and needs to be resolved through the allocation of land for agricultural purposes. Another area of concern was that of mining companies degrading land and aquatic habitats that could be used for crop, livestock and fish production, respectively. It was suggested that land be reclaimed from the mining sector for food production. The need for modern farming technology, irrigation systems and crop intensification were highlighted as well as the waiving of agricultural input taxes for the next five years. **The Sierra Leone Dialogues also that there is no standalone policy to address community disputes** arising from the destruction of farmers' crops by grazing animals.

The **Nigerian Dialogues discussed the need to review existing policies that limit access to resources** e.g. the Land Tenure System/Land Use Act. It was suggested that court rulings be enforced to grant women the right to inherit land. Stakeholders also recommended awareness programmes for policy makers on the importance of food systems for food and nutrition security, job creation and economic development, and the challenges facing food systems together with actions needed to fix them. Other recommendations included strengthening divisions within different ministries, departments and agencies of government, and ensuring budgetary provisions for nutritional programme implementation.

**Stakeholders indicated that fruit is expensive in Niger**. It was suggested that Niger learn from the experience of Kenya and South Africa, who have established relatively low prices for fresh produce and have implemented import policies to fill gaps in the local market.

Discussions in **Burkina Faso suggested that national policies relating to food systems and their state of implementation are adequate** but could be enhanced. It is important that national policies guarantee access to sufficient, diverse, healthy and nutritious food for all, including vulnerable people as well as ensure the adoption of good dietary practices and healthy lifestyles by consumers.



**Suggestions relating to governance and policy improvements to strengthen food systems in Ghana included:**

- Improved infrastructure (transport and storage);
- Policy to support the diversification of produce;
- Policy to improve access to appropriate and quality inputs;
- Regulation of food imports;
- Valorisation of nutritious traditional food to incentivise production and consumption;
- Application of best practices including GAPs, tracing and containment of contaminated produce;
- Importation of approved agrochemicals only; and
- Establishment of food and land banks (reserve lands for agriculture) to increase food production.



**In Senegal's Dialogues stakeholders recommended the following policy measures for access to healthy and nutritious food:**

- Promoting improved technologies for processing, preservation and packaging of food products;
- Facilitating national producers' access to local and international markets;
- Incentives for the development of partnership contracts between large urban suppliers and small rural family farmers for an adequate food supply for cities;

- Promotion of efficient networks for the equitable distribution of food products;
- Trade tax exemptions for the food and pharmaceutical sectors;
- Considering the food sector's action plans in the multi-year expenditure planning document;
- Popularisation of texts (laws, decrees, orders) and policy documents relating to the country's food systems;
- Facilitating access to resources, financial support for the development of said systems; and
- Strengthening of national research programmes on food and nutritional issues in Senegal.

**Proposed actions relating to sustainable consumption patterns in Senegal included:**

- Control of food products placed on the market (regulation of advertising, labelling, processing, marketing and catering);
- Encourage change in eating habits (integration of nutrition education in school curricula, conducting awareness campaigns on the requirements of healthy and nutritious food);
- Promotion of local products in school canteens;
- Facilitation of agroecological transition through subsidy mechanisms for factors of production and price support for producers; and
- Restriction of unfair competition by improving regulation of the internal market.



**Partnerships**

In the **Nigerian Dialogues**, it was noted that **strong partnerships between government, the private sector and other funding agencies** (both local and international) are needed to transform the food system. Emphasis was placed on the need for collaboration between national and state agencies and all relevant stakeholders, to be better able to understand the nature of the food system challenge and the gaps to be filled by agricultural extension workers. **Stakeholders in Ghana made special mention of a need for partnerships to mobilise financial resources.**



**Research and development**

**Stakeholders in Nigeria highlighted a need to enhance investment in food systems research and development** particularly in the areas of seed production, GAPs and food preservation. Research institutes need to be better positioned to engage in demand-driven research. It was suggested that the private and public sectors establish a partnership to enhance domestic R&D capacity and ensure the dissemination and adoption of viable R&D output amongst Nigerian farmers.

In **Niger**, discussions suggested that **research is poorly funded**, and the results are not adequately disseminated. Sufficient budget is needed for research to contribute to rural development through innovations and advice to users. A partnership framework needs to be developed between research institutions.





## Technology and innovation

The Nigerian Dialogues highlighted the following technology and innovation needs to increase resilience and productivity with a focus on nutrition:

- Scale up technologies, particularly in relation to cold chains, to tackle post-harvest food losses;
- Enhance innovation in agricultural production e.g. hydroponics, drip irrigation, mechanisation, biotechnology and genome editing;
- Adopt modern farming techniques by providing farmers with technologies and farm implements that can be maintained by local farmers;
- Use of drones for the application of fertiliser, herbicides and pesticides;
- Conduct geological surveys and mapping for agricultural areas and those prone to insecurity;
- Group security systems including community watches; and
- Undertake soil and nutrient mapping, land banking and weather modelling to control poor farming systems.

In Ghana, stakeholders mentioned the need to digitise food systems, for example, by using artificial intelligence, blockchain farming and hydroponics.



## Finance and investment

Ghana, Sierra Leone, Nigeria and Niger all indicated constraints in accessing finance for healthy and sustainable foods. In Sierra Leone, policies surrounding access to finance for agricultural activities need to be reviewed as the conditions for loan repayment are not suitable for farmers. The current interest rates in commercial banks are too high and the period for repayment of loans needs to be specified in financial loan policies.

Nigerian stakeholders discussed the need for private capital to work with other partners who have agricultural know-how to create access to micro-finance for the youth and/or female entrepreneurs, in combination with business coaching and advisory services. In Niger, it was recommended that donors contribute to sector pooled funds in addition to the Investment Plan for Food and Nutritional Security.



## Areas of divergence



### Governance and policy

In Ghana, stakeholders suggested that agriculture should be made attractive to the youth, however, some indicated that the youth are already attracted to agriculture but face other difficulties e.g. entering the poultry industry. The youth need support from the Government including access to arable land.

