

AGRIF2018

LEAD. MEASURE. GROW

ENABLING NEW PATHWAYS TO TURN SMALLHOLDERS
INTO SUSTAINABLE AGRIBUSINESSES



FORUM REPORT

AFRICAN
GREEN
REVOLUTION
FORUM 2018
5-8 SEPTEMBER
KIGALI, RWANDA



From left to right

Dr. Agnes Kalibata, President, AGRA - H.E. Emmanuel Issoze-Ngondet, Prime Minister, Republic of Gabon - H.E. Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, President, Republic of Ghana - H.E. Paul Kagame, President, Republic of Rwanda

From left to right

H.E. William Ruto, Deputy President, Republic of Kenya - Mr. Strive Masiyiwa, Chairman Econet and Chairman AGRF Partners Group - Rt. Hon. Tony Blair, Executive Chairman, Tony Blair Institute for Global Change, and Former Prime Minister of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

CONTENTS



Front Row (from left to right)

Hon. Wu Hongyao Member, CPC Leading Group Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, China
Rt. Hon. Tony Blair, Executive Chairman, Tony Blair Institute for Global Change, and Former Prime Minister of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
Mr. Strive Masiyiwa, Chairman Econet and Chairman AGRF Partners Group
H.E. Emmanuel Issoze-Ngondet, Prime Minister, Republic of Gabon
H.E. Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, President, Republic of Ghana
H.E. Paul Kagame, President, Republic of Rwanda
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Hon. Dr. Gérardine Mukeshimana, Minister of Agriculture and Animal Resources, Republic of Rwanda
Mr. Mustapha El Ouafi, Managing Director, OCP Group and Chairman, OCP Africa

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Dr. Vera Songwe, Executive Secretary, UNECA
Mr. Rodger Voohries, Executive Director, Global Growth and Opportunity Division, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

07 AGRF2018
Executive Summary

10 Foreword by
Strive Masiyiwa

12 Acknowledgements by
Agnes Kalibata

14 Address by
President Paul Kagame

18 Host Country

20 AGRF Partners
and Sponsors

28 The Kigali Communique

32 AGRF Background

34 Remembering
Kofi Annan

36 2018 Forum Outcomes
at a Glance

72 Becoming an
AGRF Partner



The African Green Revolution Forum (AGRF) is considered the world's most important and impactful forum for African agriculture, bringing together stakeholders in the agricultural landscape to take practical actions and share lessons that will move African agriculture forward.

The Forum is guided and supported by the AGRF Partners Group, which is comprised of a coalition of 17 leading actors in African agriculture.

The aim of AGRF 2018 was to draw various stakeholders around a common purpose - to unleash the full potential of Africa's 80% - the millions of smallholder farmers and their families who earn their livelihoods from small-scale farms and provide some 80% of the food and agricultural products consumed across the continent. The Forum, together with its many follow-on activities, is designed to energize political will and advance the policies, programs and investments required to achieve an inclusive and sustainable agricultural transformation across the continent. The Forum is intended to evaluate current realities at all levels - local, national, regional and international - so that it can identify and catalyze the critical next steps towards agricultural transformation.

The marketplace of ideas is a new addition to the AGRF and provides opportunities to negotiate financial backing for early-stage agribusinesses and help bring African youth to the fore of sustainable agricultural development. AGRF 2018 also provides a platform for crowdsourcing ideas and financial commitments - and to make sure these are followed through.

The theme of AGRF 2018 was: **Lead. Measure. Grow. Enabling New Pathways to Turn Smallholders into Sustainable Agribusinesses.**

The African Green Revolution Forum (AGRF) 2018 brought together over 2,800 delegates from 79 countries with a resounding mission to transform agriculture in Africa.

The Eighth AGRF, hosted by President of Rwanda and 2018 Chairperson of the African Union, the H.E. Paul Kagame, in Kigali from 5 to 8 September 2018, was the biggest yet, both in terms of the number of participating delegates and nations. Large delegations from China, India, Israel and Brazil also signaled a surge of interest in the African continent, with new partnerships forged at the conference.

A key feature was taking leadership in agriculture to a new level, both to benefit the millions of smallholders who earn their livelihood from small-scale farms, and to build the economies that make up the African continent.

