



AGRIF 2017

ACCELERATING AFRICA'S PATH TO PROSPERITY:
GROWING INCLUSIVE ECONOMIES AND JOBS
THROUGH AGRICULTURE



FORUM REPORT





AFRICAN
GREEN
REVOLUTION
FORUM 2017



Africa Green Revolution Forum (AGRF)

Secretariat
West End Towers, 4th Floor, Kanjata Road
P.O. Box 66773-00800, Nairobi, Kenya
Tel: +254 (20) 3675 000, +254 703 033 000
Web: www.agrf.org / Email: info@agrf.org

Concept & Editing: David Maingi

Graphic Design & Layout: David Maingi

Contributors: Waiganjo Njoroge, Christin Roby
(West Africa correspondent for Devex), Grayling,
African Laughter and Africa Business Group

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H.E. Alassane Ouattara, President of Cote d'Ivoire (8th from left) accompanied by H.E. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, President of Liberia (7th from left), Hon. Komi Sélom Klassou, Prime Minister of Togo, Ministers and Heads of Agencies and organizations at the opening of the 2017 AGRF in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire.

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AGRF Host

H.E. Alassane Ouattara
President, Cote d'Ivoire

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Agriculture is an important sector for our economic growth. Studies show that more than half of poverty reduction is attributable to agricultural development against 10 percent for non-agricultural development. This is why we have, in Cote d'Ivoire, gradually increased investments in the sector over the last five years, which has doubled the incomes of farmers and significantly reduced poverty levels.

I am grateful for the contribution and leadership that has made it possible for AGRA to shine and for choosing Cote D'Ivoire to host the 7th edition of the African Green Revolution Forum. Cote d'Ivoire has been proactive in its efforts to exploit the dynamism of the agricultural sector. In the last 5 years we have more than doubled the income of farmers and this is how poverty reduction can take place.

Africa still imports more than \$60billion USD worth of food. He projected that the amount of imports might reach as much as \$100billion USD and this calls for reshaping of the agricultural sector. The suggested methods to do this include increasing the use of technology. Technology has increased safe access to land and for this reason it is a key focus area in country policy. It was observed that public and private investments are not enough, therefore we need to do more in investment. We need to educate our youth to pursue their interests in agriculture.

My government is committed to increasing its budgetary allocation to agriculture to 10 per cent of GDP, of which US\$200 million has already been provided to cocoa and coffee farmers. We will comply with actions of regional organizations in favor of agricultural development with the aim of feeding our population and becoming, a net exporter of food.



AGRF KeyGuest

H.E. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf
President, Liberia

We recognise the paramount importance to us as a people and as a continent to turn agriculture around, to feed ourselves qualitatively and quantitatively. Unless we do that, our people will remain susceptible to hunger and malnutrition

Liberia knows the importance of turning agriculture around; this involves feeding the people both qualitatively and quantitatively. We must seize the moment and tackle food security as per AGRA objectives. The forum should not only be experienced in specific countries but also accelerate measures of the program continentally as initiated by AGRA.

The Feed Africa Strategy to transform agriculture to business requires continuous strengthening in the establishment of partnerships amongst banks, research institutions and private sectors. The Africa West Development Rice Institute has been a good resource in which Liberia has benefited from. We face issues with land exploitation with only 4 percent under cultivation.

I want to emphasize the value of working with the private sector to double the yields of rice farmers by improving their access to inputs to enable them to transition to low land irrigated rice production. In 2015, Liberia launched a sustainable plan to develop agriculture, small holder farmers and staple crops - rice and cassava, particularly for small holder farmers of whom women are main producers in agriculture. The country has also gone one step further to establish a land authority enable access to title deeds and land right.

Liberia still has a long way to go and they look at an example of many countries that have changed the performance of agriculture in Africa as they look forward to being champions in Africa.





AGRF KeyGuest

Hon. Komi Sélom Klassou
Prime Minister, Togo

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Looking at all the difficulties we are confronted with today and considering this is a major growing sector, we need to work with other Heads of States to develop policies that are coherent and that encourage smallholders to form cooperatives for ease of access to financing. We need to work in coordination with our peers so that partnerships between the public and the private sector can play a key role in the future of agribusiness.

Africa is on a cross road in which climate change effects are jeopardizing the development of the agriculture sector. There is a paradox that about 60 - 70% of the active population in the continent works in the agriculture industry and it is in this same continent, that malnutrition and food insecurity exist.

Due to these paradoxes, the Togolese government feels that it is time for change and to consider the agriculture industry as an economic growth sector on the continent. To achieve this, transformation in the industry is needed. There are significant issues affecting the development of the sector however including: Climate change effects weakening the industry; Problems that create insecurity in our continent; Lack of enough investment; and the costs of market access for producers. We therefore need to implement a coherent policy that allows small producers to be regrouped, in order to have easy access to financing to promote agriculture.

For us, we are keen to increase commercialization in order to move towards the transformation of agriculture. Thus the promotion of the manufacturing industry and industrialization will allow added value on agriculture production. Making the sector not just a way to eradicate poverty, but also a lever





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AGRF Convener

Mr. Strive Masiyiwa
Chairman, AGRF Partners Group

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We are very grateful to President Ouattara and his Government for the leadership he continues to provide in championing agriculture as Africa's surest path to inclusive economic growth and job creation, as well as for hosting this year's AGRF.

Evidence from elsewhere in the world show that no region has developed a diverse, modern economy without first establishing a successful agriculture sector. This holds true for Africa, where the agriculture sector has the greatest potential to create jobs for the 10-12 million new young workers that enter the African job market every year.

Last year in Nairobi we took on a bold initiative to mark the 10th year of AGRA. We embarked on a journey with a call from President Olusegun Obasanjo - that it was time that Africa came together to deal with the issue of food security in Africa and that they had to do it with partnerships and especially in partnership with farmers. Their mission is about the 450 million small holder farmers, it's about the 70% of women who produce the food we eat.

When we met under the leadership of President Uhuru Kenyatta and President Paul Kagame, they launched a campaign called Seize the Moment. They decided it's time to talk about the money, they wanted to have a platform to call upon the private sector, donors and the international community to make a pledge and say what they will invest in agriculture in Africa.

AGRF provides an opportunity to mobilise continental leadership and we are honoured to have Heads of State here. Our mission is about smallholder farmers; and it is about the women who are the main producers of food. We work in partnership with governments to realise the vision of a food secure and prosperous Africa. The AGRF partnership mobilises other players, including the private sector, to invest in the continent's robust agriculture and food sector. We are calling for global support, not in the form of aid, but in investments to enable our young people to find meaningful employment opportunities.





2017 AGRF Overview

Dr. Agnes Kalibata
President, AGRA

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The AGRF is a platform for global and African leaders to develop actionable plans that will move African agriculture forward. Established in 2010, it has emerged as Africa's premier agricultural gathering that brings together a range of critical stakeholders in the African agriculture landscape to discuss and develop concrete plans for achieving the green revolution in Africa.

An inclusive agricultural transformation will address many of the continent's biggest problems. For example, agriculture can fill the economic growth gap created by falling commodity prices; create high productivity jobs for young people as an alternative to migration to Europe; improve the livelihoods of farmers to move from subsistence occupations to viable businesses; and create a globally competitive agriculture and agribusiness sector to produce the high value processed foods consumed increasingly by Africa's growing middle classes

With the theme of "Accelerating Africa's Path to Prosperity: Growing Inclusive Economies and Jobs through Agriculture", this Forum will be an opportunity to showcase ongoing progress in Africa's agricultural transformation agenda and scale up the political, policy, and financial commitments needed to achieve the Malabo Declaration and global agenda around the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

It will also explore innovations and actions on the ground that ensure smallholder farmers and small rural agriculture businesses are at the heart of driving and benefitting from Africa's agricultural transformation.

Importantly, AGRF will look at how governments, businesses, and other partners are coming through on the over US\$ 30 Billion worth of political, policy, and financial commitments made at the 2016 AGRF held in Nairobi, as well as secure new commitments and welcome new champions.



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About AGRF

After Seizing the Moment at the 2016 AGRF and securing political, policy, and financial commitments of more than US \$30 billion, African leaders must move decisively to harness this surge of support for agriculture and ensure it creates jobs and drives economic growth across the continent—particularly for 300 million young Africans coming into the job market over the next 15 years.

No region of the world has developed a diverse, modern economy without first establishing a successful agriculture sector. Producing food on small family farms has always been at the heart of the African experience. Now, we are embracing the agriculture of our future. Agriculture is beginning to enrich Africa with a series of compelling economic opportunities on and off the farm that can be tapped across the continent to set us free—from high unemployment, poverty, and an over-reliance on oil and other commodities. The family farm can now be the source and hub for a new generation of young entrepreneurs delivering innovations across the food system, from field to table. African agriculture is open for business.

It is in this context that the 2017 AGRF congregated with a focus on, “Accelerating Africa’s Path to Prosperity: Growing Inclusive Economies and Jobs through Agriculture.” The Forum intensified the spotlight on agriculture as the key driver of African economies and established how to ensure agriculture and agribusiness drove inclusive and sustainable rural development. What has been true for the rest of the world is especially relevant for Africa today: Economic diversification and lasting wealth creation begins with a vibrant



agriculture sector. In many African countries, agriculture still accounts for more than 70 percent of employment and a significant portion of GDP. It is essential for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and building a better future for all Africans.

Under the leadership of the Government of Cote d'Ivoire, and co-hosted by the AGRF Partners and the African Development Bank, the 2017 AGRF shaped up as a premier platform that built on the 2016 edition's success with similar leadership from across the continent and the globe. The Forum attracted over 1200 delegates high level dignitaries including African Heads of State, Agriculture and Finance Ministers, business leaders, thought leaders, senior donor representatives, and other key stakeholders.

The AGRF has grown into a platform where partners and delegates showcase progress towards agriculture transformation year after year. It inspires world leaders, the private sector and civil society to the common objective of turning smallholder farming in Africa into profitable businesses.

The 2017 AGRF drove achievements towards:

1. Follow up on the 2016 commitments: Showcasing progress made on AGRF 2016 commitments to advance political, policy, and financing to African Agriculture while aligning what is needed for the community to support the Malabo Declaration and global agenda around the SDGs.
2. Political and Policy Leadership from African governments: Showcasing leadership of a few African Heads of State and ministers, particularly the progress made and the lessons learned from their agricultural transformation efforts, so that they serve as champions for the rest of the continent.
3. Political and financial support from development partners and the private sector: In the spirit of Seize the Moment in Nairobi in 2016.



4. New business deals: Several announcements of new business contracts between the private sector, small and medium enterprises, and communities of smallholder farmers were announced in commodity value chains of interest to smallholder farmers.
5. Announcement of the 2017 Africa Food Prize Winner: Recognition of the 2017 laureates, selected by an Independent Prize Committee chaired by former Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo. The Prize recognized two extraordinary individuals whose outstanding contribution to African agriculture in recent years is forging a new era of food security and economic opportunity for all Africans.
6. The Abidjan Declaration: A powerful multi-sectoral statement that captured the moments, progress, and commitments for the future.

Africa's Path to Prosperity

Close to US\$6.5 billion worth of investments in palm oil, pulses, potato and rice, mainly in West Africa, over the next eight years, were made and the new US\$280 million Partnership for Inclusive Agricultural Transformation in Africa (PIATA) launched

Africa's economic growth prospects received a major boost with the signing of a record number of new investments and partnership agreements for inclusive agricultural transformation at the 2017 Africa Green Revolution Forum (AGRF).

The forum, hosted by H.E. Alassane Ouattara, President of Côte d'Ivoire, was attended by more than 1300 delegates and high level dignitaries, including H.E. President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia; H.E. Komi Selom Klassou, Prime Minister of Togo, representative of H.E. Faure Essozimna Gnassingbe, President of Togo; Hon. Dr. Owusu Afriyie Akoto, Minister of Agriculture of Ghana, representative of H.E. Nana Akufo-Addo, President of Ghana; H.E. John Kufuor, Former President of Ghana; H.E. President Olusegun Obasanjo, Former President of Nigeria; and H.E. Jakaya Kikwete, Former President of Tanzania.

Other dignitaries included H.E. Ms. Correa Josefa Sacko, AU Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture; Mr. Marcel de Souza, President of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS); eight ministers of agriculture and finance; business leaders; financial institutions; private agribusiness firms; farmers; NGOs; civil society; media; scientists; development partners; technical partners; and the next generation of African agripreneurs and leaders.



Embodying a new spirit of cross-sectoral partnerships and innovative programmes to achieve concrete gains in agricultural transformation, the forum saw the signing of numerous agreements laying down the foundation for new types of co-operation. These co-operations will be key in bringing to life major agricultural transformation commitments including the US\$ 30 billion committed at the AGRF in 2016.

The emphasis, spearheaded by Africa's leaders, was on urgent and practical interventions and investments to remove the handicaps currently hobbling African smallholders who produce two thirds of the continent's food. The Heads of State at the forum were unanimous in the call for urgent action and committed to lead by example.

"Agriculture is an important sector for our economic growth. Studies show that more than half of poverty reduction is attributable to agricultural development against 10 percent for non-agricultural development. This is why we have, in Cote d'Ivoire, gradually increased investments in the sector over the last five years, which has doubled the incomes of farmers and significantly reduced poverty levels," said the host President, H.E. Alassane Ouattara.

Hailed as one of the foremost African agriculture champions, President Alassane Ouattara committed to increase his government's budgetary allocation for the sector to 10 percent, of which US\$200 million has already been provided to cocoa and coffee farmers.

"We recognise the paramount importance to us as a people and as a continent to turn agriculture around, to feed ourselves qualitatively and quantitatively. Unless we do that, our people will remain susceptible to hunger and malnutrition," said President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia.

She further stressed the value of working with the private sector and committed her government to working with business leaders to double the yields of rice farmers.

"Looking at all the difficulties we are confronted with today and considering this is a major growing sector, we need to work with other Heads of States to develop policies that are coherent and that encourage smallholders to form cooperatives for ease of access to financing. We need to work in coordination with our peers so that partnerships between the public and the private sector can play a key role in the future of agribusiness," said H.E. Komi Selom Klassou, the Prime Minister of Togo.