In Nigeria, a key challenge mentioned by stakeholders was lobbying and interference by special interest groups such as large multinationals and some local industries. It was noted that to achieve equitable access to affordable healthy diets, the Government will need to commit to reducing the influence of interest groups within food systems and open the market to what people really need, rather than what food companies want consumers to buy. This would simultaneously improve consumption patterns. Furthermore, there were divergent views on the Government's actions towards improving nutrition, for example, some stakeholders were of the opinion that the Government is doing a considerable amount of sensitisation especially on breastfeeding, whereas others were of the opinion that the Government could do more in addressing issues concerning undernutrition e.g. poverty.

In Guinea, contentious issues included the management of land disputes; conflict management between actors, particularly farmers and breeders; and policy for granting land to youth and women.

In Niger, stakeholder opinions varied on subsidising agricultural inputs. Some stakeholders disagreed with the action saying it was only viable in the short term, as subsidies can create dependency, distort competition and private sector activities, and manifest a significant financial burden for the state in the long term. Other stakeholders were adamant that Niger cannot eliminate hunger without subsidising agricultural inputs and equipment.



### Environmental sustainability

**A few areas of divergence emerged during the Gambian Dialogues, particularly around land use and human-wildlife conflict.** Stakeholders from the forestry and food production value chains could not agree on the expansion of agricultural lands at the expense of forests. Rice farmers complained about hippopotamuses invading and destroying their fields, but as they are protected animals, they cannot hunt them. This has resulted in lengthy discussions between the agriculture and wildlife departments.

In **Nigeria, divergences addressed the issue of a 'healthy diet' versus a 'sustainable diet'**. A healthy diet was said to include "a diversity of foods that are safe and provide levels of energy appropriate to age, sex, disease status and physical activity as well as essential micronutrients". However, it was noted that healthy diets and sustainable diets are not mutually inclusive. Evidence suggests that synergies can be identified (e.g. reducing animal protein in meat-based diets) but are often exceedingly difficult to achieve. On the other hand, completely decoupling healthy diets from the sustainability of value chains that deliver them would also not be desirable from a food system, environmental and climate change perspective.

Another divergence in the **Nigerian Dialogues was on the establishment of Rural Grazing Area settlements** to address the issues of livestock production and GHG emissions. It was highlighted that State governments need to meet with relevant stakeholders on the suitability of the programme given the diverse ecosystems that will be affected. In addition, it was noted that inorganic fertilisers are preferred to organic types, and there is a need for sensitisation/capacity building on the benefits associated with the latter.



### Livelihoods

In **Ghana, it was suggested by some stakeholders that there are too many 'middlemen' and that they inflate food prices.** On the other hand, some stakeholders said the middlemen were important for linking farmers to markets.

**In Benin's Dialogues, farmers and herders had differing opinions on the management of corridors for livestock movement.**



### Inclusivity

In the **Nigerian Dialogues, stakeholders disagreed on the assumption that youth want to work in agriculture or agro-processing.** The notion that a large proportion of youth is ready to be employed in low-paying, low-tech industries might be misplaced, and the question 'what do the youth want?' needs to be answered to inform demographic transition and youth policy design.

**Nigerian stakeholders also diverged on the role of gender** especially in areas affected by insurgency where women are becoming the household head. It was clear from different submissions that what is seen as a discriminatory social norm against a vulnerable group in one community might be a normal way of life in other communities, depending on the values and level of social indoctrination of the people. However, the issue of concern is the impact of gender inequality on food systems in the region. Some believed that women should be organised into groups, e.g. cooperatives for stronger participation whilst others felt that most women involved in farming have already formed producer groups, cooperatives, and associations and that the key challenge lies in access to production knowledge, technology and resources.



### Climate change and shocks

In **Ghana, stakeholders disagreed on whether the country's food system had the capacity to prepare for, withstand and recover from climate change-related crises and shocks.** Initially a few participants argued that the food system was resilient to climate change, however, their perceptions changed after a discussion on the indicators of resilience. Although the stakeholders agreed that the food system was vulnerable to climate change, they also noted the potential for resilience building.



### Northern region (Egypt, Mauritania, Morocco, Tunisia)



#### Climate change and shocks

Morocco's Dialogues determined that climate action needs to transcend different scales, from national to the landscape level, to strengthen adaptation and resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stresses in agricultural production systems. The Tunisian Dialogues discussed the need for improved EWSs.



#### Environmentally sustainable production and consumption

Public awareness campaigns were central to enhancing sustainable consumption and production practices in Morocco and Tunisia. In Morocco, public awareness programmes were strengthened and operationalised to institutionalise information and training campaigns within structures responsible for disseminating good agricultural and food safety practices. Successful experiences were disseminated through mass media and social networks. Tunisia followed a similar approach to Morocco, using public awareness programmes to encourage a shift towards sustainable consumption and production patterns. Users were educated on the need to protect water and soil resources, the recycling of wastewater and the adoption of GAPs.

In Egypt, stakeholders identified the key barriers to sustainable food systems as water scarcity, population growth, urbanisation, persistent food safety and quality challenges and the prevalence of unhealthy consumption patterns.



#### Trade and market access

Stakeholders in the Tunisian Dialogues suggested a review of international trade rules to make them better suited to sustainable food systems. The protection of producers through the establishment of a monitoring system on supply and market prices was also highlighted. In Mauritania, stakeholders indicated a need for improved import regulation, particularly of milk products.



#### Health and nutrition

In Mauritania, stakeholders identified the key constraints to food security as the use of outdated farming techniques, the low technical capacity of producers, and difficulties in accessing land and funds.

Nutritional awareness programmes and the promotion of healthier diets using the media and food guides were deemed necessary by Tunisia. In Morocco, the need to recognise the nutritional value of indigenous foods and return to their consumption was highlighted.



#### Gender and social inclusivity

Moroccan stakeholders recognised that the economic empowerment of women through access to resources, services, economic opportunities and decision making contributes to improved food security and more efficient and sustainable food systems.



#### Actions to empower women in Morocco included:

- Supporting women to exercise their fundamental rights;
- Facilitating their access to employment, natural resources, services and markets;
- Enabling entrepreneurship; and
- Promoting their participation in political and governance processes.