With energy at a new high, the conference pledged to deliver billions of dollars in new investments for agriculture and agri-business, with aims to triple trade in agriculture between African countries.

AGRF2018 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Forum was attended by the President of Ghana, the H.E. Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, the Prime Minister of Gabon, Rt. Hon Emmanuel Issoze-Ngondet and Deputy President of Kenya, H.E. William Ruto. Former Nigerian President, H.E. Olusegun Obasanjo, former Prime Minister of the UK, Rt Hon. Tony Blair and former Ethiopian Prime Minister, Rt Hon Hailmariam Desalegn, joined the 17 members of the AGRF Partners Group, under the Chairmanship of Mr Strive Masiyiwa. Influential leaders in their fields, representatives from financial institutions, investors, NGOs and entrepreneurs were among participants and speakers who focused on three central drivers in transforming the continent's agriculture and food systems - Leadership and Accountability; Measuring Progress and Achieving Sustainable Growth. These were unpacked in 46 sessions and side-events and by 350 speakers.

Former UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan, who sadly passed away in the month leading up to AGRF 2018, was remembered in tributes throughout the five-day summit for his leadership and vision and for galvanizing leaders of Africa to focus on an African Green Revolution.

A sharper focus on state capability, measurement and action was reflected during the launch of the 2018 Africa Agriculture Status Report "Catalyzing State Capacity to Drive Agriculture Transformation" at the opening plenary. The report is the most comprehensive assessment to date of the role of state capacity in achieving transformation and has been described as a handbook to help governments and their supporting partners transform agriculture in Africa.

The African Union's launch of the Inaugural Biennial Review Report and African Agriculture Transformation Scorecard (AATS) on the implementation of the 2014 Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agriculture Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods, was also a key point of discussion during the Forum. The AATS and accompanying Dashboard, was discussed by African ministers from across the continent during a high-level Ministerial roundtable, in which Ministers pledged to raise the bar on agricultural transformation. Data and proper research were identified as being critical before going ahead with projects and programs.

Some enduring touch points emerged during the Forum, including the need to mobilize support among all government departments in each country to make headway in agriculture. The need to attract more young people to agriculture emerged as a rallying call across plenaries and sessions. Innovation was a buzzword throughout the summit, with ICT offering the potential to help drive the sector forward. During several sessions, young agripreneurs told their stories of success in technology-led solutions in agriculture and agri-processing. The PitchAgriHack competition, organized by the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA), African Development Bank (AfDB) and Suguba, brought 24 young finalists to Kigali and matched young entrepreneurs with venture capitalists to pitch ideas.

Women, considered the backbone in agriculture, received a boost with donors promising increased investment to address gender disparities across the sector, particularly around financial inclusion.

The forum also signaled a wider focus on the importance of nutrition in agriculture and the need for integrated work between government departments, partners and donors to tackle malnutrition and stunting through producing quality food.

The African Agricultural Trade Status Monitor (AATSM) report to track the progress in achieving trade targets set in the Malabo declaration, was unveiled at the 2018 AGRF. Many calls were made to boost intra-Africa trade and do far more to turnaround Africa's annual food import bill of US \$35 million. The recent establishment of the African Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA) sparked discussions about boosting trade in agriculture commodities and food products between African countries.

Climate change and crop disease were also highlighted. A new consortium of 35 public and private sector institutions was launched to defeat the invasion of the Fall armyworm, which is threatening up to six billion dollars of damage to African maize, sorghum and other critical food crops. A renewed commitment to drive farmer-led irrigation was key in the signing of the Kigali Declaration on Farmer-led Irrigation for Smallholder Farming Enterprises. The Declaration calls for political leadership and a policy environment to make farmer-led irrigation the norm in Africa.

The 2018 Africa Food Prize Laureate was awarded to the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA). It marked a shift, with the IITA being the first institution to receive the prestigious US \$100,000 prize.

During a dynamic Presidential Summit at the end of the Forum, Rwandan President, H.E. Paul Kagame, urged delegates to transform agriculture, and ended the week on a positive note.

