

# The Accra Communiqué

Decisions and Commitments from the African Green Revolution Forum 2019  
ACCRA, GHANA, 3-6 SEPTEMBER 2019

AGRF2019GHANA

GROW DIGITAL



## Preamble:

1. The Ninth Annual African Green Revolution Forum (AGRF) was held in Accra, Ghana from 3 to 6 September 2019. The AGRF is now well established as the premiere platform for leaders from across Africa and around the world to advance concrete plans and share knowledge to tap the enormous potential of agriculture to drive equitable and sustainable growth across the continent. The Forum was hosted under the leadership of H.E. Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, the President of the Republic of Ghana. Also present and presiding over various events were H.E. the First Lady of Ghana Rebecca Akufo-Addo; Ghana's Minister of Food and Agriculture, Hon. Dr. Owusu Afriyie Akoto; Ghana's Minister of Finance, Hon. Ken Ofori-Atta; and several key cabinet members; and the African Union Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Economy, the Hon. Josefa Leonel Correia Sacko. Other co-hosts were the 23 members of the AGRF Partners Group (under the Chairmanship of Mr. Strive Masiyiwa, Chairman of Econet Group), with AGRA serving as the AGRF Secretariat. Additional resources and technical support were provided by another 19 partners and sponsors who supported the cost of the forum and contributed to programmatic content.

2. The Forum was attended by more than 2400 delegates from 89 countries and high-level dignitaries, including H.E. Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, President of Ghana; H.E. Mahamadou Issoufou, President of Niger; H.E. Yemi Osinbajo, Vice President of Nigeria; and the Rt. Hon. Édouard Ngirente, Prime Minister of Rwanda. It was also attended by several former Heads of State leading the continental agenda, including the Rt. Hon. Tony Blair, former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom; H.E. Olusegun Obasanjo, Former President of Nigeria; H.E. Hailemariam Desalegn, Former Prime Minister of Ethiopia; H.E. Lionel Zinsou, Former Prime Minister of Benin; and Dr. Donald Kaberuka, Former President, African Development Bank. Other important Forum leaders and speakers included heads of international agencies and CEOs of global, regional and national business companies within and outside of Africa. Also in attendance were ministers of agriculture from across Africa; ministers and senior government officials from Australia, Canada, China, the European Union, Germany, Israel, Japan, Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and the United States; and influential business leaders and representatives from financial institutions, agribusiness firms, farmer associations, civil society organizations, NGOs, media, research institutions, development and technical partners, and the growing ranks of young agriculture entrepreneurs and youth leaders.

3. The AGRF 2019 in Ghana represents the first time the Forum returned to a country that had hosted it before. Ghana hosted the first AGRF in 2010 and is home to the founder of the AGRF and the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA), the late Kofi Annan, the former Secretary General of the United Nations. Ghana also has been a consistent and influential champion of the agricultural transformation agenda across the continent, reliably reinforcing the role of agriculture as Africa's most potent force for powering equitable economic progress. Its commitment to agricultural

development has made a major contribution to the country's historic economic progress.

4. The theme of this year's AGRF was "Grow Digital: Leveraging Digital Transformation to Drive Sustainable Food Systems in Africa." A rigorous series of technical assessments, policy analyses, and political discussions produced a new level of consensus that could dramatically accelerate efforts to use digital innovations to make farming in Africa more productive, profitable, sustainable and inclusive. Deliberations at the Forum made it clear that the coordinated efforts of public and private sector actors can unlock the potential of advances in everything from big data to block chain systems, drones, robotics, and machine learning platforms to overcome many different challenges and generate a host of new opportunities, particularly for Africa's young, digitally-savvy entrepreneurs. Digital technologies were seen as capable of addressing issues that have been major barriers to tapping agriculture's potential to provide a host of new economic opportunities across the continent.