In his keynote address, Strive Masiyiwa, Chair of the AGRF partners group, stressed the importance of uniting all stakeholders with a shared interest in agricultural development. "This is an opportunity to mobilise continental leadership and we are honoured to have Heads of State here. Our mission is about smallholder farmers; and it is about the women who are the main producers of food. We work in partnership with governments to realise the vision of a food secure and prosperous Africa. The AGRF partnership mobilises other players, including the private sector, to invest in the continent's robust agriculture and food sector. We are calling for global support, not in the form of aid, but in investments to enable our young people to find meaningful employment opportunities."

Speaking on behalf of H.E. Nana Akufo-Addo, President of Ghana, Hon. Dr. Owusu Afriyie Akoto, Ghana's Minister of Agriculture, expressed his country's renewed support for the 'Planting for Food and Jobs' programme, with a pilot targeting 200,000 of the country's five million farmers and fisherman in the first year.

The forum heard that great progress had been achieved as part of the US\$30 billion worth of political, financial and policy pledges made in support of Africa's agriculture at the 2016 AGRF. Key among these was the announcement of the new US\$280 million Partnership for Inclusive Agricultural Transformation in Africa (PIATA) by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA). PIATA is an innovative and transformative partnership and financing vehicle to drive inclusive agriculture transformation across the continent to increase incomes and improve the food security of 30 million smallholder farm households in at least 11 African countries by 2021.

The theme of the forum was Accelerating the Path to Prosperity: Growing Inclusive Economies and Jobs through Agriculture, which served as the guiding framework for a total of 52 sessions and more than 300 speakers. Throughout the forum, there was great emphasis on the priority areas of increasing the involvement of women and youth in agriculture and agribusiness.

Significant deals were also signed by the private, public and NGO sectors. They included:

1. The European Union, which agreed a new European Consensus for Development Initiative with a value of around US\$1.5 billion. This adds to its existing blended finance facilities for Africa and the neighbouring region with an estimated budget of US\$2.6 billion to leverage more than \$44 billion of investment in Africa until 2020
2. Germany's Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) reaffirmed its commitment to the One World No Hunger initiative with €1.5 billion per year invested in agriculture
3. Yara, the global fertiliser company, dedicated more than \$100 million in downstream operations and \$130 million to develop a mine in Ethiopia
4. The Rockefeller Foundation committed \$130 million over seven years to improve working practices with partners across the private and public sectors, technology manufacturers and financiers
5. The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation has built on its US\$350 million investment in Africa, with US\$250m going to agriculture, through a partnership with the Rockefeller Foundation and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) for a new US\$250 million commitment to increase the incomes and food security of millions of smallholder households

- 6. Close to US\$6.5 billion worth of investments in palm oil, pulses, potato and rice, mainly in West Africa, were made to cover the next eight years. These included a crowd funding facility to support 10,000 farmers and SMEs with loans of US\$100 – US\$10,000; a US\$500 million infrastructure investment deal to improve access to farms and markets; and a commitment by Mahindra Agribusiness to buy all green grams produced in Africa for processing in a newly built crushing plant in Ethiopia with a capacity of 40,000 tonnes.

Speaking at the closing ceremony, Hon. Mamadou Sangafowa Coulibaly, Cote d'Ivoire's Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development said, "President Ouattara does not make these types of commitments lightly, and you have his assurance that we will make all of the necessary efforts required to implement the recommendations of this vital forum."

"The 2017 AGRF has shown what can be achieved when countries across Africa come together and collaborate with all partners including the private sector," said Commissioner Josefa Sacko. "At the moment, as a continent we rely too heavily on external resources to meet our food needs. The potential within Africa means that this doesn't need to be the case for future generations. By helping to provide the millions of small holder farmers, so many of whom are women, with access to the funding and expertise they need, we can help them thrive not just as subsistence farmers but as successful business people across the region," she added.

Dr. Agnes Kalibata, President of the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA), ended the forum with a stirring call to action that brought home to delegates how agricultural transformation not only changes farming, but remains the best bet for Africa's prosperity. "An inclusive agricultural transformation will address many of the continent's biggest problems. For example, agriculture can fill the economic growth gap created by falling commodity prices; create high productivity jobs for young people as an alternative to migration to Europe; improve the livelihoods of farmers to move from subsistence occupations to viable businesses; and create a globally competitive agriculture and agribusiness sector to produce the high value processed foods consumed increasingly by Africa's growing middle classes."

"The more value added food products Africans can consume that are made in Africa, the fewer imports we need and the more African jobs we create. By importing so much of our food we are effectively exporting jobs and losing value from our economies. Today, too many of our young people are needlessly dying in the Mediterranean searching for jobs. Tomorrow, let us ensure that agribusiness provides the jobs and stability that they surely deserve," concluded Dr. Kalibata.



Growing Inclusive Economies

New US \$280 Million Partnership for Inclusive Agricultural Transformation in Africa Launched

Four prominent organizations supporting African agriculture join forces in innovative strategic partnership to increase incomes and improve the food security of 30 million smallholder farm households in at least 11 African countries by 2021.

The multi-million dollar Partnership for Inclusive Agricultural Transformation in Africa (PIATA) was launched today at the 2017 African Green Revolution Forum (AGRF). PIATA is an innovative and transformative partnership and financing vehicle to drive inclusive agriculture transformation across the continent.

Together, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) will provide up to U.S. \$280 million to catalyze and sustain inclusive agricultural transformation in at least 11 countries in Africa, which will in turn increase incomes and improve the food security of 30 million smallholder farm households. The PIATA reflects a recognition that greater impact and value can be achieved through a strategic partnership that builds on what has been achieved by each partner across the continent, and pulls them together in ways that help catalyze and sustain transformation at scale.

The PIATA is an important collaboration between donors that aligns behind the Malabo agenda agreed to by African Heads of State and Government in 2014. It signals an enduring



commitment to Africa's transformation agenda. PIATA is but one of various means by which each of the partners are supporting African countries to deliver on agricultural transformation; its partners continue to provide support through avenues including direct support to continental agencies, government bodies and in-country partners. The partnership will allow partners to align and complement existing efforts, making new investments in developing input systems, value chains, and policy where they will have the most impact.

Speaking at the launch, Mr. Mamadou Biteye, Managing Director of the Rockefeller Foundation Africa Regional Office said, "We are pleased to be part of PIATA. We see it as an opportunity to leverage even more from the partners and their huge networks, for greater impact. We are looking forward to deploying the technologies that we have helped develop over the years, together with our shared knowledge and grant support, to work with our esteemed partners. Together we hope to catalyze Africa's pursuit for prosperity through agriculture. PIATA is critical in our ongoing push to build the resilience of farmers and systems that affect them, especially in light of increasing challenges such as climate change, among others."

According to the 2017 Africa Agriculture Status Report, Africa needs an agricultural revolution that is distinct and that links millions of small farms to agribusinesses, creating extended food supply chains, jobs and economic opportunities for large segments of the population. Agriculture is still the best bet for inclusive African economic growth and poverty reduction.

Such a transformation will require greater political, policy, and financing commitments from across the public and private sectors. It will also require new partnership models like PIATA, which is hailed as an outstanding example of how partners can collaborating with African countries' visions and systems to deliver on their own transformation, in line with their national economic development strategies.

Mr. Rodger Voorhies, the Executive Director of the Global Growth and Opportunity Division of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, said, "We've seen significant progress when countries recognize the critical importance of agriculture to their economic development and help catalyze agricultural transformation with targeted investments, evidence-based policies, and strong national plans. PIATA is an exciting platform that can help countries take the lead in driving agricultural transformation. Our investment reflects our desire to help countries develop high-quality plans linked to national and continental accountability frameworks."

Each PIATA partners boasts strong networks of local, private sector and implementers from across the continent, which, through this platform, will benefit from stronger integration of investments and alignment of approaches to boost not only development but business outcomes as well.

Delivering on Africa's potential requires both the public and private sectors to engage in new ways and strengthen collaboration. The role of the private sector



and non-state actors in agriculture development and in support of formulation of country agriculture plans is critical for sustainable growth.

This was emphasized by Mr. Sean Jones, the Senior Deputy Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Food Security, USAID. "PIATA offers a new way of doing business across the many public and private actors working to ensure food security and economic growth as called for in country-owned visions and the goals laid out in the Malabo Declaration. Agriculture is at its core a private sector enterprise, and one of the best bets for job creation and inclusive growth when the right policies and investments allow the private sector to flourish. This partnership offers an innovative mechanism to unlock this investment and realize many of the targets laid out in the Global Food Security Strategy approved by our Congress."

The PIATA launch comes at a critical time in the continent's agriculture history. Most African countries have undertaken a rigorous review of the sector, developing and adopting a new generation of sector development plans that prepare them to do business. Continentally, the African Union is coordinating the biennial review of the progress made towards the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) goals, which will be presented in the first Biennial Review Report, along with a scorecard for the Heads of State to guide them in the sector's transformation.

PIATA will shape how partners engage on the continent. Under PIATA, the partners have committed to delivering impact against a shared results framework and aligning PIATA country operations to national agriculture plans. This is the first time a partnership of this scale that is based on a shared results framework has been launched on the continent, its shared results framework is a significant achievement and the cornerstone of this partnership.

Welcoming the new partnership, Dr. Agnes Kalibata, President, Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA), expressed her belief that the initiative would contribute significantly to accelerating Africa's path to prosperity by growing inclusive economies and jobs through agriculture.



President Alassane Ouattara, President of Cote d'Ivoire points to his Government's commitment to increase budgetary allocation to agriculture to 10% of GDP in line with the CAADP principles and the Malabo Declaration which Cote d'Ivoire is party to. He was speaking at the opening of the 2017 AGRF in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire.

"We have witnessed significant progress in our agricultural transformation over the past decade, with countries that have prioritized the sector recording notable drops in poverty levels, improved food security and inclusive economic growth. PIATA will be critical in bringing key players together to support governments in their push to fully unlock the potential of Africa's smallholder farming and agribusiness as the surest drivers of job creation and the continent's inclusive economic transformation," she said.

AGRA is the primary implementing institution of the partnership under the institution's new strategy for the continent and plan agreed with priority countries. Founded in 2006, AGRA and its partners have spent more than a decade building the systems, tools, and knowledge required for an inclusive agricultural

transformation. AGRA now sees the partnership as a way to scale up its support to country agricultural transformation and serve as a go to partner for governments.

The ultimate hope is that the PIATA model will attract other public and private players in the agriculture landscape to join and work together to support Africa on a path to prosperity through agricultural transformation.

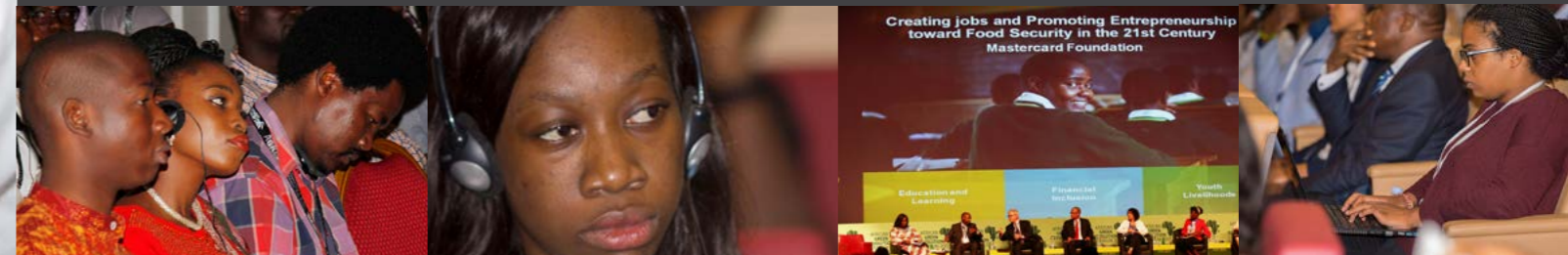
Creating Future Jobs

Experts and advocates pushed for the promotion of agriculture careers in Africa and more government-initiated investments at the 7th African Green Revolution Forum, urging governments and private investors to advance engagements beyond discussions through to implementation.

If left to eat local, the nutrition of the African continent would lie in the hands of roughly 53 million smallholder farmers who suffer from limited financing, inadequate access to markets, poor local infrastructure and strenuous labor that has thrusts many young people to major cities in search of a livelihood. Talk around African agriculture often focuses on the viewpoint of these smallholder farmers, and with good reason: experts say these farmers must urgently build resilience against climate change and adopt modernized techniques to improve yields as Africa's population continues to boom.

Developing agribusinesses could also promote food security and reduce unemployment rates, while also revolutionizing the sector by transforming raw goods into finished products and reducing post-harvest waste. Building more "Made in Africa" food brands is vital for Africa to fully capturing the projected \$1 trillion African food market by 2030.

During a session on job creation and promoting entrepreneurship, global head of agriculture for Acumen investment fund, Noor Ullah, said not enough attention is given to the fundamentals of building a proper business. "We are in danger of focusing on the wrong thing and not targeting the building blocks which can be broken from the beginning," Ullah said. To encourage private sector engagement, he also urged for long-term policies that demonstrate an enabling environment.



Creating jobs and Promoting Entrepreneurship toward Food Security in the 21st Century
Mastercard Foundation

Article By Christin Roby, West Africa correspondent, Devex

Others said that many in the sector wrongly believed that investing in Africa's rural economy was too uncertain. "I believe concerns about the risk are overblown in Africa," Jennifer Blanke, vice president of agriculture, human and social development at the African Development Bank, told Devex. "People don't know from the outside and are nervous about [investing], but there are risks in any emerging environment."

The AfDB and other financial institutions, therefore, need to derisk so the private sector will have some protection, she said. Risks ranging from fluctuating transaction costs to weak tax policies can defer investment. To combat this, the bank has announced various risk-sharing agreements, including with the Spanish Banco Santander, to facilitate an increase in agriculture financing.

Without derisking schemes, many African banks and governments often have difficulties obtaining adequate financing, AfDB reported.

Government action central to success

Country-level support remains core to improving the agriculture sector with attention to rural development, roads, communications and access to inputs as top priorities. Governments must also reinforce rural education systems to facilitate smallholder use of available technologies.