#### Value chains

The Moroccan Dialogues described the need for fair, secure and sustainable supply chains to ensure the responsible use of natural resources, reduced food loss and food waste, and for making sustainability an easy choice for consumers.



#### Food waste

In Morocco, restaurant owners shared their concern about disposing of large amounts of uneaten food. The wastage of food shocked stakeholders working with food insecure households and presented an area for collaboration.

Image Top: ©Georgina Smith (ILRI)



### Governance and policy

In **Morocco**, it was established that **agricultural trade and social policies facilitate access to affordable, safe and nutritious food for all**. The need to review and update and/or operationalise legislative mechanisms in the sectors of water, climate change, biodiversity, energy transition, women's empowerment, health security, nutritional quality, food loss and waste and the circular economy was emphasised. Furthermore, the Dialogues highlighted the misalignment between action logic and coordination mechanisms, which has limited the efficiency of interventions. There is also a need for improved participation and coordination, which can be achieved through the active engagement of all stakeholders in the development and implementation of strategies and the strengthening of coordination structures.



### Research and development

**Morocco's stakeholders indicated the need for an increase in funding for scientific research in the agricultural sector**. Stakeholders also discussed the need for integrated and multidisciplinary research.



### Technology and innovation

In **Tunisia**, the use of digital technologies for the production of educational materials on consumption and sustainable production (e.g. applications, games, social networks) was discussed. Furthermore, digital applications could be developed to promote networking for the recovery and redistribution of food products and leftover meals. The strengthening of EWSs and digitisation of agriculture was mentioned as key.

It was highlighted in the **Mauritanian Dialogues**, that the country has promoted and popularised agricultural mechanisation.



### Finance and investment

In **Mauritania**, it was recognised that budget allocations need to be increased to meet basic infrastructure and human resource needs. In addition, smallholder and family farms require better access to financing and agricultural credit.



### Areas of divergence



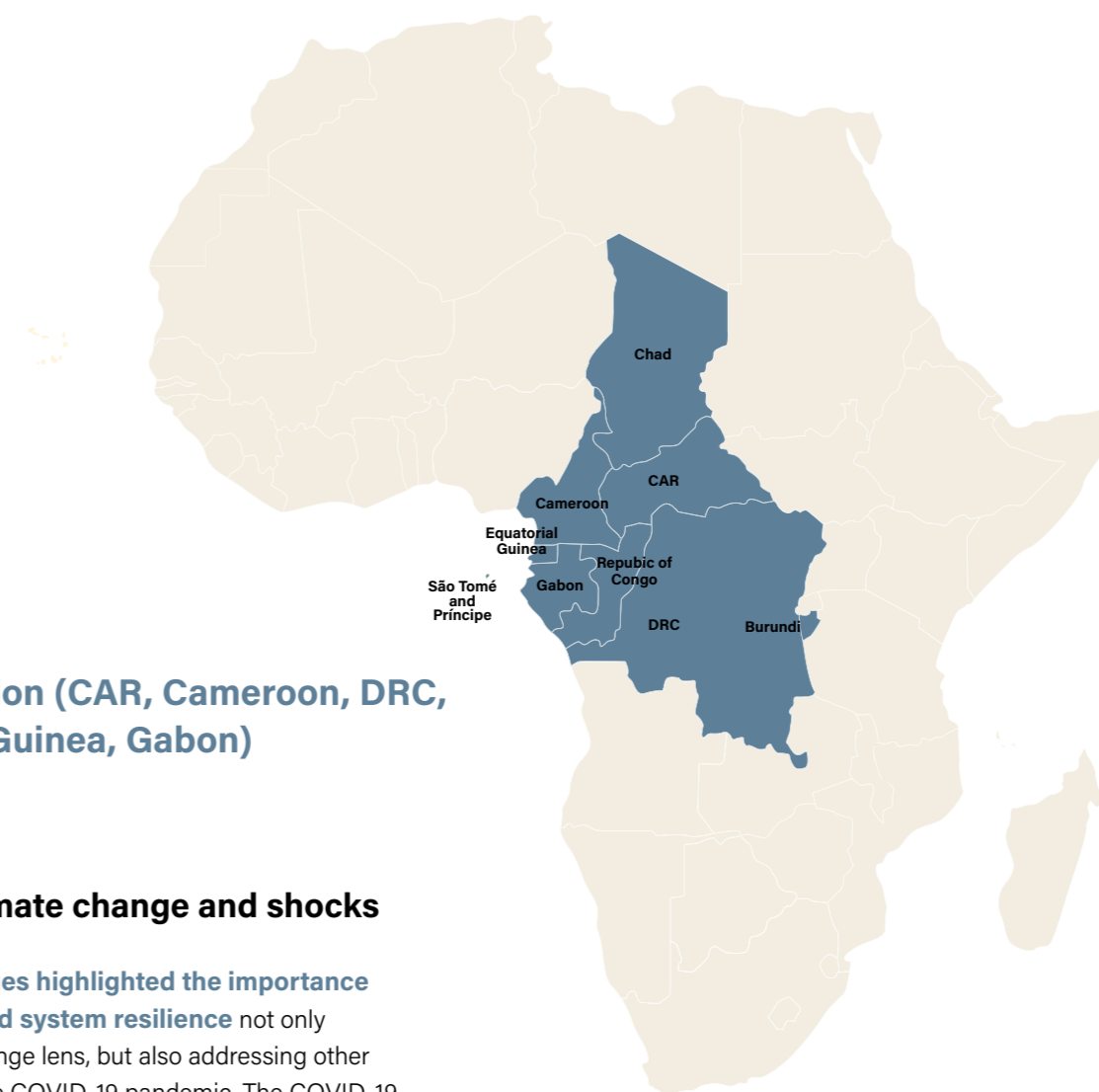
### Scale/context of approach

In **Tunisia**, discussions took place on the geographic scale of regional food models. It was noted that some models are focused on the importance of returning to traditional foods specific to localities, whilst others focused on the relaunch of regional food models such as the Mediterranean diet.