5. AGRF was officially opened by the Hon. Prof. Kwabena Frimpong Boateng, Ghana's Minister for Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation speaking on behalf of H.E. Mahamudu Bawumia, Vice President of the Republic of Ghana. The session was oriented around the new Digitalisation of African Agriculture report from the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA). The report offers a comprehensive analysis of digital agricultural or D4Ag prospects in sub-Saharan Africa. The report found that the sector is growing at a brisk pace—some 60 percent of existing providers arrived on the scene in just the last three years—and advised that it will be critical for governments to take a more active role in developing enabling policies, infrastructure, and improved national data sets. In particular, it recommends the creation of an alliance of key stakeholders to promote greater investment, knowledge sharing and partnership building.

6. The Forum included a historic Presidential Summit comprised of Heads of State & Government, eminent persons, and hundreds of leaders and stakeholders present from across Africa's agriculture and agribusiness sector. Convened under the leadership of Ghana's President H.E. Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, the Presidential Summit was attended by more than 2,400 delegates, broadcast on national television and live-streamed to stakeholders regionally and globally.

7. The Forum closely examined how governments, businesses, donors and other partners are delivering on a wide range of political, policy and financial commitments. They include \$30 billion in investments pledged at AGRF in Nairobi in 2016, initiatives that emerged from AGRF 2017 in Abidjan that have added billions of additional dollars, and commitments from AGRF 2018 in Kigali that provided significant new investments. A highlight of AGRF 2019 was the Agribusiness Deal Room where private and public sector stakeholders executed commitments worth over \$200 million to develop and

strengthen several value chains in Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Uganda and Eswatini. Companies involved included Dangote Farms Ltd. of Nigeria, Press Agriculture Ltd of Malawi, Pearl Dairies Ltd. of Uganda, and Fresh Ltd. of Mozambique and Eswatini. In addition, a Unilever-IDH partnership committed \$28.6 millions towards investments in small and medium size enterprises (SMEs) working in variety of food-related endeavors.

## Ensuring the 21st Century is Africa's Century

**8.** The Presidential Summit featured critical insights into policies and strategies that are delivering proven progress in the agriculture sectors of African countries—and focused on the promise of digital innovations to greatly accelerate the African agriculture transformation and ensure the 21st Century is Africa's Century.

**8.1.** Ghana President H.E. Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo noted that AGRF 2019 was an essential opportunity to ensure agriculture is a top priority of every country's development agenda and that digitalization and data strategies play a major role in fulfilling their commitments of the Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agriculture Growth in Africa—along with Ghana's ambitious Planting for Food and Jobs Initiative.

**8.2** Niger President H.E. Mahamadou Issoufou stated that investing in agriculture is the best way to achieve Africa's wider Agenda 2063. He noted that Niger has prioritized the sector, investing 17 percent of its budget to agriculture in 2018 to improve smallholder farmer access to inputs, irrigation, new technology, and agricultural infrastructure, including digital services through a new model of "smart villages". In the face of climate change, he stated that drought does not mean famine, as Niger's investments in the 3N Initiative ("Nigeriens Nourishing Nigeriens") have proven and have been acclaimed by experts around the world as a model worth scaling up in countries seeking economic transformation and resilience through agriculture.

**8.3.** Nigeria's Vice-President H.E. Yemi Osinbajo pointed to high-potential initiatives in digital agriculture that are attracting a new wave of young Nigerians to the agriculture sector. He also noted that the ubiquity of mobile phones is making such things as digital payment platforms accessible across the population, including among poor farmers in remote rural areas.

**8.4.** Rwanda's Prime Minister the Rt. Hon. Édouard Ngirente discussed how focused efforts to make agriculture a key pillar of the country's economic development—which includes significant investments in digital technologies—are attracting a surge of interest in the sector, including from a growing number of younger entrepreneurs.

**8.5.** The Hon. Josefa Leonel Correia Sacko, Commissioner of Agriculture and Rural Economy for the African Union Commission, noted that there is a growing level of alignment and agreement among AU countries about the potential of digital agriculture services, with several countries, particularly in East Africa, providing a model that can facilitate much wider adoption across the continent.