"Basic education and capacity development are things that only the government can provide on their own," Dr. Thomas Jayne, co-director at Alliance for Partnership, told the audience during a session on spurring modern farm development.

Research released during last year's conference confirmed that countries that have dedicated 10 percent of their national budget toward agriculture posted higher agriculture productivity, stronger GDP growth, and sharp declines in malnutrition compared to countries that have not.

Seven African countries — Senegal, Ghana, Togo, Cameroon, Rwanda, Ethiopia and Angola — were applauded in a report launched at this year's forum for their institutional and programmatic actions against malnutrition. These governments expanded beyond traditional national policies to cross-sectoral strategies to address hunger.

"High intersectoral coordination structures that put nutrition high on the national agenda leads to the funneling of money in a much more constructive way which reaches across the value chain," report co-author and University of Pretoria food security professor Sheryl Hendriks said.

Strategies such as national school lunch programs, national legislation and regulations, and the involvement of the private sector to fortify common foods are examples of how some nations have advanced agriculture development goals.

Sound policies are critical for investors to build trust that countries are investment-ready, Blanke argued. "We need to get away from the idea that government can do everything," and "need to have the private sector involved, so making sure that there's not misappropriation of financing that comes into the sector, for example," Blanke said.

Making agriculture attractive to youth

On average, 12 million young people enter the African workforce each year with only roughly 3 million jobs available to them. While this causes a huge potential for high unemployment rates, Blanke also pointed out the opportunity for "agripreneurship" and agribusinesses to flourish.

"As long as youth are provided with skills to create new businesses and [an] underlying policy environment to make it easier to create businesses, you are capturing more of the value add and that's where the jobs are going to be," Blanke said.

The culture and image around agriculture in Africa has long been shaped by images of poor, rural farmers performing tiring manual labor for hours on end with little regard to other activities along the value chain, such as transformation, packaging, and retail, she told Devex. Former Sierra Leone Minister of Agriculture Sam Sesay insisted that Africa's transformation will occur in agriculture — not manufacturing as seen in parts of Asia — so the region must promote more than cultivators.

Presently, youth typically resist agriculture for three reasons, Jayne argued: parents own a small amount of land, older siblings are already working the family-owned property and low productivity. "Youth are not inherently against farming; they are inherently against being poor," Sesay said.

Integration of technology could also attract more youth to the sector. Since 2005, smallholder use of tractors has increased 10 times over. Mobile technologies, irrigation systems and biofortified seeds and fertilizers are examples of how technology can be incorporated at the farm level.

Former WFP Executive Director, Ertharin Cousin, said during a session. Low-skilled agricultural labor is unattractive to most over the long term, so training must be tailored to the needs of smallholder farmers, she said.

"It's not just about helping poor farmers who need to be supported; it's about developing a thriving business because it's not just about Africa feeding Africa, but Africa feeding the world," Blanke noted.

AGRF

Agreements & Deals



Dr. Agnes Kalibata, AGRA's President called on African country leaders to work harder and faster to improve the ease of doing business in their countries to encourage private investment in agriculture and other sectors.

Speaking during a session titled "Closing The Deal - Investing in African Agriculture" at the African Green Revolution Forum (AGRF) in Cote d'Ivoire, Kalibata said it had been proven that countries where setting up businesses was simplified recorded the most economic growth.

"In my country Rwanda, I have seen several deals made in agriculture, where you ask yourself that 'this is small- who is going to do business here?' But they grow. And the reason is because of the energy and effort that the government has made in making sure that the private sector feels encouraged and reassured," said Kalibata.

Mauritius, Rwanda and Botswana are the leading African countries in the latest release of the Ease of Doing Business index, an initiative by the World Bank that shows how countries perform in the fostering of regulatory environments that encourage entrepreneurship.

Among the indicators of doing business that are covered in the index are starting a business, dealing with construction permits, getting electricity, and registering property. To encourage governments to commit to increasing the ease of doing business, the African Development Bank (AfDB), a financial provider to African governments, is directing its resources to strengthening private companies.



“Traditionally, we have lent to big agriculture projects with governments, and we will continue to do that for sure, but what we are trying to do now is move along into the private sector, the non-government space - and indeed it is a very attractive sector,” said Jennifer Blanke, the Vice-President, Agriculture, Human and Social Development.

Blanke said agriculture remains Africa’s biggest hope for economic success and expressed optimism that governments will continue creating enabling environments for businesses, as well as making their own investments in the sector. “It is incumbent of us to make that argument well, that agriculture is the future. The economic transformation of Africa is going to be led by agriculture - it is going to be agribusiness-based,” said Blanke.

Njack Kane, the Chief Executive Officer, Intervalle, a regional player in the agriculture business, shared Blanke’s confidence in a revival driven by agriculture, noting that the private sector will play a key role in this resurgence and needs more support from governments.

“Investing in agriculture is a long-term initiative and for it to be attractive, there has to be a clarity of intention for investors. Unless the scene is set for private investors and confidence is given to them, no massive investment will come,” said Kane.

Dr. Joseph Sam Sesay, the former Minister for Agriculture of Sierra Leone and current advisor to the country’s president on agricultural matters, agrees that the onus is on governments to build these enabling environments.

AGRA signs six MoUs at the AGRF 2017 as partnerships surge forward

At the seventh African Green Revolution Forum, held in Abidjan, Cote d’Ivoire from 4th to 8th September 2017, saw the signing of six MoUs as first steps in the formation of a new partnerships directed at accelerating African agricultural transformation.

MoU with The centro internacional de mejoramiento de maiz y trigo also known as the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT); and The International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA)

To scale-up and deliver seeds of improved high-quality maize varieties, especially hybrid maize seed in 11 African countries, namely: Ghana, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, Mozambique, Burkina Faso, Mali, Kenya and Malawi. CIMMYT will also support effective scaling-up and commercialization of elite, high-yielding, and stress resilient maize hybrid seeds, in partnership with AGRA-supported and committed public and private sector partners in Ethiopia, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, Mozambique, Kenya and Malawi.

MoU with the International Trade Centre (ITC)

To identify trade and investment flows and potential markets for value chains by researching and identifying buyer and investor priorities through a programme of visits to potential international buyers and investors.

MoU with The Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, Germany (BMZ)

To advance the agricultural incomes of smallholders, food security, sustainable land use, and inclusive agricultural transformation in Africa that fosters employment and economic opportunities. This supports the goals of achieving the African Union’s Year 2025 goals of doubling agricultural productivity, tripling agricultural trade, managing one third of Africa’s agricultural land with climate smart agricultural practices, eliminating hunger, and cutting poverty in half. It also contributes to the G7-Goal to lift 500 million people out of hunger and malnutrition; the G20 Initiative for Rural Youth Employment; and is well aligned towards the goals of BMZ’s Special Initiative ONEWORD – No Hunger Initiative.

MoU with IDH sustainable trade initiative

The Partnership aims to establish a blended finance technical assistance (TA) facility that acts to coordinate TA services, targeting agricultural investments in Africa that benefit African smallholder farmers and SMEs in key agricultural value chains. The Partnership will also drive industrialization in the cassava value chain, and develop resilience for small-scale farmers growing cash and staple crops in sub-Saharan Africa.

MoU with: The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)

To strengthen governance and financing of the agriculture sector through greater cooperation in all areas concerning the issues of government support, policy engagement and advocacy in the ECOWAS region. Areas of special focus include strengthening country planning, policy and programme efficiency to increase the sector’s financing and growth in the ECOWAS region. The MoU also aims to boost the adoption of good agricultural practices and innovations, in particular for the use of improved seeds, improving soil health and more efficient use of fertilizer.

MoU with: The Farm to Market Alliance and Interval Geneve SA

This project will work on agricultural value chain development projects involving rice production in West African countries in collaboration with international partners, Governments and local partners. The project will confirm countries and regions within those countries and local partners where rice projects will be developed. The countries currently considered are Burkina Faso, Côte d’Ivoire, Ghana, Nigeria and Senegal.

2017 AGRF Deal Announcements

In the context of a wider African agricultural transformation agenda as supported by the AGRF partners, AGRA, African Development Bank and Grow Africa the full day 'Closing the Deal' session was a meeting between agro enterprises with concrete investment needs, investors, financing institutions, key development partners, government leaders, to begin to frame a blueprint on how to close the \$25bn to \$33bn per year financing gap for agricultural transformation on the continent.

The meeting discussed improved effectiveness, competitiveness and inclusivity of specific agricultural commodity value chains and address key bottlenecks and solutions to growth. The meeting also addressed improved uptake of modern farming technologies and better market access at scale by building scale into business development models from the outset.

Work done at the meeting provided agribusiness investment with a running start to prepare top quality agricultural project proposals for discussions with investors at the Africa Investment Forum (AIF) and the Grow Africa Investment Forum which collectively with the AGRF aimed to create a shared platform for action.

RICE VALUE CHAIN

In Development: Crowd funding facility to support 10,000 farmers and SMEs with loans of \$100 – \$10,000 within the next 18 months; Intervalle/Rabobank/Farm -to- Market deal for rice production in West Africa; and West Africa Regional Rice Task Force PPP being developed to unlock US\$ 470 million to achieve rice self sufficiency

Deal Prospects: \$500 million infrastructure investment fund proposal from a Swiss Investor in collaboration with AFDB (NDA in place)

Pledge: \$40 million dollars to support joint initiative for rice production in Nigeria; Missing Middle Finance Fund commitment of \$10 – \$15 million for farmers (investors are confidential); and Maslaha Seed Limited and Sygenta committed \$1 million on rice seed

POTATO VALUE CHAIN

In Development:

Black Pace Nigeria committed to invest \$1,03 million in Nigeria and a further commitment of \$120 million for potato processing in Rwanda self sufficiency

Pledge: AFC Kenya committed to invest \$2 million lending to Potato farmers

PALM OIL VALUE CHAIN

In Development: ITC committed to launch an oil market intelligence and information app to develop that will be free

Pledge: \$4 billion by 2025

PULSES VALUE CHAIN

Pledge: Mahindra Agribusiness committed to buy all green grams produced in Africa, including Ivory Coast and New investment commitment to set up a plant in Ethiopia with 40,000 metric tons crushing capacity





AGRF Session Outcomes

Digital technologies, post-harvest loss management, value chain investment and the role of women in African agriculture were some of the core topics that gave structure to the successful 2017 AGRF.

The importance of investing in modern farming technologies and giving the youth and women more resources to venture into productive agriculture were emphasised in different sessions, as was the need for governments to create enabling environments for the private business community to flourish.

Similarly, the importance of Africa in the future of the world's food security plans was reiterated across the five days. For, as the global population approaches 9 billion by 2050, farmers around the world will need to increase their productivity by 70 per cent to cater for the rising demand. Africa, which bears more than half of the world's unused arable land, has already made it onto the global radar as the biggest potential bridge to that increased food production.

During the 2017 AGRF, four prominent organizations supporting African agriculture unveiled a strategic partnership designed to improve food security for 30 million smallholder farm households in at least 11 African countries by 2021, while increasing the incomes for farmers. Titled the Partnership for Inclusive Agricultural Transformation in Africa (PIATA), the initiative will see the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) contribute \$280 million towards inclusive agricultural transformation in the continent.

"This is a unique and a novel partnership to bring together bilateral development partners together, not just from a financial point of view, but also our expertise and networks, in partnership with AGRA to push forward the agricultural transformation agenda," the Rockefeller Foundation's Africa Managing Director, Mamadou Biteye, said.

But the highlight of the forum was the coming together of all delegates to celebrate two women, Kenyan scholar Prof. Ruth Oniang'o and Malian agropreneur Mme Maïmouna Sidibe Coulibaly, who were jointly declared the new laureates of the African Food Prize. Prof. Oniang'o was rewarded for her profound role in fostering nutritional development of the continent through various advocacy efforts, while Coulibaly was recognized for her resilience in developing a business whose core mission is to improve the productivity of African farmers.

Africa poised to deliver the second Green Revolution in agriculture

The launch of the 2017 Africa Green Revolution Forum in Abidjan marked history in the making, according to heads of state who took the podium to lead the continent in reshaping Africa's agriculture.

"Africa missed out on the first Green Revolution but we must seize the moment as the second Green Revolution unfolds. AGRF 2017 is happening at the right time because we now recognise the paramount importance to us as a people and as a continent to turn agriculture around, to feed ourselves qualitatively and quantitatively," said Liberia President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf during the official launch of the forum. Speaking at an event flanked by presidential guards in sweeping cloaks and long boots, President Sirleaf presented the new will for transformation that now sees Africa climbing the productivity ladder.

For when much of the globe's agriculture enjoyed a green revolution and soaring growth in agricultural output in the mid-20th century, fueled by the arrival of tractors, pesticides, high yield crops, and intensive farming, Africa was substantially left behind.

But more than half a century later, the continent is now taking center stage as the world's main hope for food security as the world's population moves towards 9 billion by 2050. With more than half of the world's unused arable land in Africa, the continent is now projected to play a central role in meeting global food needs.

But the world's second Green Revolution is emerging as markedly different from the first, as it places a new emphasis on smallholder farmers, working land traditionally considered poor, and often prone to drought or flooding.

This revolution is now regarded as critical to delivering the jobs, wealth, and take-off that have eluded the continent until now, as well as to achieving food security.

"We have managed to reduce the levels of poverty in our country through investment in agriculture. And because of the economic benefits we have made, as a country we commit to continually invest in the sector," said AGRF host Cote d'Ivoire President Alassane Ouattara.

Engaging the youth in this is now critical, he said. "Agriculture is a great source of employment and, therefore, we must make it attractive to the youth."

Such progressive commitments are now spurring a new era of partnerships between governments, agencies and the private sector around the common mission of repositioning African agriculture.

"There is notable effort to improve food production methods and real commitments have been made to address key issues in the sector to increase yields and production, with 95 per cent of resources dedicated to increasing food production," said Mamadou Biteye, the MD of the Rockefeller Foundation.

As the 2017 AGRF declared itself open and turned to its 52 events, across plenary sessions, symposia, and panels, the forum opened to a clear declaration of commitment by Africa's agricultural leaders to delivering a new revolution for everyone.