### Governance and policy

In **Mauritania**, some stakeholders mentioned the need to introduce differential taxes for imported products to reduce competition with the local market. Other stakeholders suggested that it would be more beneficial to support local producers with equipment and inputs, considering the global trade agreements in place (World Trade Organisation (WTO), AfCFTA and the Economic Community of West African States).



### Central region (CAR, Cameroon, DRC, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon)



### Climate change and shocks

**Gabon's Dialogues highlighted the importance of looking at food system resilience** not only with a climate change lens, but also addressing other shocks such as the COVID-19 pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic and associated increased unemployment rate has resulted in lower purchasing power and a reduced demand for food. This in turn is resulting in food surpluses at the producer level, higher levels of post-harvest losses and food insecurity and malnutrition. Community-level education on contingency planning and risk management were suggested actions to address the issue of shocks. In addition, Gabon described the need to favour local production to strengthen the resilience of food systems in the face of crises such as COVID-19, which disrupted food value chains and importation.



### Environmentally sustainable production and consumption

In the **Central region's Dialogues**, improved land tenure, capacity building on good land management practices and equal access to subsidies were some of the action areas given to enhance sustainable food production. It was recognised in the **Equatorial Guinea Dialogues that comprehensive and diversified training is needed for technicians and farmers** to increase agricultural production. In addition, the Environmental Organisations Sector insisted on the importance of promoting the sustainable management of natural resources and biodiversity conservation.



In **Gabon's Dialogues**, special mention was made of the regional imbalance between farmers in the northern countries who benefit from subsidies and those in the south who tend to be small-scale farmers with limited resources. Mechanisms need to be developed to support the farmers in the south to protect biodiversity (protected fauna causes extensive damage to farmers' plantations) and to promote improved farming methods and sustainable forest management. Persistent human-wildlife conflict was noted as threatening food security as well as the lives of farmers with 8 deaths recorded in 2020, 15 accidents and 8,300 complaints. Furthermore, it was noted that the emigration of youth to urban areas is likely to continue, should a solution not be found. It was concluded that support from international bodies is needed in the implementation of eco-responsible agriculture.



#### Dialogues in the DRC highlighted the need to:

- Guarantee access for all to healthy, affordable and nutritious food;
- Switch to sustainable consumption patterns;
- Stimulate production that respects nature;
- Promote equitable livelihoods; and
- Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress.

Land tenure was noted as a major barrier to sustainable agricultural production in the DRC.



#### Trade and market access

In **Equatorial Guinea**, the need for improved equity in rural transport was highlighted, as rural populations are economically excluded by food distribution barriers.



#### Value chains

In **CAR**, stakeholders indicated that smallholder farmers are responsible for the majority of food production but face multiple agricultural challenges such as a lack of access to good quality inputs (such as seeds, fertilisers, pesticides and supervision) and reliable machinery. It was mentioned that the resilience of vulnerable communities can be strengthened through the development of sustainable value chains and the establishment of food safety nets.

In **Equatorial Guinea's Dialogues**, it was indicated that food handling in supply chains is poor and the control of food quality in public markets and grocery stores is inadequate.



#### Health and nutrition

In the **Central region**, key areas for improving health and nutrition included nutrition-sensitive agriculture, reducing the prices of nutritious foods, awareness campaigns on nutrition and indigenous foods, improved dietary guidelines and food safety standards. In the **CAR Dialogues**, it was mentioned that there is a need for the development of nutrition-sensitive agriculture with the ambition of reducing chronic malnutrition by at least 10% in three years.

The **Dialogues in Equatorial Guinea** found that healthy and nutritious food is too expensive thereby limiting the population's access to it. Consequently, obesity, anaemia and child malnutrition have risen, and the country has promoted the production and consumption of healthy, safe and nutritious food.

**Nutritional awareness programmes and the promotion of healthier diets using the media and food guides were deemed necessary by Gabon.** Stakeholders described an absence of food-based dietary guidelines and a lack of nutritional standards. Furthermore, the need for a return to the consumption of healthy indigenous foods was recognised.



#### Other potential means for improving nutritional intake in Gabon, included:

- Improved dietary data;
- School feeding programmes;
- Incorporation of nutritional education in school curricula;
- Diversification of food production for more balanced diets;
- Improved processing;
- Fortification/enrichment methods; and
- Modern food storage practices.



#### Gender and social inclusivity

In **Gabon**, it was mentioned that people living with HIV are now included in agricultural projects with grants available to them to purchase agricultural land. The FAO has committed to continue supporting the empowerment of people living with HIV by providing training on vegetable production and balanced diets. Land has also been allocated to refugees for agricultural and commercial activities. **Youth inclusion was also emphasised in Gabon's Dialogues.** The youth have been mobilised through the digitalisation and mechanisation of agriculture but there is still a need to promote agricultural professions and provide incentives to interest more young people. The State also needs to improve basic social services such as hospitals, schools, recreation centres and internet connectivity in rural areas.





Image: © Juan Pablo Marín García (Alianza de Bioversity International / CIAT)

In **Cameroon**, an impact study was conducted on the socio-economic effects of COVID-19 on livelihood strategies undertaken by the rural poor and the adaptation of the agricultural sector as a whole. Consultation was inclusive with participation by the Regional Platform of Farmers' Organisations of Central Africa, youth, women, people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups. The consultation was facilitated by the Climate Smart Agriculture Youth Network Global.



### Governance and policy

In **CAR**, a common vision for 2030 was identified through the involvement of different food system stakeholders, government, technical and financial partners, civil society, farmers' organisations as well as the national scientific community. The Government, through the Ministry of Agriculture, is to strengthen its leadership and coordinate actions.

Stakeholders mentioned that **Gabon is implementing a policy that reconciles agricultural production with environmental conservation**. The National Land Use Plan is to provide a key instrument for the preservation of primary forests and other terrestrial and aquatic protected areas. The Dialogues in Gabon also highlighted the need for an increased

budget for the Department of Agriculture so as to be able to respect the Maputo and Malabo agreements. Other action areas included the need to implement nutrition policies, strengthen collaboration between the Health Department and other sectors that deal with health issues, and to reform the legislative and regulatory framework to promote smallholders' access to land.