**9.** Ministers of Agriculture from multiple countries met to discuss similar themes to the Presidential Summit with a Ministerial Roundtable that featured influential business leaders and produced a series of new commitments. Over 25 Ministers from African Governments deliberated particularly on the role of digital innovations to inform efforts to advance the 2nd Biennial Review (BR) reporting. The next report is slated for discussion by African Union Heads of State and Government in January 2020 and will track CAADP goals and targets set out in the 2014 Malabo Declaration. The assembled Ministers agreed to:

**9.1.** Support the institutionalization of the CAADP Biennial Review and to secure it as a tool to support countries in the prioritization of critical areas that can drive their agriculture transformation and track their resource commitment, actions and performance management;

**9.2.** Use evidence-based solutions, including digital tools, for identifying, designing and implementing policy solutions;

**9.3.** Implement policies that promote digital solutions to support the monitoring and implementation of key priority actions; and,

**9.4.** Drive the delivery of national and regional agriculture investment plans through well planned, implementable and measurable flagship and through prioritization of critical policy actions that each each Minister will pursue in line with the national investment plans.

## Advancing the Continental Agenda with Ambition and Innovation

**10.** Over three and a half days a series of new initiatives emerged that hold the potential to deliver new investments and major innovations in digital technologies and other areas that will animate the ambitious agenda established by Heads of State and Ministers of Agriculture.

**11.** The President of the Mastercard Foundation, Reeta Roy, announced a new US \$500 million commitment within its Young Africa Works initiative, which will support efforts of young entrepreneurs across the continent to develop economic opportunities in agriculture. Through Young Africa Works, the Foundation will endeavor to help millions of young Africans to find meaningful employment in agriculture. The new investment will raise the Foundation's total commitments to African agriculture to US \$1 billion.

**12.** The World Bank reiterated a recent pledge to invest US \$50 billion in Transforming Africa's Digital Economy, as well as noted its plans to increase funding for food security initiatives by 25 percent relative to 2017 investments, for a total of \$33 billion in funding over the next four years. The Bank is committed to ensuring every African, including every African business and government, is digitally enabled by 2030. The digital investments will focus on foundational elements of the digital economy that will be crucial to realizing the potential of digital

agriculture services. They include support for broadband infrastructure; digital skill development; digital platforms; digital financial services; and digital entrepreneurship. One key goal is to double access to broadband services across the continent by 2021.

**13.** A coalition of donors and philanthropy, including the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the United Kingdom's Department of International Development (DFID), the German development agency (BMZ), the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR), and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, announced a new initiative with the CGIAR aimed at modernizing and sharpening the priorities of public plant breeding in the developing world. The CGIAR's Crops to End Hunger initiative will provide African farmers with a new generation of varieties that help them adapt to climate change, reinforce food and nutritional security and enhance the livelihoods of both producers and consumers.

**14.** The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) under the leadership of its President Gilbert Houngbo noted that there is a huge funding shortfall between the \$115 billion that is needed for investment in agriculture annually to meet the zero hunger Sustainable Development Goal and the \$10.5 billion invested in ODA to agriculture. In response, IFAD is partnering in several areas to scale up private agribusiness investment. At this Forum, it particularly joined in creating the Food Action Alliance to bring together a consortium of partners, including the World Economic Forum (WEF), Rabobank, AfDB, and AGRA to pool individual strengths to align food systems more closely with the SDGs.

**15.** There were new commitments to expand efforts focused on providing African farmers with innovations and assistance they need to deal with the many impacts of climate change. The Hon. Ezzeddin Abu Steit, Egypt's Minister of Agriculture and Land Reclamation, speaking on behalf of H.E. Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi, President Egyptian and current Chair of the African Union, delivered the AGRF 2019 Declaration on Increasing the Adaptation and Resilience of African Food Systems. The declaration calls on multilateral, bilateral and private sector partners to support increased funding focused on multiple climate-related challenges to food production in Africa. The declaration also called on delegates including Heads of State, Ministers and private sector leaders to commit to embed resilience and adaptation interventions into national agricultural investment plans and to scaling-up proven technologies targeting smallholder farmers, with a special focus on women and youth.