"Agriculture deserves the concentrated attention of Africa's policymakers, scientists and entrepreneurs. Fortunately we know what works. The knowledge, experience and goodwill in evidence at this Forum shows that we have everything we need to succeed. It is up to us working together to drive the necessary change in our respective communities and organizations."

THEMATIC FOCUS

AGRF aimed to unpack three pivotal issues that are central drivers in transforming the continent's agriculture and food systems.

Leadership and Accountability:

Experience and evidence from Africa shows that achieving food security and realizing the high potential returns offered by efficient agribusiness value chains requires visionary leadership. It also requires accountability, coupled with the integrated efforts of a diverse group of stakeholders.

Measuring Progress:

The 2018 AGRF will take stock, evaluate actions and learn from compelling evidence from across the continent. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals together with the Africa Union's Agenda

2063 objectives offer macro level targets. Private sector programmes and models offer useful metrics for evaluation.

AGRF will review evidence and share success stories that can inform planning and evaluation processes.

Achieving Sustainable Growth:

Despite the lack of readily available data, Africa appears to be making notable progress in a number of areas, which are explored during the 2018 AGRF. Farmers, public sector thought leaders & private sector champions and agripreneurs will share their experiences and lessons in achieving sustainable growth.



KEY SESSIONS: AGRF 2018 PROGRAM FOCUS AREAS

With these three pillars in mind, the various sessions at AGRF 2018 focused on six main areas:

1 Institutional Capacity Development for Transformation

2 Youth Participation in Agriculture

3 Agritech and Agribusiness Development

4 Global and Regional Markets

5 The Resilience of Africa's Agricultural Systems

6 Africa's Nutrition Challenge

Each area drew on experts from across the continent and the world, drilling down into issues from leadership and ways to speed up trade to cutting-edge technology and coping with climate change.





ADDRESS BY H.E. Paul Kagame

PRESIDENT OF RWANDA AND 2018 CHAIRPERSON OF THE
AFRICAN UNION – HOST OF AGRF 2018

“Agriculture is the cornerstone of Africa’s prosperity and of our children’s health and nutrition. This sector is not only essential for survival. It drives everything else that we are trying to do in terms of human and economic development. The majority of Africans still earn their livelihood directly or indirectly from the land. Agriculture therefore deserves the concentrated attention of Africa’s policymakers, scientists and entrepreneurs. Fortunately we know what works. The knowledge, experience and goodwill in evidence at this forum shows that we have everything we need to succeed. It is up to us, working together, to drive the necessary change in our respective communities and organizations.

At the national level, we must cultivate the political and scientific leadership required to create an enabling environment that will unleash the enormous potential of this sector. Better coordination within governments is essential, and so are links among policy makers, scientific researchers, financial institutions and investors. We have to make sure that Africa’s farmers are getting the most out of the many good partnerships that have already been set up in this eco-system.

Secondly, revitalization of agricultural extension services is urgent. We have to do a better job at mobilizing citizen farmers and treating them as clients. They need the latest skills and services to increase their productivity and better manage risk. This will also serve to make careers in agriculture more attractive to young people and more profitable as well.

Thirdly, the private sector is absolutely central. Even as more African governments achieve the levels of public spending agreed in the comprehensive African Agriculture Development Program, we know that most funding for agriculture is already coming from the private sector, not from government. This is a significant trend, which will only continue to increase, thanks to enormous new opportunities for trade in agricultural commodities, created by the African Continental Free Trade Area agreement.

We must sustain the continental commitment to measuring progress and results using the African Agriculture Transformation Scorecard. This is an invaluable tool because it keeps up the pressure to deliver to citizens.

Finally and perhaps most importantly, we require a rapid shift in the mindset of our young people towards agriculture as a career choice. With the knowledge and technology available, there has never been a better time for young Africans to get involved in agriculture and agri-business and create wealth and well-being for society as a whole.”

SETTING THE AGENDA

“A practical step towards achieving real transformation in the continent is opening up trade across the borders. We need all African countries to come together and embrace this mindset.”

H.E. Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, President, Republic of Ghana

“With the Africa Continental Free Trade Agreement, we have the platform and the muscle to negotiate with the rest of the world.”

H.E. William Ruto, Deputy President, Kenya

“It is our common understanding that agricultural transformation in Africa will require extraordinary efforts. Business as usual will not work.”