### Partnerships

**Gabon identified the need for forestry companies to collaborate with the department responsible for infrastructure** to maintain road networks essential for the flow of agricultural produce.



### Research and development

In **Equatorial Guinea and Gabon**, stakeholders noted the need for **State-funded research to improve agricultural production**. Additionally, in **Equatorial Guinea**, it was recognised that **all subsectors (e.g. crops, livestock, fisheries and forestry) need technical assistance in production**, diagnosis of problems, coordination and financing for research.



### Technology and innovation

In **Equatorial Guinea**, special mention was made of the need for technical assistance by fisheries, particularly in the areas of:

- Traditional boat repairs;
- Safety and survival equipment at sea, such as radar;
- Engine spare parts; and
- Facilities for the conservation, handling and sale of fresh fish.



### Finance and investment

In **CAR**, a support strategy has been established for small-scale producers which includes improved access to financing and Equatorial Guinea has entered high-level dialogue to work towards the Maputo agreement of investing 10% of resources in the agricultural sector.

In **Gabon**, the Dialogues highlighted the need for mechanisms to mobilise funds for producers. It was deemed essential to set up an investment fund to support agricultural activities. It was noted that professionals from the agricultural sector are prepared to contribute to its establishment through voluntary financial contributions which will be supplemented by the State. Furthermore, it was suggested that banking institutions hire agricultural specialists to better assess the demands for related financing.



### Areas of divergence



#### Scale/context of approach

In the **CAR Dialogues**, **customary law on land access proved a contentious issue** as it does not allow equity in access to land nor the sustainable exploitation of non-timber forest products. Furthermore, current agricultural systems, concentrated around villages with limited resources, were noted as not being conducive to the establishment of large farms, which would likely create tension over land.



#### Governance and policy

In **Equatorial Guinea**, importance was placed on updating national legislation related to the food system and its sustainability. The livestock sector indicated a need to build a feed factory. This led to discussions on who should establish the factory, the Government or the private sector. Additionally, producers highlighted the need for better coordination between financial institutions and the competent ministerial departments to improve the selection of beneficiaries to financial facilities.



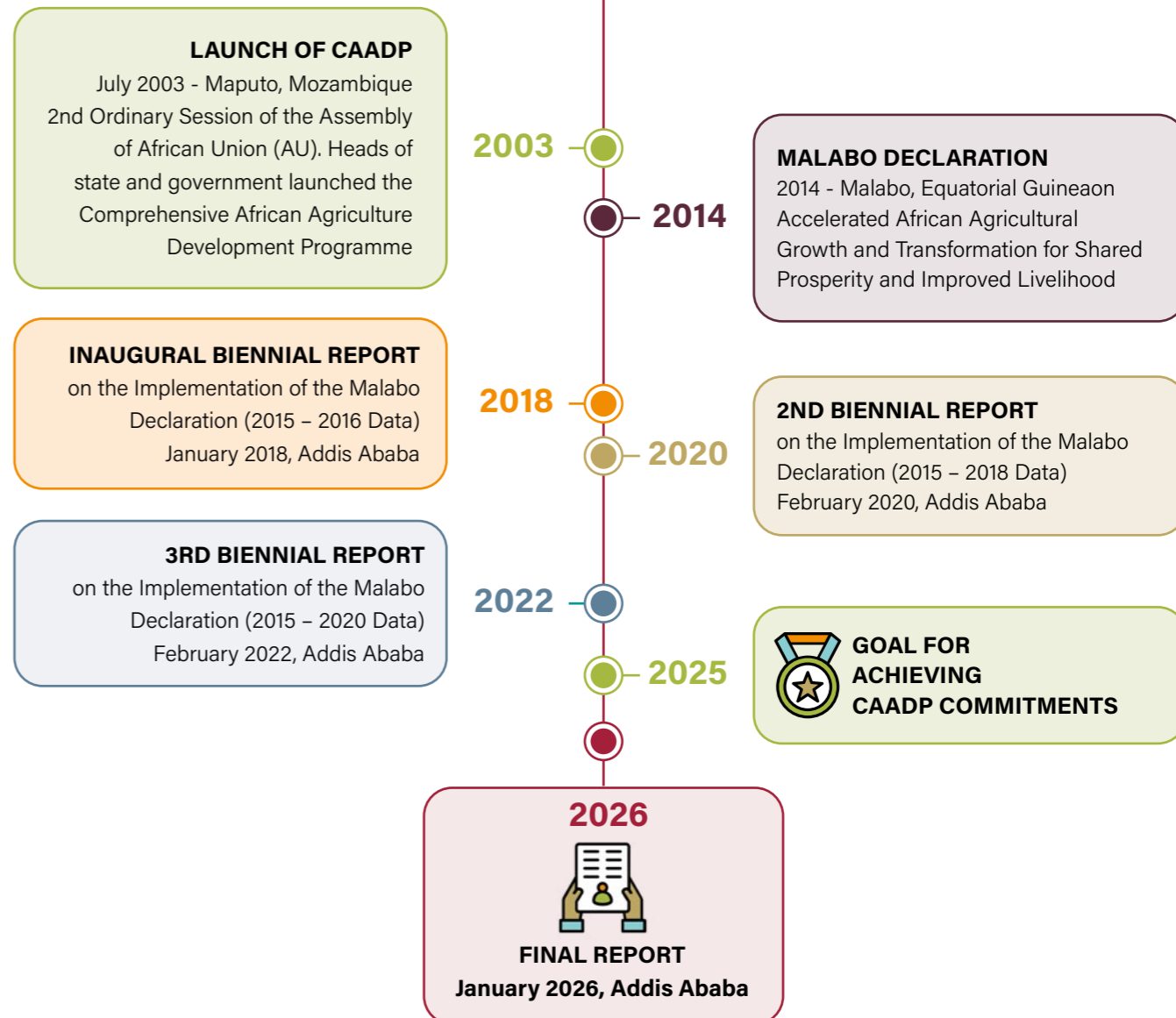
Image: ©Annie Spratt (Unsplash)



# Key insights from CAADP 3rd Biennial review process

## About CAADP

Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP).  
Africa's policy framework for agriculture and agriculture-led development since 2003.  
Aimed at reducing poverty and increasing food security on the continent.