**16.** H.E. the First Lady of Ghana Rebecca Akufo-Addo presided over a special event focused on scaling up nutrition-focused initiatives in the region in advance of the 2020 Nutrition for Growth (N4G) Summit in Japan. Over the last few years, the long-standing focus on food security in Africa has evolved to become a stronger focus on nutrition security. The goal is to ensure farmers are able to provide consumers with a dynamic mix of crop and livestock products that promote good health and proper childhood development. H.E. the First Lady was joined in the session by UN Assistant Secretary General Gerda Verburg of the Scaling Up Nutrition Movement, as well as Ambassadors and High Commissioners from

Canada, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States who are committed to this agenda.

**17.** A new partnership initiative, Generation Africa, was launched by founding partners from leading public and private sector organisations, who will work collaboratively to strengthen the ecosystem that supports young agripreneurs on their journey from idea to business and scale. This partnership will fast-track the rate at which businesses that have potential to impact millions of people will be identified and funded.

**18.** AGRF 2019 featured the launch of a new Africa Regional Food Trade Coalition. The Regional Food Trade Coalition was called for and developed by a large and diverse coalition of leaders from the public and private sector concerned by the current pace and dismal volume of regional trade versus imports. The coalition is building on the foundation established by the new African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and market opportunities evidenced in the region's \$35 billion annual food import bill. The goal is to increase regional food trade via more predictable policies and mechanisms that encourage new agribusiness investments that capitalize on the rich diversity of farming ecologies across the continent and the fact that 70% of African farmers are working to produce food but have no market.

The Coalition shall aim to:

**18.1.** Develop and influence key policy and regulatory reforms that will strengthen regional food trade for the benefit of all stakeholders, including smallholder farmers and consumers.

**18.2.** Support and coordinate policy interventions by strengthening key systems that generate supporting evidence for reform.

**18.3.** Facilitate engagement between agribusinesses and public sector actors for developing more predictable and transparent policy regimes that produce structured market systems and facilitate trade in agri-food products.

**18.4.** Work to improve the competitiveness of Regional Food Trade on the continent.

**19.** The Forum featured an announcement of the new global SDG 2 Alliance to coordinate urgently needed action and increase financial commitments for interventions focused on achieving the 2nd Sustainable Development Goal to eradicate hunger by 2030. Dr. Stefan Schmitz, Deputy Director-General, Department of Food, Rural Development and Natural Resources, Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), encouraged African countries to join the alliance and noted plans to hold an SDG 2 Alliance conference in 2020 in Berlin.

**20.** There were new commitments to extend the tremendous progress in improving Africa's seeds systems to many more countries across the continent. The Forum looked at models and lessons from public private partnerships to improve early generation seed production, and it also featured the launch of the new

Seed Systems Group. Working from the successful model developed and validated by AGRA's Program for Africa Seed Systems, SSG aims to partner with African governments and the international donor community to make quality seed of high-yielding, climate-resilient crop varieties available to millions more smallholder farmers— especially in countries facing significant development challenges.

### Accelerating Business Investments to Create Jobs and Economic Growth

**21.** The Investment Center and Agribusiness Deal Room of AGRF 2019 was a hub of activity, securing the Forum as a prime venue for connecting agribusinesses and investment opportunities with critically needed capital. There were more than 250 scheduled meetings and close to 600 impromptu discussions in the formal Deal Room alone. Over 100 SMEs participated in the Deal Room; these businesses have a total fundraising need of \$759 million and were able to meet with a plethora of capital providers that offer debt, equity, quasi-equity, and grant funding. Capital needs ranged from \$500k to \$100 million with an average investment need of \$7 million and a median investment need of \$1 million.

**21.1.** Private and public sector stakeholders executed commitments worth over \$200 million to develop and strengthen several value chains in Eswatini, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria and Uganda. The signing companies/investors were Dangote Farms Limited (Nigeria - Tomato value chain), Press Agriculture Limited, (Malawi - Dairy, Macadamia and Soya value chains), Pearl Dairies Limited (Uganda - Dairy value chain) and Fresh Limited (Mozambique & Eswatini - Horticulture value chain). In addition, a Unilever-IDH partnership committed \$28.6M to SME's in relevant value chains.