Africa's food transformers Feted

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The gala dinner of the 2017 African Green Revolution Forum (AGRF) in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire, unfolded as a celebration of progress, and a rallying call in meeting the challenges, as delegates engage in accelerating agricultural development in Africa.

Attended by the 2017 AGRF co-host President Alassane Ouattara, of Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia's President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and former rulers Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria and Tanzanian Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete, the dinner's warmth and sociability was punctuated by leaders' speeches addressing weighty matters in meeting Africa's food needs.

But at the heart of the dinner was the award ceremony for the Africa Food Prize, celebrating two outstanding achievers in changing the food security landscape in Africa. Kenyan influencer Ruth Oniang'o and Malian Agri-business entrepreneur Mme Maimouna Sidibe had earlier been named as the 2017 African Food Prize Laureates.

Prof. Oniang'o, the founder of the African Journal of Food, Agriculture, Nutrition and Development (AJFAND) as well as the non-profit Rural Outreach Africa, has been feted for advancing nutrition across Africa. Coulibaly founded the Malian seed company Faso Kaba in 2007 and oversaw its rapid growth, which saw it more than double its sales from 700 tonnes of certified high yielding seeds in 2011 to more than 1,600 tonnes by 2015.

At the AGRF dinner, a feisty Prof. Oniang'o, the first Nutrition professor in Kenya and the first female Nutrition professor in sub-Saharan Africa, took to the podium, where she gave a charged speech detailing the challenges she has encountered in her quest for a well-nourished continent.

"It has not been an easy journey, but the desire to see Africa become self-sufficient in its food needs has kept me going. And I would like to urge fellow academicians to keep researching and coming up with ways to help the 55 States in Africa grow their food and nutrition options," said Oniang'o.

A former politician, who served in Kenya's ninth parliament from January 2003 to December 2007, Prof. Oniang'o narrated how she had to fight insurmountable odds to front her ideas to her country's MPs.

"My mission was to empower the women, most of them who were not able to feed their families. By then nobody was really giving attention to food and nutrition and I made them understand that my constituency was the women and that I would represent their health interests as strongly as I could," said Oniang'o. Coulibaly, in her speech, detailed the setbacks she surmounted to launch her business and sustain and expand it to the giant it is today.

"There were many times when I felt like giving up, but I was encouraged to keep going by the number of people who told me how great of an effect I was having in their lives," said Coulibaly.

New commitments made for African agriculture announced at the 2017 AGRF

In a week peppered with new investments for agriculture at the 2017 Africa Green Revolution Forum, delegates heard about pledges including the German government signing a memorandum of understanding with AGRA to promote food security and rural development, expanding on Germany's investment in African agriculture to date of \$1.8bn.

Other commitments announced included the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)'s renewed commitment to African agriculture; and the Gates Foundation, Rockefeller Foundation and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)'s announcement that they will provide up to \$280 million for inclusive agricultural transformation in 11 countries in Africa.

Commenting on this year's commitments, Mamadou Sangafowa Coulibaly, Cote d'Ivoire's Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development said, "The numbers show that funders are convinced agriculture is the backbone of development in Africa and with proper investment in the sector, the continent will rise to greatness."

The Minister also made the link between increased investment in agriculture and meeting COP21 climate change targets.

"At this stage we are satisfied with progress but discussions will carry on and there is more to do. Previous commitments were not all met and we need to learn from this and ensure that we only make commitments which are achievable," added Mr Coulibaly.

Gilbert F. Hounbo, President of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) echoed this sentiment,

"We do not make commitments lightly and it is important you only commit to something that you can follow up on. With 100 million people below the poverty line, 70 million of which live in rural areas, the stakes are too high for empty words. So it is essential that commitments are translated into real action in practical ways in rural communities," said Mr Hounbo.

Dr. Agnes Kalibata, President of the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA), summed up the new round of commitments announced.

"There is a real commitment and the right level of commitment from governments as well as from other sectors. We are beginning to see Government movement towards working together in partnership with the private sector and donor community. We are extremely grateful for the donations and investment, but we are looking for more than just money. The thing that is most important here is political commitment and that people are following through with those commitments," said Dr Kalibata.

'Digital Quake' will revolutionize African Farming

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Electronic learning and big data technologies are set to play a big role in the future of African farming, as experts develop new digital mechanisms to enhance food security and increase general agricultural production in the continent.

Dr. Debisi Araba, the Africa Regional Director of the Centre for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT), said technologies now under development would help drive better decisions and greater productivity across African agriculture.

"There are constantly shifting variables and challenges affecting the agricultural industry such as climate changes, diseases and illiteracy and therefore the need to race against time to develop solutions that will enable the African continent to increase its agricultural production by 70 per cent to cater for the two billion population by 2050," said Araba in his keynote address.

But "artificial intelligence is playing a great role in improving the decision-making process," he said, with emerging technologies already beginning to play a critical role in all aspects of farming Araba cited a recent example in which CIAT's systems saved rice farmers more than \$3million in inputs by providing timely production advice.

Digital information offers the power to achieve vital changes in behaviour too. Research, for instance, has shown that farmers can now add zinc and micro ions to the soil and increase their maize yields, by up to seven to eight bags of maize even on relatively tiny land plots. Likewise, seeds have been adapted to take in less water, but their uptake depends on farmers appreciating their existence and knowing how to source them.

Other digital technologies, such as the E-platform that brings together farmers to access financial services, access markets, affordable insurance and financial inclusivity, can transform smallholders access to finance and levels of risk.

Precision farming is also set to play a central role in the growth of Africa's agricultural output, as the demand for food soars with an increase in population.

It is now possible to use aerial images from satellites to manage and improve crop growth, using systems that give early warnings of deviations, allowing for corrections to be made in good time. Such innovations greatly improve productivity by reducing the wastage of inputs and by ensuring that production cycles are well synced with climatic conditions and other farming requirements.

With the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations projecting that the number of people in Africa will reach 2 billion by 2050 requiring farmers to produce up to 70 per cent more food to meet the demand, it is important that all functions of production are made lean.

"We must bring to an end to the costly and damaging anomaly of the net deficit in food. No more should Africa produce what it does not or cannot consume, and no more should it consume what it does not, but could easily, produce," African Development Bank (AfDB) President Dr. Akinwumi Adesina said on the opening day of the AGRF 2017.

Partners call for audits and reforms to shape regulation for improved agricultural productivity

Africa's food supplies, nutrition, wealth and wellbeing rest on stimulating agricultural production, and yet the continent remains hidebound, still, by regulatory processes or gaps that are slashing productivity along every step of the value chain, according to speakers at an AGRF 2017 discussion on enabling the business of agriculture.

The session, held by the World Bank in partnership with the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA), provided an analysis of 62 countries looking at ways of enabling the business of agriculture. Speakers emphasized that sustainable agricultural development was one of the most powerful tools to end extreme poverty, as the economic and social mainstay of millions of smallholder farmers in Africa and the continent's largest source of incomes, jobs and food security.

Moreover, with the world's population expected to reach nine billion by 2050, food demand is forecast to increase by at least 20 per cent globally over the next 15 years, with the largest increases projected in Sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia and East Asia.

To feed the world in coming years, it is essential to increase the productivity, profitability and sustainability of African agriculture. "To achieve this goal, we need to be more productive and efficient in the way we grow food, while building the resilience of both farmers and food supply chains, while simultaneously reducing the environmental footprint of the agriculture and food sectors," said Mr. Shenggen Fan, Director General International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI).

This required policies and regulations that foster growth in the agriculture and food sectors, well-functioning markets, and thriving agribusinesses, to make more food available. In pursuit of these objectives, the World Bank has set out to measure and monitor regulations that affect the functioning of agriculture and agribusiness.

Dr Holger Kray, the Head of the Africa Agriculture Policy Unit at the World Bank explained that despite the inherent complexity of agricultural systems and the differing regional and country contexts in which agriculture and agribusiness performance is evaluated, globally comparable data and indicators offer meaningful tools that enable countries, policy makers and stakeholders to identify barriers impeding the growth of agriculture and agribusinesses.

The World Bank's enabling agriculture statistics now form a basis from which countries can share experiences and develop strategies to improve their policy environment anchored in local contexts.

The World Bank's 'enabling business of agriculture' indicators cover seed, fertilizer, machinery, finance, and are helping to strengthen the information base that can be used for informed policy dialogue and encourage regulations that ensure the safety and quality of agricultural inputs, goods and services while minimizing costs to make more food available to more people.

In this, robust, effective and efficient regulatory systems are essential components of well-functioning agriculture and food markets. In turn, such systems can help end poverty by 2030 and boost shared prosperity - as well as the Sustainable Development Goals.

Fall Armyworm now 'permanent' in Africa, urgent co-ordination required

In an interim report presented at AGRF 2017, CABI delivered new figures on the spread of the Fall Armyworm (FAW) reporting the pest had now infested 28 African countries, following its arrival in Africa in early 2016.

FAW now presents a permanent agricultural challenge for the continent, said Mr Roger Day, SPS Coordinator for CABI, during an open presentation and panel discussion at the forum.

The worm feeds on more than 80 crops, but prefers maize and can cut yields by up to 60 per cent, raising a substantial threat to the continent's agricultural output, and now requiring urgent coordination and action. Panellist Dr Godfrey Ching'oma of the Malawian Ministry of Agriculture reported the attack was 'huge' in Malawi, hitting around 138,000 ha of maize out of a total in Malawi of around 1.7m ha. That represented 8 per cent of the country's entire maize production, prompting the government to buy 25,000 litres of pesticide in a bid to control the invasion, compared with normal buying each year of just 3,000 litres for the African Armyworm.

But as delegate Sandy Roberts of DEVCO reported, in Zimbabwe, "it came hard, it came fast, and we were literally caught napping. In Mozambique, I was recently on a farm where 25 people were plucking off the worms. They were calling them pythons, they were so large," she said.

Panelist Dr Bodduupalli Prasanna, the director of CIMMYT's global maize program reported, however, that help might be on the way. CIMMYT has been testing maize seeds that are naturally resistant to the worm, in Kenya, in recent months, with first tests showing that these varieties suffer far less damage than maize that is susceptible to the worm.

Prasanna said CIMMYT was now developing a natural hybrid based on the tests and was in talks with seed company Monsanto to try to accelerate the licensing and sale of the FAW resistant seeds, which are conventionally derived. He also reported that VIP 3A genetically modified seeds offered greater potential still and could be available for sale within the next three to four years, as a solution that might re-open debate in some countries around allowing the sale of GM seeds.

If not properly managed, CABI now estimates, based on recent on research in Ghana and Zambia, that the financial cost of the worm in just 10 of Africa's maize producing countries could be as high as \$5.5bn a year. But managing the worm needed to be coordinated nationally and internationally, the panel concluded.

"In Malawi, as government, we cannot fight this problem of Fall Armyworm alone, so we had to create a task force where we included donor partners, especially FAO, as one of the technical assistance partners, and even NGOs who are working in rural areas to formulate a short term, medium term and long term plan to sort out this problem," said Ching'oma.

"One major problem was our extension workers didn't know the management of Fall Armyworm, it being a new pest, so we had to train them through what we call the training of trainers whereby we brought them to a place and taught them the biology, ecology and management of FAW and we even taught them on the control options which were available. But the only option that we had was chemicals, because we didn't have information on predators, we didn't have information on other environmentally safe strategies. So, as government, we had to buy pesticides."

Data and next generation leaders offer hope of forewarning on famines

The recent famine in parts of Africa has brought into sharp focus the need to be able to predict and prevent nutrition crises in Africa, prompting the International Center for Tropical Agriculture, known by its Spanish acronym, CIAT, to convene about 150 delegates at AGRF 2017 to discuss the scope for a nutrition early warning system (NEWS) for Africa.

The event sparked conversations amongst delegates, who represented diverse food and nutrition security actors as well as members of the artificial intelligence fraternity on the requirements for and the potential of a NEWS system.

Speakers at the event included Dr Debisi Araba, CIAT; Allison Greenberg, Action Against Hunger; Dr Jennifer Blanke, African Development Bank; Prof. Ruth Oniang'o, Rural Outreach Africa and African Food Prize 2017 Laureate; Dr Moustapha Cisse, Facebook Artificial Intelligence Research; and Rositsa Zaimova, Dalberg Data Insights.

The panelists criticized the currently siloed approach to tackling food security, agriculture and nutrition related problems as an obstacle to sustainable solutions, with each category of experts lacking visibility of what the others are working on.

A major factor in this is the way data is being collated and presented. Although there is a large amount of data on food and nutrition security, there is a lack of capacity and processes focused on turning that data into insights that can inform corrective actions. Moreover, the packaging of data and models on food security and nutrition is not usually in a format that is easy enough for policymakers to understand and take action from.

According to the experts, Africa needs to build its capacity to manipulate and interpret data. Artificial intelligence has the potential to create a paradigm shift in this area. Examples of this were offered by Dalberg Data Insights, which uses both traditional and non-traditional data on agricultural, food security and nutrition indicators to pick up trends, for instance, spikes in expenditure.

The key takeaway from the session is that Africa needs a data revolution powered by its young people to drive a new green revolution for food and nutrition security for all. In this, smallholder farmers should not be left behind.

The session concluded with a call for continued collaboration amongst the participants on the development of the NEWS.

Africa needs its agricultural productivity boosted in all ways to end food imports

The AGRF 2017 session on import substitution represented the essence of the forum in bringing together government, NGO and private sector leaders and actors to combine perspectives and fuel new solutions.

"Government and the private sector need to share the vision and commit together with clear commitments to roles and responsibilities that they will sign off and be accountable for," said Njack Kane, Chief Executive Officer, Intervalle, representing the opinion of the working group.

The session which focused on The Rice Value Chain required participants to work in groups and come up with strategies to achieve import substitution for rice in West Africa. The aim was to generate a list of actionable ideas that could be implemented anywhere in Africa, to cut down on imports of basic agricultural products that could easily be produced locally, with slight incentives and guidance to local producers. In classic development models, import substitution has often been achieved through incentives such as preferential taxation and subsidies, designed to spur the development of an alternative domestic industry.