## The 3rd Biennial Review Process

The Third Biennial Review Report is on the progress in the implementation of the Malabo Declaration on **“Accelerated Africa Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods”** that was adopted by the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government in June 2014 in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, to strengthen the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program (CAADP).

The Malabo Declaration has seven commitments. Under Commitment 7 of the Declaration, AU Heads of State and Government requested the AU Commission and the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency (NPCA) to produce a progress report for presentation to the AU Assembly every two years, starting from 2017. The inaugural and 2nd Biennial Review Reports were presented to and endorsed by the AU Assembly in January 2018 and February 2020, respectively.



Building on the lessons of the two previous cycles and in adherence to the request from the AU leadership, the African Union Commission (AUC) and the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD) collaborated closely with partner institutions to:

1. review and update the mechanisms they had developed to enhance Africa’s capacity for knowledge and data generation and management to strengthen evidence based planning and implementation;
2. advocate for the institutionalization of a system for peer review that encourages good performance on achievement of progress made in implementing the provisions of the Malabo declaration and recognize biennially, exemplary performance through awards; and
3. conduct the third full cycle of the biennial review reporting, with the view to report on progress to the Assembly of the African Union during its 35th Ordinary Session in February 2022.

The third BR cycle was conducted in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and the United Nations Food Systems Summit (UNFSS), for which the AU convened a joint meeting of ministers in charge of agriculture, trade and finance from the AU Member States on the impacts of COVID-19 on African food systems, and the preparation and the presentation of the African common position to the UNFSS as a continent. In both instances, there was a recommitment to advance agricultural transformation of the continent through strengthening the implementation of CAADP and the BR process as the tool to assess progress on the implementation of the recommendations and the game changing solutions contained in the Africa common position to the UNFSS.

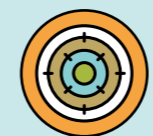
During the period under review, the agriculture sector in Africa was also challenged by the fall armyworm and the desert locust invasion especially in the horn of Africa, and climate related episodes such as floods and droughts in southern, eastern and western Africa.

This 3rd BR report was produced midway through the decade of the Malabo declaration (2015-2025). However, the scope of the recommendations **go beyond achieving the 2025 targets and provide an opportunity to reflect on Africa’s journey to the SDG 2030 goals**, but also on the post-Malabo CAADP agenda in the context of the second ten years’ implementation plan of Agenda 2063.

Consistent with the previous reports, the seven (7) Malabo Commitments were translated into seven (7) thematic areas of performance:

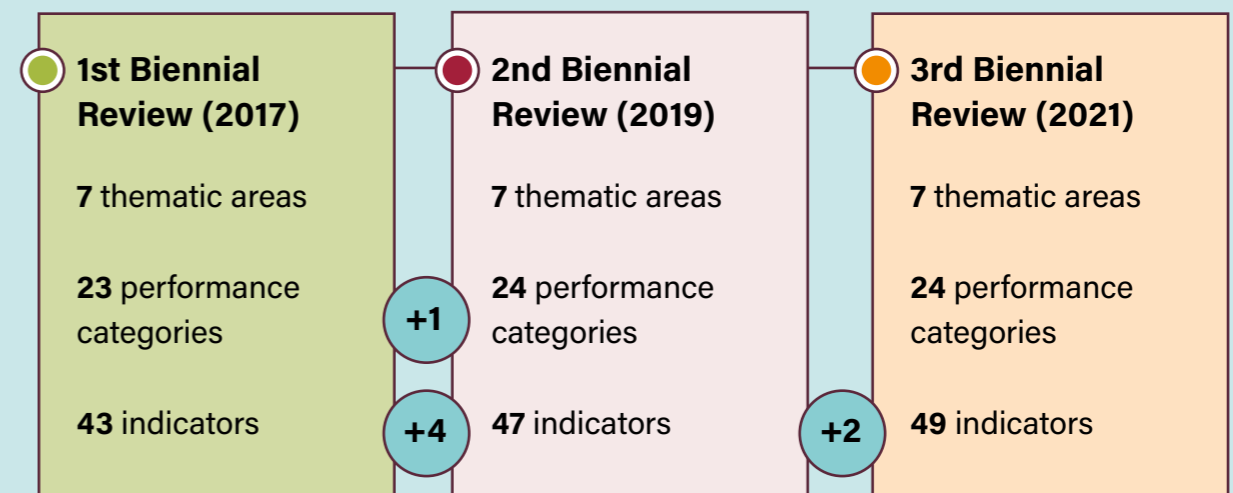
1. re-committing to the principles and values of the CAADP process;
2. enhancing investment finance in agriculture;
3. ending Hunger in Africa by 2025;
4. reducing poverty by half, by 2025, through inclusive agricultural growth and transformation; (v) boosting intra-African trade in agricultural commodities and services;
5. enhancing resilience of livelihoods and production systems to climate variability and other related risks; and
6. strengthening mutual accountability to actions and results.

### The biennial review process: evidence-based & peer-driven



#### Objective

Evaluate country performance towards achieving the CAADP Malabo goals and targets by 2025.