**21.2.** Some country delegations presented investment opportunities worth in excess of \$2 billion. The proposed investments, coupled with support from various stakeholders, is anticipated to impact millions of smallholder farmers and create 7 million direct and indirect jobs.

**21.3.** The AGRF partners will continue to monitor high-potential matches and provide feedback to the partners for targeted interventions. The Agribusiness Deal Room at the AGRF was made possible with the support of core design partners, including AECF, AGRA, AFDB-ADF, CrossBoundary, GAIN, GrowAfrica, IFAD, the Tony Blair Institute for Global Change, and USAID. The Deal Room also received advisory support from the World Economic Forum.

### Consolidating Africa's Commitment to South-South Cooperation

**22.** Building on the foundation established at AGRF 2018, the Forum included a number of productive exchanges with Africa's partners across the global south. China has pursued a successful path of agricultural and economic development that has lifted 700 million of its farmers out of poverty. Israel and Brazil also offered valuable lessons on agricultural transformation, particularly how

to apply advanced digitally-enabled agri-tech tools, adopt sustainable and appropriate irrigation systems, and increase access to mechanization. In addition, officials and experts from China, Brazil, and Israel discussed policy and digital innovations that can increase access to inputs, services and markets. They also shared key insights that can help African leaders learn from their experience to address current bottlenecks. The AGRF Partners are committed to expanding and deepening the Forum's platforms for South South Cooperation and attracting even larger delegations in the future.

### Embracing Evidence-Based Leadership

**23.** Leaders and delegates at the Forum were energized by a series of groundbreaking reports that provide a firm foundation for moving forward in multiple areas, including digital services, agri-business development, and regional trade.

**24.** The launching of the Digitalisation of African Agriculture report from CTA offered a rigorous, detailed foundation for data-driven action to realize the potential of digital agriculture (D4Ag) services to accelerate Africa's agricultural transformation. It found that most digital agriculture offerings are focused on advisory services, but those providing market linkages—for both inputs and offtake—represent the fastest growing segment. The report calls on donors, investors, and governments to consider a number of actions to scale existing and new D4Ag solutions and ensure farmers are actively using the services.

**25.** The Forum featured the release of the 2019 Africa Agricultural Status Report (AASR) from AGRA and its partners, which presented new evidence of how the SMEs-led agri-food supply chains in sub-Saharan Africa has undergone a Quiet Revolution. The report found that today, SMEs source directly from millions more smallholder farmers across Sub-Saharan Africa, accounting for 64 percent of the volume of food consumed in the region. The report finds the rise of SME's has been largely unrecognized by policymakers, even as it has bridged gaps that previously separated most small-scale farmers from commercial markets. The report calls these SMEs the "hidden middle".

**26.** The launch of the Africa Agriculture Trade Monitor (AATM) 2019 report from the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) and CTA examined the effectiveness of efforts to increase regional trade integration and intra-African trade. It also evaluated the potential impact of broader integration on Africa's trade performance in light of emerging trade protectionism in the global economy. Meanwhile, the Regional Food Trade policy symposium showcased a number of data innovations and initiatives that aid in monitoring and forecasting agriculture production, climate and earth observatory, as well as tools used in trade and food security monitoring. Delegates appreciated the role of these innovations in strengthening evidenced based policy making in advancing food trade in selected countries and the need for scale-up in their use. The session ended with a call for the formation of a Regional Food Trade Coalition to strengthen policy harmonization and alignment.

## Recognizing and Celebrating Africa's Agriculture Leaders

**27.** The Forum showcased the hard work and admirable achievements of African leaders who are blazing a path for Africa and the world, demonstrating how food production in the 21st century can be productive, sustainable, resilient and profitable.