The Prime Minister of Rwanda, Edouard Ngirente

“Our young people are beginning to turn their heads and they are beginning to see agriculture. The youth have heard the call and that call has gone across this continent. We are seeing extraordinary movements across Africa. We now need to harness that energy and take it forward”

Strive Masiyiwa – AGRA Board Chair and Chairman, Econet Group

“We must remember to carve out a special place for women at the heart of all our interventions, to experience the transformation we expect, and to which we are indeed entitled”

H.E. Jeannette Kagame, the First Lady of Rwanda, Chairperson of Imbuto Foundation and Unity Club

“We have made a modest improvement in agriculture ... but it is not yet transformation. We have to engage these young people into the agricultural sector which is the future of our continent.”

H.E. Hailemariam Desalegn, former Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

“Remember that if we get these things right, lives are changed. People have hope. This continent starts to be what it can and should be...This isn't just a conversation about policy... it's a worthwhile mission, and we are, at last, on our way.”

Hon. Tony Blair, Executive Chairman, Tony Blair Institute for Global Change, and Former Prime Minister of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

“African nations must work together and support one another to transform the agriculture sector. We have to lead, we have to measure and we have to grow.”

H.E. Emmanuel Issoze-Ngondet, Prime Minister, Republic of Gabon

“A stunted child produces a stunted economy and we don't want to see a stunted Africa by 2030”

Dr. Gérardine Mukeshimana, Minister of Agriculture and Animal Resources, Rwanda

“The most powerful legislative chamber in the world is the stomach.”

Hon Audu Ogbah – Minister of Agriculture, Nigeria

FOREWORD BY Mr Strive Masiyiwa

CHAIR, AGRF PARTNERS GROUP

“ On behalf of the AGRF Partners, thank you all for honouring our invitation and joining us on this journey. We in AGRF, we don't take this for granted, and we know your presence reflects how clearly you understand the centrality of agriculture in Africa's pursuit of socio-economic development.

There is another leader who shared this vision and is unable to be with us here today, and that is His Excellency, Kofi Annan. It was his call for “a uniquely African Green Revolution” that gave birth to the AGRF and is the reason many of us are here today. I ask that you join me in a moment of silence to recognize Mr. Annan. We will not tire until we have achieved the desired Green Revolution.

AGRF is steadily evolving into a platform which all of us see as the platform for advancing our shared aspirations. It is the platform for dialogue; the platform to share experiences and learn lessons; the platform for scaling up working models and strengthening systems based on the best practices.

Last year, we met in Ivory Coast under the leadership of H.E. President Alassane Ouattara, and we have seen a lot of progress in terms of coming through with the business deals and investments we are brokering. H.E. President Uhuru Kenyatta hosted us in Nairobi in 2016, and I recall he himself challenged us and called for a scorecard that could be discussed at the level of Heads of State. Our aim was to mobilize new political, policy, and financial commitments for Africa's agriculture. In both previous AGRFs in Nairobi and Abidjan, we have managed to mobilize over US\$60 billion in cash and pledges for our agriculture. We have since seen policy and political commitments translate into action to change the face of agriculture on the continent from subsistence to business.

As we pursue our shared vision, we will certainly face a number of challenges, such as climate change and pests and diseases. We must not be distracted by these challenges, but instead continue to rally together and build resilience around by investing even more of our efforts and resources into agriculture.

At the center of this next push for African agriculture will be all of our youth who will be at the center of agricultural transformation in Africa.

To lead our efforts today, we could not ask for a better host than the Government of Rwanda and His Excellency, President Paul Kagame. As many of you know, our host led the way in inaugural biennial review with the overall best performance of all countries in stocktaking. It is a major reason we are here this year to ensure we learn from their experience as well as continue to share with our Rwandan colleagues the partnership they request to improve what isn't working. I look forward to these thoughts, lessons, and visions.”





ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS BY Dr Agnes Kalibata

PRESIDENT, ALLIANCE FOR A GREEN REVOLUTION IN AFRICA (AGRA)

“We are very proud to bring the African Green Revolution Forum to Kigali, Rwanda. We thank H.E. President Paul Kagame and the government of Rwanda for being such excellent and gracious hosts and for the opportunity to hold AGRF 2018 in the dynamic city of Kigali.