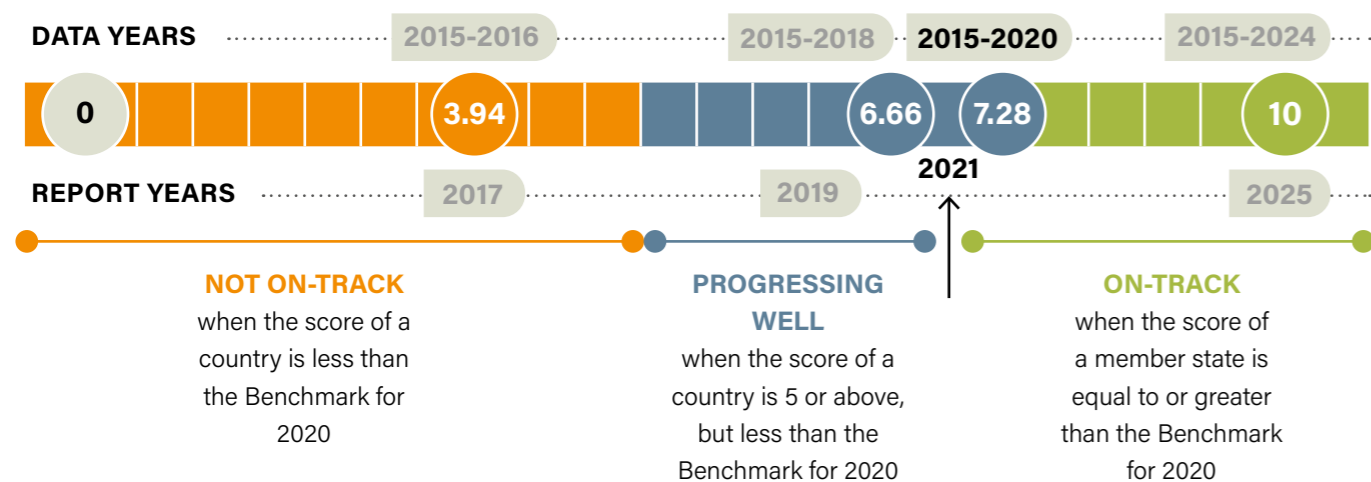
### 3rd biennial review: understanding the country scorecard

**2017 Report: 2016 Benchmark** = Minimum score for a Member State to be on track to achieve the Malabo targets in 2016

**2019 Report: 2018 benchmark** = Minimum score for a Member State to be on track to achieve the Malabo targets in 2018

**2021 Report: 2020 benchmark** = Minimum score for a Member State to be on track to achieve the Malabo targets in 2020

**Benchmark:** a standard or point of reference against which scores are compared.



Comparing the performance (score) in the indicators against their benchmarks between the 2019 BR report and the 2021 BR report shows that:



With respect to the indicators under **ACTION TRACK 1**, 10 Member States (Cabo Verde, Gambia, Mali, Mauritania, Rwanda, Seychelles, Eswatini, Tanzania, Tunisia and Zimbabwe) were on-track in 2019, compared to only 5 (Eswatini, Gambia, Mali, Tunisia and Zimbabwe) in 2021



With respect to the indicators under **ACTION TRACK 2**, 15 Member States (Burundi, Cabo Verde, Central African Rep., Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, Madagascar, Mali, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Eswatini, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda) were on-track in 2019, compared to only 1 (Egypt) in 2021



With respect to the indicators under both **ACTION TRACKS 3 AND 4**, no country was on-track in either of the Action Tracks and review periods



With respect to the indicators under **ACTION TRACK 5**, 5 Member States (Ghana, Mali, Morocco, Rwanda and Tunisia) in 2019, compared to 1 (Rwanda) in 2021



These results suggest the **performance of Africa in transforming its food systems has declined between the two review periods**, which is consistent with the overall deterioration in performance in achieving the Malabo Declaration goals and targets.

Because the CAADP Malabo Declaration aims to position agriculture as the main driver of inclusive **growth and economic development to ensure wealth creation, food and nutrition security, poverty alleviation and prosperity, and resilience and sustainability**, African leaders have already set the foundation for taking a food systems approach to achieving their national development objectives.

As such, the momentum created by the UN Food System Summit is therefore an **opportunity to substantially improve on and accelerate the pace of implementation of the CAADP/Malabo Agenda**. The BR and AATS may be supplemented with additional indicators (e.g., processing and distribution as key segment in the food system) to better inform a more comprehensive planning, implementation, and tracking of transforming Africa's food systems.



In line with the theme of the 2021 BR report, the BR indicators were classified according to the five UN Food Systems Summit's Action Tracks.

Change in the performance indicators between the previous BR and this BR is analyzed to give an indication of how Member States are performing in transforming their food systems.

Of the 47 BR performance indicators, eleven fall under:



**ACTION TRACK 1**  
**Ensuring access to safe and nutritious food for all**



**ACTION TRACK 2**  
**Shifting to sustainable consumption patterns.**



**ACTION TRACK 3**  
**Boosting nature-positive production at sufficient scale.**



**ACTION TRACK 4**  
**Advancing equitable livelihoods and value distribution.**



**ACTION TRACK 5**  
**Building resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks, and stress.**

## Africa's agriculture transformation goals



### 01 Re-committing to the principles and values of the CAADP process

- Pursue agriculture-led growth strategy to achieve targets on food and nutrition security.
- Boost growth through regional cooperation and implementation of CAADP.
- Apply evidence-based planning, policy, dialogue review and accountability.
- Use of partnerships and alliances including farmers, agribusiness, and civil society.

### 02 Enhancing investment finance in agriculture

- Uphold **10% public spending** target.
- Create and enhance policy and institutional systems for private investment in agriculture, agri-business and agro-industries (priority to local investors).
- Operationalization of Africa Investment Bank.

### 03 Ending Hunger in Africa by 2025

- At least **double agricultural productivity** (focusing on Inputs, irrigation, mechanization).
- **Reduce Post-Harvest Losses** at least **by half** by 2025.
- Improve Nutrition: **reduce stunting to 10%** and **underweight to 5% by 2025**.

### 04 Reducing poverty by half, by 2025, through inclusive agricultural growth and transformation

- Sustain annual **agricultural GDP growth of at least 6%**.
- Establish / strengthen **inclusive public-private partnerships for at least 5 priority agricultural commodity value chains** w/ strong linkage to smallholder agric.
- Create **job opportunities for at least 30% of the youth** in agricultural value chains.
- Preferential entry & participation by **women and youth** in gainful and attractive agribusiness.

### 05 Boosting intra-African trade in agricultural commodities and services

- **Triple intra-Africa trade** in agricultural commodities and services by 2025
- Policy: Fast track **Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA)** & transition to a continental **Common External Tariff (CET)** scheme
- Policy: Facilitate agriculture-related trade negotiations and partnership agreements

### 06 Enhancing resilience of livelihoods and production systems to climate variability and other related risks

- Ensure that by 2025, **at least 30% of farm/pastoral households** are resilient to shocks.
- Enhance **investments for resilience initiatives**.
- Mainstream **resilience and risk management**.