**28.** The 2019 Africa Food Prize was awarded to two exceptional professionals and successful food producers: Dr. Emma Naluyima, a smallholder farmer and private veterinarian from Uganda, and Baba Diouma, a policy champion and agricultural entrepreneur from Senegal. Dr. Naluyima has transformed her one-acre plot into a showcase of profitable and environmentally friendly agriculture. Also a prosperous farmer, Baba Diouma has excelled in the policy sphere, leading the introduction of key reforms in Senegal and advancing the trade dimension of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP).

**29.** Young entrepreneurs were showcased as drivers of innovation and growth in Africa's agri-food sector. The GoGettaz competition, hosted by Econet Group and Yara International, reached over 50 million people with inspiring messages and culminated at AGRF in a pitch competition among 12 dynamic finalists, and one male and one female young business owner - Ghanaian Isaac Sesi and Tswana Bonolo Monthe - were announced as winners of the inaugural GoGettaz Agripreneur Prize at the Africa Food Prize gala dinner.

**30.** CTA in partnership with AGRA, the OCP Group, GreenTec Group and with the contribution of the World Bank, FAO and other partners, launched Pitch AgriHack 2019. Its ultimate objective is to contribute to the transformation of the agricultural sector and promotion of youth employment. Winners were recognized across different categories and received a contribution to their start-up capital. The whole group had an additional opportunity to pitch their businesses in the deal room.

**31.** AGRF 2019 also featured the leadership transition for the Chair of both the AGRF Partners Group and the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) from Mr. Strive Masiyiwa, Chairman of Econet Group, to H.E. Hailemariam Desalegn, Former Prime Minister of Ethiopia. Mr. Masiyiwa has guided AGRA and AGRF since 2014 under his steady hand, during which AGRA and the Forum have grown in size and influence. For his contribution to Africa's agricultural transformation, Mr Masiyiwa was awarded the Norman Borlaug Medallion; a World Food Prize honor bestowed upon exceptional world leaders and institutions. H.E. Hailemariam served as Prime Minister of Ethiopia from 2012 to 2018 and Chairperson of the African Union from 2013 to 2014. He pledged to ensure the Forum and AGRA continue to deliver concrete

and objective results under his leadership.

## Next Steps and a New Era for AGRF

**32.** The AGRF 2019 closed under the leadership of Ghana's Minister of Food and Agriculture, the Hon. Dr. Owusu Afriyie Akoto. In his closing remarks he urged delegates to seize the opportunities that emerged at the Forum to deliver on investments and commitments that will consolidate the coming decades as Africa's Century.

**33.** Following a competitive bidding process, the 23 Members of the AGRF Partners Group unanimously agreed and announced that the Republic of Rwanda will host the 2020 AGRF and serve as the long-term home country of the Forum going forward.

**33.1.** The AGRF has taken place in eight different countries over the last decade, ensuring that awareness, models, lessons, and the political will required to drive an inclusive agricultural transformation in Africa grew steadily across the continent. At the end of its first decade, the AGRF will now adjust its approach and adopt a "home and away" model where the Forum will alternate between hosting the event in Rwanda in even years and different host countries across the continent in alternate years.

**33.2.** The AGRF Partners look forward to partnering with the Republic of Rwanda in this new approach, particularly under the committed leadership of H.E. President Paul Kagame. The move will add the Republic of Rwanda to the AGRF Partners Group to help shape and drive the long-term vision of the Forum, deepen relationships with service providers to streamline organizational logistics, and unlock long-term partnerships with several new institutions looking to grow with the Forum. It will also increase accountability and pressure to come through on the Forum's vision to deliver on the goals laid out by African Heads of State and Government in the AU Malabo Declaration, UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and Africa Agenda 2063.

**33.3.** The AGRF Secretariat was mandated to operationalize this new relationship immediately and ensure the arrangements are in place by the end of the year in order to host AGRF 2020 in Kigali.

**34.** All partners thanked the Government of Ghana for its gracious hosting of the AGRF delegates and for its consistent and continued leadership of this continental Forum.

## Host and Partners



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