Other historical methods have concentrated on protecting local producers from imports by raising tariffs on imports and introducing foreign exchange controls that cap all purchasing of foreign products. However, both these classic routes have become more difficult to pursue while also keeping the rules of the regional trade blocs and the World Trade Organisation, which do not permit unfair advantage for local producers.

Thus, stimulating local production requires new approaches that address the full array of issues holding back African agriculture, across low productivity, surging post-harvest losses, and poor market access. The workshop encouraged governments to create policies that encourage domestic production, including regulating markets. It was noted that the establishment of rules and regulations around markets was the best way to ensure that domestic producers were not exploited, further encouraging them to stay in the trade.

The importance of technology and mechanization was also emphasized, with the participants agreeing that adopting modern methods of production and inputs helps increase the output by farmers. In this regard, it was agreed that to boost domestic mechanization, deals for tractors and other machinery, as well as trained workers to run them, should be struck.

Value addition was seen as the other area of production that needs focus if African countries are to cut down the need for imported food.

Similarly, the workshop agreed on the need to encourage farmers to run their enterprises as businesses. For this purpose, incubation centers need to be developed as platforms for capacity building.

"Farmers should be encouraged to regard their operations as businesses, through inclusive business models that are also sustainable. Such skills and strategies can be taught through business incubation centers," said Stefan Kachelriess-Matthess, Project Manager, GIZ/CARI.

Syngenta calls for innovation partners in drive to empower smallholders

Biotechnology company Syngenta launched a call to action, laying out the company's four key transformation projects in Africa, with an invitation to partners to join them in inventing new business models in African agriculture.

The event on inclusive models for African smallholder productivity ran four parallel group discussions on the most innovative models to have unlocked smallholder activity.

A focus project was Mavuno Zaidi, meaning 'Grow Production', which is an initiative in Kenya and Tanzania that addresses the challenges faced by potato and tomato farmers. In partnership with ICT company Technoserve, farmers access quality inputs, training on good agricultural practice, post-harvest storage solutions and market linkages.

Over 25,000 Kenyan farmers have so far joined the initiative.

eShamba, in Kenya and Tanzania, which is collecting data and using mobile technology to improve farmers' access to farming advice and access to finance, was another of the named initiatives.

In West Africa, Syngenta is partnering with Africa Rice to provide growers with high quality locally adapted rice varieties, resistant to stress, offering the potential to increase yields by up to 20 per cent. In Ivory Coast, the company has also worked to build the Reference Farm Network to improve the skills and resilience of cocoa farmers, and achieve higher cocoa yields and returns on investment.

Each of innovative models ties with Syngenta's five A-model strategy that seeks to unlock agricultural potential in Africa by bridging the gap in key crops and meeting the demand of a growing population. The strategy aims to create a modern resilient and thriving agricultural market place.

"To support and empower farmers, our business development team on the ground invests in innovative and holistic business models that address barriers within African agriculture today. We cannot do this alone and to implement at scale requires partnerships with like-minded organizations who bring their own complementary contributions," said Peter Veal, Head of Business Development Africa and Middle East, Syngenta.

The company's core goals are to increase awareness and skills through training, achieve the effective and safe use of inputs, open accessibility to local markets at fair prices, open affordable routes to finance and machinery, support aggregation and flexible trading services and the development of broad local retail networks.

"We see AGRF as a springboard to build stronger partnerships with like-minded organizations who share our vision and who can complement our skills and expertise with their own," said Alexandra Brand, Regional Director Europe, Africa and Middle East Syngenta.

Agricultural alliance launches inputs platform to drive higher yields

An alliance of agricultural organizations has launched a comprehensive platform, encompassing a seed and soil program, at the 2017 Africa Green Revolution Forum in Abidjan, in a drive to accelerate the adoption of certified high yield seeds and hybrid inorganic fertilizers and pesticides. These improved inputs have been shown to increase farmers' yields by four-fold or more, amounting to a key driver in Africa's agricultural transformation.

Presenting a Progress Report from the Seed For All Toolkit of the International Finance Corporation, IFC-World Bank Group and the African Seed Index of Cornell University, the partners reported that the number of project based organisations working to improve the inputs of African farmers had risen sharply.

The session cited examples such as N2A Africa, a large scale, science-based "research-in-development" project focused on putting nitrogen fixation to work for smallholder farmers growing legume crops in Africa. The project has moved into government supported fertilizer production that has seen farmers produce four times more than previously. Such initiatives are also bringing wider economic benefits, in reducing the volume and cost of fertilizer imports to African nations.

For farmers, the change is proving transformatory. Farmers group TWIZERANE in Rwanda ran two legume trials with N2A Africa and reported that production levels rose more than four-fold on introducing the nitrogen fixing technology. However, even once soils are tended, yields will still depend on the quality of the seeds planted, with few African countries yet signing up to processes to get high quality seeds to farmers. This has allowed the sales of fake seeds to continue in hampering yields, with estimates of the proportion of fake seeds sold in Africa estimated to be between 20 per cent and 40 per cent.

Such counterfeits are limiting revenues across African agriculture in multiple ways. The fake seeds effectively make seeds more expensive in relation to outputs, because of the poor results secured, and cause commercial and tax losses to producers and government. As anti-competitive behavior, the level of seed counterfeiting, is also weakening the performance of credible seed producers and the global seed trade.

The session also discussed the limitations caused by the absence of harmonization in Africa's national seed markets. This is resulting in different seed certification procedures across countries, Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) measures that are not standardized and act as market entry barriers, and intellectual property rights issues that are complicated in trading blocs.

These issues have added to the risks and costs of investment in Africa's seed sector, leaving the public sector assuming a dominant role, crowding out the private sector, and leaving in place cumbersome seed import and export procedures.

The session called for a unique and harmonized database for the seed and fertilizer markets, to enable researchers, farmers, project funders, scientists, wholesalers, and government bodies to access information that will improve and facilitate work in upgrading Africa's agricultural inputs.

BasketBall funds target youth in drive towards more agribusiness

Agribusiness is by far Africa's most attractive business sector, accounting for 25 per cent of the continent's GDP and 70 per cent of its employment, but it is yet to have its potential unlocked as a result of its dependence on youth who are not interested in agriculture.

Youth engagement thus needs to be urgently facilitated, according to speakers addressing – Youth Agripreneurs and organised by the African Development Bank (AfDB), Association for Water and Rural Development (AWARD) and Southern African Confederation of Agricultural Unions (SACAU), at the AfDB headquarters in Abidjan.

"Agriculture will give us a competitive advantage as a continent when the youth are actively engaged. In order to achieve this, we must position agriculture in a different light. We need to remove the youth from the frame of mind that farming is a lackluster activity and get them to see its benefits as a profession. This can be done through the promotion of sport education via SEEDs, a 20 year fund," Mr Amadou Fall, Vice President and Managing Director, Africa National Basketball Association (NBA).

The fund will provide finance each year to support sports education for the youth. Up to 10 million youth join Africa's labour force each year, making them central to any economic transformation on the continent. Without them, growth will even flounder. In Cote d'Ivoire, for example, the average age for cocoa growers is 63, meaning the industry's future rests on mobilizing the youth into agripreneurship.

"The average age of persons actively involved in agriculture is approximately 60 years despite the youth population in Africa. In order for agriculture to thrive in Africa, we need to get more youth to leverage on the upcoming technological advancements and improve on this sector. Women need to be moved from the informal sectors to the formal sectors so that they are able to improve on the overall agricultural production across the continent," Ms. Vanessa Mounzar, Director, Gender Women and Civil Society, AfDB.

Panelists raised the challenges of achieving sustained youth engagement, observing that it was easy to attract the youth into agriculture, but difficult to keep their interest. A factor in this has been the mainstream media, which has portrayed farming as a lowly profession compared to careers in medicine and law. Moreover, for the youth who have already become agripreneurs, the scale of the challenges often make them want to give up. A principle roadblock remains funding, even though there are over 30 countries in Africa running youth enabling programs and initiatives, and hundreds of incubator organizations committed to helping youngsters grow their business ideas.

Young agripreneurs also face difficulties attracting and retaining their own peers as employees. An enabling environment rooted in detailed policies giving youth greater access to support as agripreneurs and mechanisms that offer mentorship and knowledge transfer will be critical for transforming agriculture in Africa and accelerating the path to prosperity, the session concluded.

Learn lessons from success to beat malnutrition in Africa

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Several African countries, including Senegal, Ghana, and Ethiopia, have shown success in reducing malnutrition over the last 15 years. This progress, driven in part by policy actions and interventions, shows that the battle against malnutrition in Africa can be won, according to a new report launched today by the Malabo Montpellier Panel at the Africa Green Revolution Forum in Cote d'Ivoire.

This report from the group of noted African and international food security experts, analyses the policy decisions and actions that contributed to this achievement and draws out the lessons that policymakers, donors and other stakeholders can learn.

Panel Co-Chair, Ousmane Badiane, said: "Much progress has been made, which is heartening. However, significant challenges remain. To achieve the aims set out in the Malabo Declaration and African Union's Agenda 2063, governments need to learn from past successes and redouble their efforts to tackle the triple scourge of hunger, malnutrition and obesity on the continent. The report clearly demonstrates that progress is possible"

Across Africa, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger dropped from 28% to 20% between 1990 and 2015, although the total number continues to increase due to a rapidly growing population. Some countries have made remarkable progress. Senegal, Ghana and Rwanda have all reduced the number of undernourished people and wasted and stunted children by more than 50%. Angola, Cameroon, Ethiopia and Togo have achieved reductions of more than 40%.

There is still a lot of work to do. Demographic changes and urbanization are adding pressure on food systems to increase yields, at the same time as producing more diverse and nutritious foods. Critical threats include conflict and climate change – which delay progress or even reverse gains in the fight against hunger and malnutrition. The consumption of cheap, nutrient-poor food and reduced physical activity among the middle class is driving up obesity levels. The estimated prevalence of childhood obesity is expected to reach 11% in 2025.

Joachim von Braun, Co-Chair of the Panel said: "Governments are successful in combating malnutrition when they put it at the top of their agenda and implement programmes across departments in close collaboration with partners. Investment is needed in crisis prevention and programmes that build resilience against climate stresses."

The recommendations in the report, drawn from the example set by successful countries include:

- Adopt a comprehensive policy on nutrition as a top priority
- Set up mechanism to coordinate coherent agenda on nutrition across government
- Invest in crises prevention and emergency intervention capacities to address the threat of conflict to malnutrition reduction
- Strengthen national agricultural and nutrition research to expand biofortification and other nutrient enrichment programmes
- Empower women's groups

African Agriculture must be informed and adaptive to survive climate change

Of the 10 countries in the world adversely affected by climate change, six are African. This reality presents the continent with a profound challenge in adapting to changing temperatures, seasons, and weather in ways that protect its harvests and food security.

Panelists, including the Assistant Director General and Regional Representative of the FAO, the Pan African Ambassador for Food Security for South Africa, and directors and coordinators from many of the world's leading agricultural research and finance organisations, outlined ways in which smallholder farmers could be positioned to stay in business as Africa's climate continues to change.

Without such initiatives hard fought gains in agricultural productivity in Africa will cease or even reverse, as climate change raises new threats across water supplies, food shortages, nutrition, public health, conflicts over resources, and economic decline.

Building climate resilience into smallholders' farming is therefore critical, as the continent's smallest businesses and land plots continue to provide some two-thirds of its food.

Yet, concluded the panelists, Africa has the resources and means to protect its agricultural output, with one of the most significant means being through well-defined and improved irrigation systems.

Further, building farmers' adaptive capacity is vital. A critical input in this will be the production and dissemination of climate information, through vigorous and targeted campaigns directed to the youth, as they are the future leaders.

'We need to get five year olds involved in broadcasting the information about climate changes and the available mitigation strategies in the villages as they are the future leaders. In turn we need to get the youth involved in biotechnology as well as taking part in formulating policies around mitigation and adaptation strategies,' said Dr Brylyne Chitsunge, Pan African Ambassador for Food Security, South Africa.

Climate change presents both an obligation and an opportunity to reconfigure development strategies, concluded the symposium's two parallel debates.

In this, national governments bear responsibility for developing and implementing programs from grass root levels to top managements that build the resilience of their populations, emphasizing preventive local actions to manage the risks associated with climate change.

In the longer term, a climate fund (or funding mechanism) should be established in conjunction with a new and comprehensive climate agreement to support developing countries' actions in mitigation and adaptation.

Starting at \$10 billion and growing to \$50 billion per year, in addition to ODA, it should consist of innovative and predictable sources of funding, including auctioning revenues from carbon markets and global market-based levies, such as from international air travel and maritime emissions reduction.

Experts combine to reverse food losses costing \$4bn a year, and rising

Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) statistics show that almost 40 per cent of the food produced in sub-Saharan Africa is lost between the farm and consumer, with \$4bn of grain lost a year – enough to feed 48 million people.

This scale of this wastage is so huge, the World Bank estimates that if post-harvest losses were reduced by just 1 per cent, the region would make \$40 million worth of gains. Instead, as a result of the post-harvest losses, and with more than 233 million undernourished people in its territory, Africa is left to spend \$35bn on food imports, in spending that is forecast to rise to \$110 billion by 2025. But this trend could yet be reversed, if the ideas raised in Cote d'Ivoire are meaningfully acted upon.

Dr. Lindiwe Sibanda, the Vice President for Country Support, Policy, and Delivery, and one of the panelists in a Post-Harvest Management session held at the forum on September 7th, confirmed that her institution was committed to reducing post-harvest losses of maize.

But, "unless farmers can get better markets, they will have little incentive to work towards reducing post-harvest losses," said Dr Sibanda.

Other factors that need to be addressed for better post-harvest management included farmer aggregation for knowledge sharing, financing, implementation of new technologies and policy development, she said. Jumping in on the technology aspect, Bhupinder Singh, the CEO of Tanzania's AgroZ, introduced to the panelists his company's hermetic storage bags.

"The bags are made of two layers – an outer polypropylene and an inner liner. The whole concept in hermetic storage is that it does not allow oxygen, water or carbon dioxide to pass through to the grains and pulses, and it also locks out organisms such as weevils," said Singh.