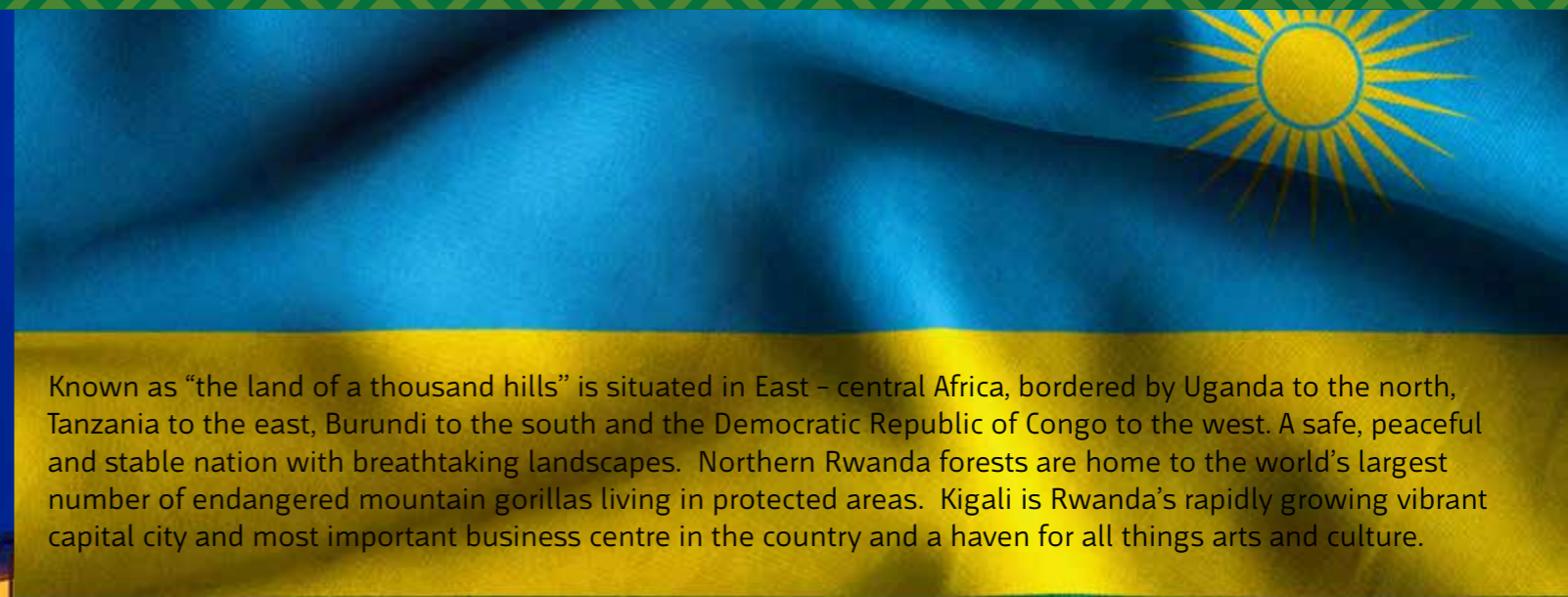
AGRA as an institution started out with the call from Kofi Annan for a uniquely African green revolution. The word ‘unique’ was premised on the fact that people thought Africa needed certain technologies to drive a green revolution. Thanks to the work we have all done - from AGRA and many institutions to governments themselves - we believe Africa now has a significant bank of technologies and models to call on to drive an African green revolution.

We are grateful to the AGRF Partners Group for their vital role in this. The forum is guided and supported by this group, comprising a coalition of 15 leading actors in African agriculture. They are the African Union Commission, the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency, the African Development Bank (AfDB), the Rockefeller Foundation, International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO), IDRC, YARA International, Mastercard Foundation, SACAU, OCP Africa, Syngenta, the African Fertilizer and Agribusiness Partnership, GROW AFRICA, AGCO Corporation and the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA).