### 06 Strengthening mutual accountability to actions and results

Through the CAADP Result Framework:

- Conduct a biennial Agricultural Review Process
- Foster alignment, harmonization and coordination for peer review and mutual accountability
- Strengthen capacities for knowledge and data generation
- Recognize and award best performers

## The 3rd Biennial Review Report

The aim of the report is to present individual Member States and collective performances in order to trigger continental, regional and national level action programmes to drive agricultural transformation in Africa. The report also helps to create more appetite for individual entities to strengthen national and regional institutional capacity for agriculture data collection and knowledge management to inform actions. Building on this principle, it is anticipated that this would support improved evidence-based planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, mutual learning and foster alignment, harmonization and coordination among multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder efforts. Such efforts include the CAADP Malabo Policy Learning Event, the Permanent Secretaries' Retreat, engagements led by Regional Economic Communities (RECs), and platforms organized by partners.

The report highlights the inclusive nature of the process and methodological approach that was used to collect and analyse data and write the report. Furthermore, the report also presents the key findings at continental and regional levels, the detailed profiles and scorecards of individual Member States, and sets of recommendations for individual Member States, regional bodies and continental institutions.

The report is complemented by an online CAADP BR Communication Toolkit, used as a smart and powerful online interactive tool that presents the BR data in various forms, making it more easily accessible to users. The tool was developed by AU and its partners in close consultation with RECs, technical experts and other stakeholders as an accompanying output of the BR Report to facilitate the dissemination of its findings. The tool is designed to make it easier for policymakers and other stakeholders at national and regional level to interact with the data and information provided. The Toolkit contains clear graphics, analyses and maps that facilitate easier access to the information.

For the first time, the report includes a section on the implementation of AU decisions, thematic in nature, and specific to agricultural transformation in Africa, on: Seed and Biotechnology; Livestock Development; Fisheries and Aquaculture; Irrigation; Mechanization; Fertilizer Use; Sanitary and Phytosanitary Capacities, Land Policy; and Ecological Organic Agriculture. This reporting period covers

progress made by Member States in the implementation of the Malabo declaration for the period 2015 to 2020.

As reflected in the key findings, the report presents the seven (7) thematic areas of performance, aligned with the commitments in the Malabo Declaration. It also evaluates country performance in achieving the goals and targets, which have been disaggregated into twenty-three (23) performance categories, and further divided into forty-six (46) indicators.

In the Third BR Report, countries are considered 'on-track' if their total score is equal to or higher than the benchmark of 7.28; or 'progressive' when their score is equal to or more than 5 but less than 7.28; or 'not-on-track' if their score is less than 5.

A total of fifty-one (51) AU Member States reported in this 3rd cycle of the Biennial Review process, up from the 49 Member States that reported in the 2nd Biennial Review cycle, and 43 in the inaugural Biennial Review cycle. Out of the 51 Member States that reported, 25 Member States registered increased scores between 2019 and 2021 review cycles. This reflects the commitment by Member States to the CAADP BR process and their efforts to address the shortfalls revealed in the inaugural and 2nd BR reports.

While only Rwanda is on-track to meet the goals and targets of Malabo by 2025, nineteen (19) countries are classified as progressive. With an overall score of 4.32, the continent is not-on-track to meeting the Malabo goals and targets by 2025. Regarding financing, the report shows that only four (4) countries invested at least 10% of their national expenditure on agriculture. Only one country is on track to meeting the goal by 2025. Both empirical observations and research findings presented in the report, show that the COVID-19 pandemic and its impacts on agriculture and food security on the continent, could partly explain this low performance of the continent.

**For every reporting Member State, performance against the set targets is presented in the form of a "Country Scorecard in implementing the Malabo Commitments"**



## The 2021 biennial review report calls for action to transform Africa's agriculture

- Member States, regional economic communities and AU should **mount a strong communication and dissemination campaign on the findings in the report**. The use of the CAADP biennial review communication toolkit and the biennial review dashboard should be encouraged among different stakeholders to view, observe and reflect on the findings in the report.
- Member States, working in collaboration with all stakeholders, should **ensure that national dialogues are convened to reflect on and discuss the results of this report** to prioritize and develop policy and programmatic responses to speed up the implementation of the Malabo Declaration.
- Partnerships among AU institutions, RECs, Member States and development partners** should be guided by the findings of this report to ensure alignment to the CAADP agenda.
- Stronger political leadership and commitment** is required in order for government to mobilize stakeholder buy-in for financing and implementation of key recommendations. A central multi-sectoral coordination mechanism is required for effective CAADP implementation.
- Member States are urged to **design, fund and implement carefully selected priority programs and projects** to fast-track the achievement of the seven Malabo Commitments. In this regard, Member States should intensify efforts to develop and implement Malabo-compliant high-quality NAIP.
- Strengthen the capacity of regional economic communities**, given the critical role they play in mobilizing member state in the biennial review process, by providing them with more human and financial resources.
- Strengthen mutual accountability systems** to include accountability for actions and results by a broader range of players, including the private sector, farmer organizations, civil society organizations, and development partners.
- Member States should use the CAADP biennial review mechanism** to report on progress in the implementation of the pathways for food systems transformation in the Africa Common Position to the UN Food System and national dialogues report.
- AU should undertake an external evaluation/ audit of the overall biennial review process** to establish the efficacy of the self-reporting system and to suggest measures to strengthen the quality and robustness of the process at national, regional and continental levels.
- Member States are encouraged to **integrate the CAADP biennial review data collection process** into existing national monitoring and reporting systems, including the joint sector review processes.
- AU and Member States need to develop and **strengthen implementable mechanisms for peer learning**. Well-structured peer-to-peer learning and exchange should be an integral part of the CAADP process.
- From the experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic, Member States should establish stronger **emergency response plans** and commit to building more resilient food systems to respond better to future shocks.



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