To prove the success of his company's storage product, Singh noted that between 2014 and 2017, AgroZ has sold 1.5 million hermetic bags in Kenya alone. In fact, hermetic storage remains one of the oldest and safest forms of food preservation in the world as it provides an airtight, safe and pesticide-free means of storing dry food commodities. Indeed, hermetic grain storage systems were first discovered in North Africa and the Middle East, where grain was stored in underground sealed pits, in an ancient but effective technology that companies such as AgroZ have improved on with their hermetic bags.

Yet new technology alone is not enough to tackle fully the problem of post-harvest food losses. The African Development Bank (AfDB) has identified a series of other challenges that they are now tackling through flagship projects. Among these projects is the establishment of agroprocessing zones, in which farmers are aggregated as direct investors, as AfDB links them to markets. So far, agroprocessing zones have been set up in Congo DR, Nigeria, Cote d'Ivoire and Ethiopia. Warehouse receipt systems, which have proven successful in Ethiopia and Kenya are also being investigated by AfDB as another way of dealing with food loss caused by poor storage.

Much more needs to be done, however, and the panelists at the forum agreed it is imperative for governments and other stakeholders to join forces in tackling the challenge. Infrastructure development and sourcing of markets were presented as among the key necessities in curtailing Africa's costly problem of post-harvest losses.

Geospatial data on crops, resources and markets can drive accelerated growth

Information is set to be the chariot that delivers agricultural transformation to Africa, guiding farmers towards higher productivity by pointing them to everything from ideal soils, crops, and water sources, to storage facilities and markets, using geospatial data.

Addressing a symposium on geospatial development models, Honourable Adam Kone, Ivory Coast's Minister of Finance pointed out the essential nature of better information to farmers.

"We agree that the biggest and a common problem across the globe is how to feed the world, but paradoxically, Africa has more than enough arable land compared to other nations, yet cannot feed ourselves because of the sub-standard farming methods," he said.

Yet, African agricultural production needs to increase by 70 per cent to feed an additional 2.5 billion people over coming decades: a feat that can best be achieved by adopting geospatial development models, which has been described as an opportunity to modernise Africa.

Projects such as the University of Ghana's geospatial website are now leading the way in opening access to data sets that can drive evidence-based decisions in farming systems, which, it says, hold the key to fast tracking the collection, harmonisation, packaging and dissemination of agri-related datasets to guide farmers and farm-related enterprises in determining high efficiency and increased returns on agriculture investments.

"While geospatial tools have been successfully used for natural resources, and environmental management, actual use of the technology in the agriculture sectors is slowly gaining ground in Africa," states the university.

"The Centre for Remote Sensing and Geographic Information Services (CERSGIS), University of Ghana, is endeavouring to fill the spatial data gap in Ghana's agriculture sector by providing a Web-based platform that guarantees access to spatial data and agro-related information by prospective investors, thus contributing to the overall goal of agricultural transformation."

While hurdles are expected in the development of such platforms and of the geospatial development model, the symposium delegates agreed that no model has a perfect beginning. Instead, the models should be allowed flexibility and space to grow.

Policy makers also defended their slow uptake of the model saying their hesitance emanates from the need to understand better how the implementation of such policies will help them achieve their goals. Advocates of geo spatial development models argue that the data can provide a foundation for appropriate policies for subsidies and pricing, and planning efforts for robust and resilient agricultural systems in the context of climate change, food insecurity and urban expansion.

Proper nutrition is key to Africa's economic success, says report

Africa's struggle with malnutrition remains a major hindrance to its success, with one in five people chronically undernourished. A nutrition report titled *Nourished: How Africa Can Build a Future Free from Hunger and Malnutrition*, released by the Malabo Montpellier Panel confirmed that the growing burden of undernutrition continues to threaten the improvement of Africa's progress towards achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.

The report revealed that the proportion of people struggling with hunger dropped from 28 per cent to 20 per cent between 1990 and 2015. However, the total number has continued to increase due to a rapidly growing population. Some countries, such as Senegal, Ghana and Rwanda, have, nonetheless, made remarkable progress in reducing undernourishment, more than halving stunting in children. This success has been credited to the dedication of the leaders in these countries.

"Governments are successful in combating malnutrition when they put it at the top of their agenda and implement programmes across departments in close collaboration with partners. However, more investment is needed in crisis prevention and programmes that build resilience against climate stresses," said Joachim von Braun, Co-Chair of the panel.

Nor is malnutrition the only health worry for African countries. Obesity is gradually becoming a major concern, and one which the Panel recommends need urgent attention.

"It is not uncommon to find undernutrition and obesity coexisting within the same country, the same community, or even the same household. In such situations, child stunting coexists alongside overweight adults (particularly women), as well as in stunted, but overweight children," reported the panel.

A driver of this parallel trend has been Africa's rising population of middle-income households, who now prefer highly processed foods, which lack nutrients, and are increasingly engaged in a sedentary lifestyle and desk jobs.

"The estimated prevalence of childhood (7–11 years of age) overweight increased from 4 per cent in 1990 to 7 per cent in 2011, and is expected to reach 11 per cent in 2025, while the percentage of children under five who are overweight varies between 4 per cent in West Africa and 15 per cent in Southern Africa," warned the Malabo Montpellier Panel report.

The panel recommended drastic measures to tackle the continent's nutrition problems. "To successfully address the multiple forms of malnutrition, governments and the private sector need to work together to reshape the food system in a way that will ensure healthier diets for all," said the report.

This was aligned with policy commitments said Panel Co-Chair, Ousmane Badiane. "To achieve the aims set out in the Malabo Declaration and African Union's Agenda 2063, governments need to learn from past successes and redouble their efforts to tackle the triple scourge of hunger, malnutrition and obesity on the continent," he said.

Former Tanzanian President Jakaya Kikwete's expressed his confidence that African leaders will continue to push for more success. "Our continent is the last frontier in humanity's struggle and quest for better living standards. Fortunately, the people of Africa and their leaders have always been proactive in conceiving social-economic policies and taking measures and actions to implement those policies," said Kikwete in his keynote address at AGRF 2017.

African women farmers can liberate continent if given more than just financial support

Ninety three per cent of young women provided with other support, in addition to funding, succeed in business, compared with just 57 per cent who thrive when given financial aid alone, according to Dr. Jemimah Njuki, Senior Program Officer, at the International Development Research Centre (IDRC).

Speaking during a session organized by the Africa Enterprise Challenge Fund (AECF) on the prosperity of women in agribusiness at the 2017 African Green Revolution Forum (AGRF) in Abidjan, Ivory Coast, Dr. Njuki said access to finance, capacity building, mentorship and links to markets are vital for the success of women-led agribusinesses, insisting that the four items really needed to be provided as a package.

“What we (IDRC) have learnt through the research that we fund is that any single one of those is not going to work. It is like a conveyor belt – if you give women funding for their business, one of the key determinants we have found for the success of women’s agribusinesses is the link to markets.”

In Africa, 80 per cent of agricultural production comes from smallholder farmers, with women accounting for about 40 per cent of the production. However, almost 50 per cent of the food grown in the continent goes to waste for lack of markets.

According to the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the amount of food wasted in Africa is enough to feed 300 million people.

Ironically, all this wastage happens in a continent where 200 million people suffer from hunger and 40 per cent of children under the age of five remain stunted due to malnutrition.

Dr. Njuki said countries in Africa can overcome this cycle of meaningless production by developing structures to help women agripreneurs access both local and international markets.

“These linkages to global markets are not automatic. We are leaving women to navigate through all these barriers on their own,” she said.

Citing the example of WEConnect, an organization that takes women-led businesses, mentors them and helps them sell their products, Dr. Njuki further emphasised the importance of exposure to new markets in the success of the African economy.

“Right now they (WEConnect) have 600 businesses in their registry and about 60 that are connected to the global supply chains. These 60 businesses are now generating over \$127 million annually and have about 5000 employees,” she said.

Access to high-value markets, however, remains a tough challenge, which Dr. Peter Hazell, the Technical Advisor, 2017 African Agriculture Status Report, in an earlier forum pre-event, said could be bridged by actively engaging the private sector

“Connecting small farmers to the value chains, feeding into geographically growing urban markets is the key for commercializing them. You can make a lot of farmers rich and prosperous if you can get them into those value chains,” he said.



“The challenge is making those links. The private sector players, who control those markets have a preference for bigger farms because they can produce better product of better and consistent quality.

“But you can get these players to work with small farmers through public-private partnerships, where you organize many small farmers in such ways that they become attractive to agribusiness.” And that is where governments and NGOs need to engage the private sector to create these linkages.”

The seventh edition of AGRF, entitled Accelerating Africa’s Path to Prosperity: Growing Inclusive Economies and Jobs through Agriculture, and which runs from 4-8th September will serve as a forum for African leaders and agriculture industry stakeholders to improve Africa’s economic welfare, through success in agriculture.

Leaders Speak

Voices for agriculture

Speaking at the launch of the 2017 Africa Green Revolution Forum, Africa's agricultural leaders presented a clear vision and analysis

"A continent so well-endowed does not deserve to starve"

Professor Ruth Oniang'o, 2017 Africa Food Prize Laureate

"We have what it takes to lead global food production"

Dr Agnes Kalibata, AGRA President

"The countries that have invested in agriculture are already experiencing economic growth of more than 6 per cent. These include Uganda, Rwanda, Ghana and Ethiopia"

H.E. Josefa Sacko, AU Commissioner, Rural Development & Agriculture

"There is notable effort to improve food production methods and real commitments have been made to address key issues in the sector to increase yields and production, with 95 per cent of resources dedicated to increasing food production. However, poor handling of produce including poor harvesting techniques is contributing to close to 30 per cent loss of food"

Mr Mamadou Biteye, MD Rockefeller Foundation

"A critical area to consider in the improvement of agriculture is to insist for support for women and youth especially those that are in areas under economic pressure"

Mr Gilbert Hougbo, IFAD President

"The biggest win for AGRF so far has been the Ability to bring leadership on board thus allowing a strong force to lead the move towards food security"

Dr Agnes Kalibata - AGRA President

"We recognise the paramount importance to us as a people and as a continent to turn agriculture around, to feed ourselves qualitatively and quantitatively. Unless we do that, our people will remain susceptible to hunger and malnutrition"

H.E. Ellen Johnson, President of Liberia

"Looking ahead- rapid growth expected in Africa presents both a challenge and an economic opportunity for Africa"

Mr Rodger Voorhies, Executive Director, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

"The leap for the African Union is the creation of a tool that rallies various groups including heads of states to support agriculture. The tool provides a strong background against which the push for empowerment of women and youth is made"

H.E. Josefa Sacko, AU Commissioner, Rural Development & Agriculture

2017 Africa Agriculture Status Report

New Report focuses on transforming African smallholder agriculture and agribusinesses to appropriate a \$1 Trillion food market and replace natural resources as the driver for the continent's economic growth.

The power of entrepreneurs and the free market is driving Africa's economic growth from food production, as business wakes up to opportunities of a rapidly growing food market in Africa, that may be worth more than \$1 trillion each year by 2030 to substitute imports with high value food made in Africa. This is the main conclusion of the 2017 Africa Agriculture Status Report (AASR), launched in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire.

According to the report, agriculture will be Africa's quiet revolution, with a focus on SMEs and smallholder farmers creating the high productivity jobs and sustainable economic growth that failed to materialise from mineral deposits and increased urbanisation. Despite 37 percent of the population now living in urban centres, most jobs have been created in lower paid, less productive services rather than in industry, with this service sector accounting for more than half of the continent's GDP. Smart investments in the food system can change this picture dramatically if planned correctly.

Commenting on the report's findings, Dr. Agnes Kalibata, President AGRA, the commissioning agency for the study said: "Africa has the latent natural resources, skills, human and land capacity to tip the balance of payments and move from importer to exporter by eating food made in Africa. This report shows us that agriculture involving an inclusive transformation that goes beyond the farm to agri-businesses will be Africa's surest and fastest path to that new level of prosperity."



AFRICA AGRICULTURE STATUS REPORT

The Business of Smallholder Agriculture in Sub-Saharan Africa



To succeed, Africa's agricultural revolution needs to be very different to those seen in the rest of world. It requires an inclusive approach that links millions of small farms to agribusinesses, creating extended food supply chains and employment opportunities for millions including those that will transition from farming. This is in contrast to the model often seen elsewhere in the world of moving to large scale commercial farming and food processing, which employs relatively few people and requires high levels of capital.

The report highlights the opportunity for Africa to feed the continent with food made in Africa that meets the growing demand of affluent, fast growing urban populations on the continent looking for high value processed and pre-cooked foods. Furthermore, it advocates that this opportunity should be met by many of the continent's existing smallholder farmers. Currently part of this growing demand for Africa's food is met by imports. These amount to \$35bn p.a. and are expected to cost \$110bn by 2025 unless Africa improves the productivity and global competitiveness of its agribusiness and agriculture sectors.

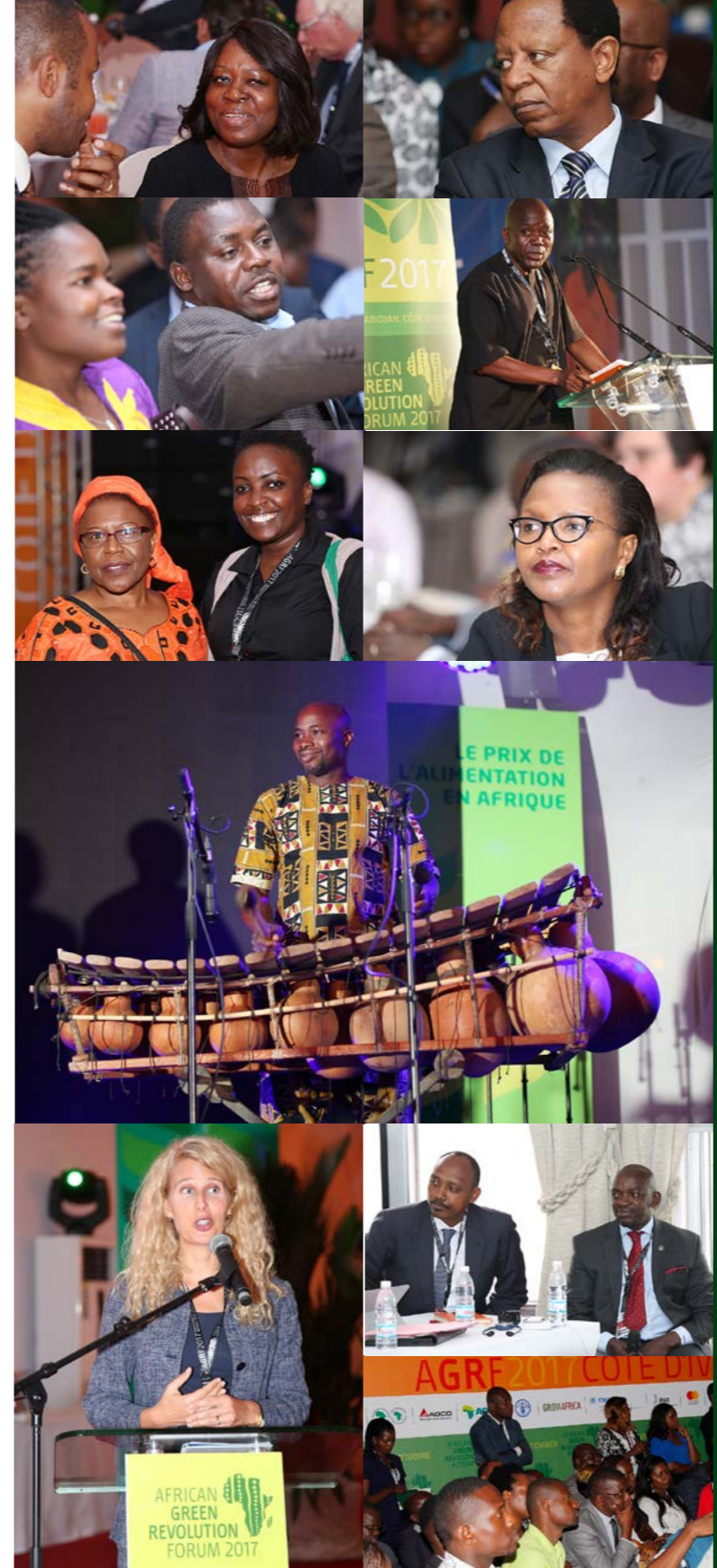
The report acknowledges that the private sector holds the key to the transformation of the food system so far. "Impressive value addition and employment is being created by SMEs along value chains in the form of increased agricultural trade, farm servicing, agro processing, urban retailing and food services. Large agribusinesses like seed companies, agro processors and supermarkets are also playing an increasing role in the food value chain in many regions," said Peter Hazell (IFPRI), the technical director of the report.

However, the study is clear that left to the private sector alone, growth in the agrifood system will not be as fast as it could, nor will it benefit as many smallholder farmers and SMEs it could. Government support is needed to both stimulate and guide the transition. AS a high priority, governments need to create an enabling business environment, and in particular, meet targets to invest ten percent of GDP in agriculture, agreed at the 2003 African Union (AU) Summit as part of The Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP).

The report also urges governments to nurture a globally competitive food production sector through measures such as increasing infrastructure investment in secondary cities and towns, improving the reliability of energy and water supplies, building more wholesale market spaces, promoting open regional trade, identifying and investing in first mover crops and introducing stricter standards for food safety and quality.

The authors also call on governments to stimulate new private public partnerships for more innovative financing and insurance provision which can lead to increased resilience for farmers and their households. While globally agricultural insurance is a \$2 billion business, Africa accounts for less than two percent of the market. Other fiscal stimulus measures suggested include improving financial regulations, developing better credit-reporting processes, opening up special economic zones, supporting digital warehouse receipt systems and sharing risk with lenders through credit guarantees and matching funds.

The report points out other new opportunities to target support presented by digital technology such as satellite tracking and big data. These can help locate new high value agri-economic zones and smarter financing and food security policies, especially in the face of climate change.



"Smart support is just as important as scale of support for Africa's highly diverse group of famers and agribusinesses. To step up their game, businesses needs assistance tailored to distinct groups of viable small farms and agribusinesses at different development stages, rather than blanket support for all," added AGRA President, Dr. Kalibata.

The report's authors conclude that although progress is being made, Africa needs to pick up the pace if it is to compete globally and turn itself from importer to exporter by feeding its people with food made in Africa. "Hopefully the prize of a rapidly growing and valuable market for food made in Africa will spark widespread political will and attract the best business talent to build a high value food sector," said Peter Hazell. "This private public partnership will be essential to provide the trinity of high productivity employment, sustainable economic growth and food made in Africa for Africa and the world."



H.E. Olusegun Obasanjo, Chairman of the Africa Food Prize Committee poses with the 2017 Award laureates, Prof. Ruth Oniang'o (left) and Mme Maïmouna Sidibe Coulibaly (right) after the award ceremony in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire.



Champions for Nutrition, Food Security and Agribusiness Named Winners of 2017 Africa Food Prize.

Two women, working at both ends of the agriculture supply chain in Africa, have each been awarded the 2017 Africa Food Prize. Hon. Prof. Ruth Oniang'o, a professor and advocate of nutrition from Kenya, and Mme Maïmouna Sidibe Coulibaly an entrepreneur and agro industrialist, from Mali were awarded for their exemplary efforts in driving Africa's agriculture transformation.

Hon. Prof Ruth Oniang'o is recognized as the leading voice of nutrition in Africa and for her relentless advocacy for the availability and affordability of diverse and nutritious crops for millions across the continent. She pioneered nutrition leadership in academia, research, and policy to improve food security and nutrition. Her groundbreaking work, with farmers' groups and rural communities connects agriculture and nutrition both in research and practice providing a natural link between agriculture and nutrition.

Mme Maïmouna Sidibe Coulibaly, on the other hand has been feted for her mission to produce and supply improved and high-yielding seed that have led to improved incomes and nutrition for millions in Mali and other West African countries. Through sheer hard work

and consistency, she has overcome multiple hurdles to build a leading seed company that is fast becoming a model for Africa's agri-businesses. Her company, Faso Kaba, specializes in the production and sale of a wide range of improved seeds, including cereals, oil seeds, market gardening, fodder and tuber seeds that can improve agricultural yields by up to 40 per cent.

The Prize recognizes and puts a spotlight on shining examples of agricultural projects that are transforming lives and economies. The 2017 Prize winners come from both the public and private sector representing how both groups are working together to transform agriculture into a high value industry sector. The 2017 AFP awards had over 600 nominees establishing it as the most prestigious prize for African agricultural development.

The Chairperson of the Prize Committee, H.E. President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria, commended Hon. Prof Oniang'o and Mme Coulibaly on behalf of the Committee for their trailblazing efforts that are improving the socio-economic wellbeing of millions in Africa.

"It gives me immense pride that this year's winner are both women. This is a clear demonstration that women in Africa are at the forefront in terms of connecting the rising food needs and the continent's vision for prosperity that is driven by agriculture and agri-business. The fact that the winners work at either end of the agriculture value chain, represent both private and public sector and are from different parts of Africa reflects the wide impact agriculture has in transforming economies and reducing poverty, way beyond the fields," he said.

As a member of Kenya's Parliament (2003-2007), Hon. Prof Oniang'o dedicated her efforts to alleviating poverty and hunger, with special focus on science and technology, agricultural research and productivity, food security, nutrition, bio-safety legislation, use of fertilizer and other inputs, HIV/AIDS and gender issues.

A strong believer in farming being the bridge between humankind and nature, Prof. Ruth Oniang'o spends most of her time with smallholder farmers and women in rural areas helping them to transform their household's ability to produce, purchase and consume foods in higher quality and quantities. She reckons that smallholder farmers are the most valuable part of the market and the entrepreneurial value chain.

"I believe we are what we eat. I realized early on in my life, when I dreamt of being a doctor, that food is the first medicine," said Prof. Oniang'o as she received her Prize. "I am humbled to receive this Prize and believe it highlights the work we have done and more importantly, it will contribute towards shaping our continent's food future. I am a strong believer that Africa shall, one day, feed the world." said Hon. Prof Oniang'o.

For her part, Mme. Coulibaly observed that the opportunities for Africa agribusinesses are endless. She however, decried the enormous challenges African entrepreneurs especially start-ups face as they try to set up businesses.



"I am honored and humbled to receive this Prize. It is, in part, a validation of the hard work that I have put into building Faso Kaba with the support of my family and staff. I would like to say that it has been easy. There are many times when I almost gave up as I struggled to raise to finance the business. I am glad I stayed true to my vision, attended many trainings and worked with partners that believed in my vision," she said. Today, we have become a model that many people that are starting businesses come to. I no longer book appointments with the banks. They call me with financing proposal. I look forward to a time when businesses will not struggle to start like I did," she added.

The 2016 winner of Africa Food Prize is Dr Kanayo Nwanze, the former President of the International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD). Dr. Nwanze was awarded for his visionary leadership and passionate advocacy to place African smallholder farmers at the centre of the global agricultural agenda, and for his demonstrated success in advancing policies, programs and resources that have improved the lives of millions across the continent.

AGRF 2017 CÔTE D'IVOIRE



Abidjan Communiqué

Decisions and Commitments from the 2017 African Green Revolution Forum, Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire

Preamble

1. The Seventh African Green Revolution Forum (AGRF) was held in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, from 4 to 8 September, 2017 as a premier platform for global and African leaders to develop actionable plans to move African agriculture forward. The forum was hosted by H.E. President Alassane Ouattara, a continental champion of inclusive agricultural transformation, and his team of senior government officials, including Vice President Daniel Kablan Duncan, Prime Minister Amadou Gon Coulibaly, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Mamadou Sangafowa Coulibaly, and several other key cabinet members. The other co-hosts were the African Development Bank, the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA), and the 15 members of the AGRF Partners Group. Additional resource and technical partnership was provided to the forum by another 10 partners who supported the cost of the forum and its sessions and content.
2. The Forum was attended by as many as 1300 delegates and high level dignitaries, including H.E. President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia, H.E. Komi Selom Klassou, Prime Minister of Togo and Representative of H.E. Faure Essozimna Gnassingbe, President of Togo, H.E. John Kufuor, Former President of Ghana, H.E. President Olusegun Obasanjo, Former President of Nigeria, and H.E. Jakaya Kikwete, Former President of Tanzania.

Other dignitaries included the President of ECOWAS, the African Union Commissioner for the Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture, eight ministers of agriculture and finance, business leaders, financial institutions, private agribusiness firms, farmers, NGOs, civil society, media, scientists, development partners, technical partners, and the next generation of African agripreneurs and leaders.

3. The theme of this year's forum was Accelerating the Path to Prosperity: Growing Inclusive Economies and Jobs through Agriculture. This served as the guiding framework for a total of 52 sessions and more than 300 speakers around related topics, particularly youth employment, women in agribusiness, strengthening access to inputs, market access, financial inclusion, the enabling policy environment, and other critical barriers to value chain development and unlocking private sector investment. The forum was closely aligned with and built heavily upon key global and continental gatherings earlier in the year, including the African Development Bank Annual Meeting, the African Union Summit, the CAADP Partnership Platform Meeting, and the G20 and G7 Summits that have all focused heavily on the creation of jobs for the youth and driving rural development and prosperity through agriculture.
4. The 2017 African Agriculture Status Report (AASR), entitled The Business of Smallholder Agriculture, once again served to provide a technical foundation and set of key findings and recommendations for the forum. The report acknowledged the importance of governments working with the free market to drive Africa's economic growth from food production. It emphasised the need to substitute imports with high value food made in Africa for a market forecast to be worth more than US\$1 trillion a year by 2030.
5. The AGRF 2017 looked at how governments, businesses, and other partners are delivering on the political, policy and financial commitments worth over US\$30 billion made at the AGRF 2016 in Nairobi, Kenya and the impact this is having on the lives and incomes of farmers and agribusinesses.
6. The AGRF 2017 benefitted from a series of six thematic working groups driven by the AGRF Partners throughout the year. These considered i) Youth, ii) Women, iii) Inputs, iv) Markets, v) Mechanization, vi) Finance. Results of the year-long engagement included the launch of a toolkit on blended finance released at the forum, strengthened stakeholder communities for the youth and women working groups.

Assessing Progress

7. The forum highlighted considerable progress over the last 12 months against the AGRF 2016 multi-year commitments guided by the 9 priority action points contained in the Nairobi communique.
 - i. The African Union, NEPAD, and countries noted that seven countries have initiated the process of refreshing their investment plans to unlock 10 per cent of public expenditure in agriculture to leverage significant additional resources from the private sector and development partners.
 - ii. Private sector partners made investments, including OCP's US\$2.4 billion fertilizer plant in Ethiopia, with further plants planned in Rwanda, Cote d'Ivoire, Kenya, Tanzania and Nigeria. KCB working with the MasterCard Foundation launched a US\$30 million partnership to promote financial inclusion for at least two million smallholder farmers in Kenya and Rwanda.
 - iii. Partners such as the African Development Bank, the Mastercard Foundation, and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) advanced innovating financing mechanisms to develop SMEs and increase finance for the continent's smallholder farmers. This included work on the Smallholder Agriculture Investment and Finance Network, SAFIN.
 - iv. Many countries are making progress in developing updated national agricultural strategies and investment plans aligned with expectations under the Malabo declaration. The Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) of the United Nations has provided support to a number of countries in the course of the last year, including Kenya, Ghana and the AGRF host country of Cote d'Ivoire.
 - v. These and other countries are making progress in identifying and unlocking policy and regulatory bottlenecks critical to boosting agriculture sector growth. In Ethiopia, progress has been made on regulatory updates to enable contract farming, in the removal of a cereal export ban, and reduce restrictions around agricultural inputs and machinery. In Ghana, the government moved to strengthen the import distribution and subsidy systems. Malawi launched a fertilizer policy regulating fertilizer distribution. Burkina Faso, Ghana and Nigeria strengthened their legal systems to enable private sector involvement in the seed and fertilizer sectors.

- vi. Significant progress has been made towards the completion of the first CAADP biennial review process, which the African Union and NEPAD are leading with countries and Regional Economic Communities in preparation for the African Union Summit in January 2018. Up to 30 countries have submitted their biennial review reports to date, and the process is on track to deliver the commitment of a one-page scorecard for Heads of State.
 - vii. A first ministerial roundtable and dialogue was held at the 2017 Global Open Data for Agriculture & Nutrition (GODAN) meeting hosted by Kenya, where ministers reviewed the progress they are each making in the development of data. The meeting resolved to establish an African intergovernmental network on Open Data for Agriculture and Nutrition.
8. Progress was exemplified by stakeholders across the agricultural community, including ongoing leadership by H.E. President Uhuru Kenyatta of Kenya and H.E. President Paul Kagame of Rwanda, who remain among the key leaders of inclusive agricultural transformation on the continent, and took measures such as allocating US\$32 million to the Uwezo Fund and the Youth and Women Enterprise Fund.
 9. Across all of this progress, partners noted that in order to achieve agricultural transformation, new models and new ways of doing business are required.
 - a. The Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA), the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) launched a new partnership of up to US\$280 million to increase incomes and improve the food security of 30 million smallholder households in 11 countries by 2021.
 - b. The Farm to Market Alliance, a partnership of Syngenta Foundation, RaboBank, WFP, AGRA, YARA and Bayer that aims to enhance access for smallholder farmers, expanded to draw in more partners, including Intervalle.
 10. The AGRF Partners Group agreed to continue tracking progress against its multi-year action items, as a key instrument for mobilizing additional partners and commitments, and ensuring accountability.

Securing new commitments and recognizing success

11. This year's forum featured new types of partnership agreements providing innovative ways of doing business. A number of new partnerships were established as vehicles for resource mobilization and co-ordination. These were contained in a number of MOUs covering areas such as increasing the productivity of maize smallholder farmers; building export capacity of agricultural enterprises; strengthening post-harvest management and increasing financial inclusion.
12. Most notably, a new MoU was signed between the AGRF host country, Cote d'Ivoire and the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) to facilitate the setting up of an AGRA office in the country to support the country and the Francophone West African region attain its agricultural transformation targets.
13. The forum set the narrative for inclusive agricultural transformation that involves millions of smallholder farmers, but which goes beyond the farm to include SMEs and agri-businesses in the entire food value chain.
14. Heads of State and other government leaders present made new commitments to sustain their economic and agricultural transformation drive.
 - i. **H.E. Alassane Ouattara of Cote d'Ivoire** stated his government's commitment to increase its budgetary allocation to agriculture to 10 per cent of GDP, of which US\$200 million has already been provided to cocoa and coffee farmers. He also committed to comply with actions of regional organizations in favor of agricultural development with the aim of feeding its population and becoming, ultimately, a net exporter of food.
 - ii. **H.E. Komi Selom Klassou, the Prime Minister of Togo** emphasised the need to work with other Heads of State to achieve policies that are coherent and that support smallholders in organising into cooperatives for ease of access to finance. He called for stronger partnerships between the public and private sectors to play a key role in the development of Africa's agribusinesses.
 - iii. **H.E. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia** stressed the value of working with the private sector to double the yields of rice farmers by improving their access to inputs to enable them to transition to low land irrigated rice production.

- iv. Hon. Dr. Owusu Afriyie Akoto, Minister of Agriculture, Ghana, who represented H.E Nana Akufo-Addo, President Ghana expressed his country's renewed support for the 'Planting for food and jobs' programme, with a pilot targeting 200,000 of the country's five million farmers and fisherman in the first year. This five year project will improve productivity through improved seeds, fertilisers, market support and e-agriculture.
- 15.** Other commitments were made by the following institutions representing the private sector and the development partners:
- i. The European Union has signed a new European Consensus for Development initiative with a value of around US\$1.5 billion. This adds to its existing blended finance facilities for Africa and the neighbouring region with an estimated budget of US\$2.6 billion to leverage more than US\$44 billion of investment in Africa until 2020.
- ii. Germany's Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) expressed its commitment to African development with agriculture as a key driver. Under Germany's presidency, the G20 this year launched an initiative on rural youth employment with a focus on job creation for young people. This is contained in the Berlin Charter that has been adopted by civil society, the private sector and science community. It also reaffirmed its commitment to the One World No Hunger initiative with €1.5 billion per year invested in agriculture. Its Marshall Plan with Africa will guide the corporation and development of initiatives between Africa and Germany.
- iii. Yara, the global fertilizer company, has dedicated more that US\$100 million in downstream operations and US\$130 million to develop a mine in Ethiopia. Yara is also part of the Farm to Market Alliance, but noted that investment could increase further with continued improvements in the enabling environment.
- iv. The Rockefeller Foundation committed US\$130 million over seven years to improve working practices with partners across the private and public sectors, technology manufacturers and financiers
- v. The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation has built on its US\$350 million investment in Africa, with US\$250m going to agriculture, through a partnership with the Rockefeller Foundation, and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) for a new US\$250 million commitment to AGRA as a leading pan-African institution that works with multiple players and governments to increase the incomes and food security of millions of smallholder households.
- vi. The African Union has committed to the creation of a CAADP-Malabo business plan to create a tool to implement the seven goals.
- 16.** Close to US\$6.5 billion worth of investments in palm oil, pulses, potato and rice - mainly in West Africa – over the next eight years, were made.
- i. The rice value chain received significant boost in investments including a crowd funding facility to support 10,000 farmers and SMEs with loans of \$100 – \$10,000 within the next 18 months, plans to establish the West African Regional Rice Task Force to unlock US\$ 470 million to achieve rice self-sufficiency. A US\$500 million infrastructure investment deal is also under development to improve acces to farms and markets.
- ii. Maslaha Seed Limited and Sygenta committed a US\$1 million investment in increased rice seed production while the expansion of the Farm to Market Alliance to include of Intervalle will increase rice marketing in West Africa.
- iii. Black Pace Nigeria committed to invest US\$1,03 million in Nigeria and to another US\$ 120 millin for for potato processing in Rwanda while Kenya's Agricultural Finance Corporation committed to invest \$2 million lending to Potato farmers.
- iv. ITC committed to develop and launch a free palm oil market intelligence and information app.
- v. US\$4 billion will be invested in the palm oil sector by 2025
- vi. Mahindra Agribusiness committed to buy all green grams produced in Africa including the setting up of a pocessing plant with a crushing capacity of 40,000 metric tons in Ethiopia.
- 17.** A high-level ministerial roundtable agreed on a collaborative deal to accelerate agricultural growth in the continent, adopting a framework to ensure that all countries on the continent grow in unison, and an accountability tool that will track the delivery on the pledges made by participating countries in the current and previous fora. The ministers committed to:
- a. Strengthen their coordination to ensure accountability against pledges, commitments and plans made, especially within the framework of a continental scorecard.
- b. Re-orient their relationship with the donors from one of a donor-recipient to that of investment partners that deliver mutual value and benefits, especially to the African smallholder farmers.
- c. Strengthen their leadership and continue building an environment that attracts private sector investments.
- 18.** Other contributions came from a variety of stakeholders, all focused on how to improve the business of smallholder agriculture to achieve improvements in income and food security

and to create of decent jobs. The youth present at the forum underlined their commitment to drive seize the opportunities in agri-businesses.

19. Women in Agriculture featured prominently throughout the forum, including through a dinner that was keynoted by H.E. Daniel Kablan Duncan, Vice President, Cote d'Ivoire during which commitments were made towards ending malnutrition and hunger, as well as creating opportunities for women. During the event, it was unanimously agreed that investments made for projects led by women and youth were critical for the overall attainment of the agriculture development goals.
20. The forum also provided a premier platform to highlight the success of individuals and institutions driving significant progress across the continent for agricultural transformation and food security. Under the leadership of H.E. President Olusegun Obasanjo and the Africa Food Prize Committee – and witnessed by Heads of State and Government present – the 2017 Africa Food Prize was awarded to two individuals who have made outstanding individual contributions to African agriculture and are forging a new era of sustainable food security and economic opportunity that elevates all Africans:
 - a. Hon. Professor Ruth Khasaya Oniang'o, for her pioneering leadership in academia, research, and policy to improve food security and nutrition for millions in Africa; and for her groundbreaking work, with farmers' groups and rural communities, that connects agriculture and nutrition both in research and practice.
 - b. Mme. Coulibaly Maimouna Sidibe, for her illustrative business success in producing, packaging, and distributing improved and high-yielding seeds that have significantly improved the food security and incomes of smallholder farmers throughout Mali and West Africa; and for her inspiring combination of world-class business practices and sound technical skills exemplifying the best of Africa's agri-business sector.
21. Recognizing the importance of youth in driving the future of agriculture across the continent, the forum also recognized the winners of a Pitch Agrihack competition that honours outstanding youth e-agriculture start-ups. Projects from Nigeria and Ghana were announced as winners in the early stage category and youth from Senegal and Ghana feted in the advanced stage category.

Following the presentations and discussions at AGRF 2017, key actions were identified for immediate execution, to lead the path to Africa's prosperity through agriculture.

Next Steps

22. Heads of State and regional institutions led by the African Union Commission and NEPAD Agency reaffirmed their commitment to driving the CAADP biennial review process and implementing the scorecard on agricultural transformation for tracking progress in realising the aims of the Malabo Declaration.
23. The Heads of State and Government present further committed to honor all financial, policy and political commitments made during this forum and in other past meetings.
24. The actions taken over the next four months until the January 2018 AU Summit will be critical to delivering on this agenda and contributing to the achievement of the goals laid out in the Malabo Declaration. The AGRF partners intend to build on the momentum established at AGRF 2017 by developing a work plan that will tie together the most important moments and forums of the African agriculture community to secure further support for the biennial review process.
25. The AGRF 2017 closed under the leadership of H.E. Amadou Gon Coulibaly, Prime Minister Cote d'Ivoire and with the participation of the AGRF Partners Group. All partners thanked the Government of Cote d'Ivoire for its leadership of the continental forum, and the partners noted a location for the next AGRF will be chosen before the end of the year through discussions with governments that step forward as the next leaders.

2017 AGRF Limelight

AGRA initiated a process to build content to create a drumbeat and publicity pre, during and post 2017 AGRF. This initiative showcased AGRF partners' pointing to progress made towards commitments made in the 2016 AGRF in Nairobi.

These included:

- Formative Africa focused publicity campaign encompassing
- A partnership led engagement and amplification program designed as an accountability frame for tracking progress of the commitments made at the 2016 AGRF event held in Nairobi.
- Development of a landmark opening video production and showcased at the presidential opening ceremony of the 2017 AGRF in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire.
- To achieve this there was close collaboration between the Government of Cote d'Ivoire, AGRF partner organizations, sponsoring partners and an integrated communications working group to drive success.

This report provides an overview of the media coverage of the 2017 AGRF since it's official launching in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire in April 2017 to hosting of the Forum, on 4-8 September 2017.

A total of 1,463 unique broadcast, print and online features on the Forum were published and aired in national, regional and international media outlets. Choice international media partners included The Guardian, Financial Times, BBC, Al Jazeera, CNN, CNBC, Jeune Afrique, AFP, Reuters among many others.





The Guardian

Agriculture holds the key to unlocking Africa's vast economic potential
by Letters Sep 17, 2017

Sentiment: neutral
Viewership: 52,919,251
Shares: 7
Ad Equivalency: \$99,488

ANALYSIS | African Green Revolution Forum over Apr 1, 2017 - Sep 22, 2017

Highest readership articles are based on the readership of each publication (how many people potentially read an article based on unique visitors to the publication's website) and how many times your keyword(s) appear in each article. Access the article by clicking the headline above and then click on the publication you're interested in.

Aggregate Readership

Aggregate Readership: 557,005,114

Online News
550,522,510

Blogs
6,482,604

African Green Revolution Forum over Apr 1, 2017 - Sep 22, 2017



TWITTER REACH
Custom Range: Apr 1, 2017 - Sep 19, 2017 - Updated 4 Few Seconds Ago

23.4M reach and 82.6M impressions

from 16.8K mentions by 5,746 users

FRENCH COVERAGE

Le Septième Forum de Révolution Vert africain (AGRF 2017), a été tenu à Abidjan de 4ème - le 8 septembre 2017 sous le thème "Le Chemin de l'Afrique Accélération à la Prospérité : Croissance d'Économies Inclusives et Emplois (travaux) par Agriculture".

Des relations médiatiques pré et pendant le poste 2017 AGRF ont réalisé la couverture d'émission suivante mise en évidence (justifiée) dans ce rapport :

- Plus de 90 entretiens (interviews) médiatiques pour des partenaires d'AGRF ont été organisés
- Les communiqués de presse suivants ont été partagés
 - a) Ouverture de communiqué de presse
 - b) AAGR communiqué de presse
 - c) Soirée de Nouriture de l'Afrique
- On a fourni la couverture médiatique pour les événements de conférence de presse suivants
 - a) Lancement du Rapport de Statut d'Agriculture de l'Afrique et AGRF 2017 conférence de presse d'Ouvrant
 - b) Lancement du Partenariat pour Transformation Agricole Inclusive en Afrique (PIATA)
 - c) Nouriture de l'Afrique Attache une grande valeur à Annonce de Gagnant
 - d) Conférence de presse d'engagements
 - e) Conférence de presse de clôture

ANALYSIS |

210 articles were published in top national, regional and international French outlets.

Print and online media



ANALYSIS | African Green Revolution Forum over Apr 1, 2017 - Sep 22, 2017

This report provides an overview of the print and digital media coverage of the 2017 AGRF since the launch in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire in April 2017 to the hosting of the Forum, 4-8 September 2017.

A total of 1,203 unique articles on the Forum have been published in national, regional and international media.



FACEBOOK
Custom Range: Apr 1, 2017 - Sep 19, 2017

86 wall posts with 69752 likes 363 comments and 2 replies.



AFRICAN
GREEN
REVOLUTION
FORUM 2017

AFRICA AGRICULTURE
STATUS REPORT 2017
The Business of...

AGRE 2017 CÔTE D'IVOIRE
Accélérer la prospérité de l'Afrique par l'agriculture
ACCELERATING AFRICA'S PATH TO PROSPERITY:
TRANSFORMING ECONOMIES AND JOBS THROUGH AGRICULTURE