We thank our sponsors for their generous support of AGRF 2018 - USAID, AECF, Liquid Telecom and the World Bank Group as well as DSM, Mastercard, Netafim, BRB, Syngenta, GIZ, East Africa Trade & Investment Hub and Mother Africa Needs You.

Our technical and knowledge partners have also contributed to the strength and success of this Forum. They are: Africa Improved Foods, The Chicago Council of Global Affairs, Kofi Annan Foundation, Tony Blair Institute for Global Change, McKinsey&Company, Dalberg, World Economic Forum, The Food and Land Use Coalition, the Department for International Development, UKaid, Care and JAIN.

AGRF 2018 is a gathering of Heads of State, Ministers, business leaders, development partner leadership, researchers, thought leaders, farmer organization representatives, youth entrepreneurs, and other critical stakeholders. We thank you for the role you are each playing towards our goal of transforming African agriculture and moving the continental agenda forward.”



Known as “the land of a thousand hills” is situated in East – central Africa, bordered by Uganda to the north, Tanzania to the east, Burundi to the south and the Democratic Republic of Congo to the west. A safe, peaceful and stable nation with breathtaking landscapes. Northern Rwanda forests are home to the world’s largest number of endangered mountain gorillas living in protected areas. Kigali is Rwanda’s rapidly growing vibrant capital city and most important business centre in the country and a haven for all things arts and culture.

RWANDA AGRICULTURE

As Rwanda modernises into a knowledge-based economy, agriculture remains the backbone - it accounted for 31% of the overall economy in 2017- for sustained economic growth, providing high quality livelihoods, and living standards for the population. Arguably, agricultural surplus underpinned human development and economic factors necessary for subsequent economic and social development. In that regard, a high number of the Rwandan population depends on agriculture and 58% (3,988,000 people) of the labour force are employed in agriculture. Rwanda’s agriculture is central for creating growth, jobs, exports and livelihoods necessary to transform the economy to a knowledge based middle-income economy. With 5.3 per cent average annual growth, the agriculture sector has more than doubled in value from 2000 to 2016. Food crops is the dominant sub-sector accounting for 58 per cent of the sector in terms of GDP contribution, followed by Forestry (21 per cent of total), Livestock (12 per cent), traditional export crops (7 per cent), and Fishery (1 per cent) All sub-sectors are currently growing. Food crops saw an immediate growth spurt with the introduction of the CIP programme in 2008, after a period of low growth. Export crops have seen an average growth of 3.8 per cent p.a. between 2000/2016, marked by high year-to-year volatility due to global price variations in the dominant crops, tea and coffee. Livestock has seen accelerating growth with an average of 5.2 per cent p.a. and is currently the fastest growing sub-sector, growing 8.3 per cent p.a. between 2012 and 2016.

The agriculture sector has developed its fourth edition of the strategic plan for Agriculture transformation to drive the sector in the next five years. That strategy has four priority areas namely (i) Innovation and Extension, (ii) Productivity and Resilience, (iii) Inclusive markets and value Addition and (iv) Enabling Environment and responsive Institutions.

“With leadership that is committed to what we want to do in agriculture, there is no way we cannot grow and see our economies grow.”

Dr. Agnes Kalibata, President, AGRA

“No country has come out of poverty without having an inclusive agriculture transformation agenda that makes smallholder farmers more competitive”

Rodger Voorhies, Executive Director, Global Growth and Opportunity, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

“Disruption is important, and certainly there is nowhere disruption is more required than agribusiness in Africa, but disruption won’t work without getting the basics right.”

William Asiko, Executive Director, Grow Africa

“African agriculture is at a defining moment. To achieve real transformation we need to mobilize across sectors.”

Svein Tore Holsether, President and Chief Executive Officer of Yara International

“Agriculture is not just potentially a commercial business, but a cutting-edge technology driven business.”

Dr Rajiv Shah, President, The Rockefeller Foundation

“We have measured the progress that 55 member states are making towards the goals and targets of the Malabo declaration. Of the 55 member states, 47 member states have reported. Twenty members states are on track towards achieving the goals and targets. We are encouraged by the performance we

Godfrey Bahigwa, Director of the Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture for the African Union Commission



Decisions and Commitments from the African Green Revolution Forum 2018 Kigali, Rwanda, September 2018

PREAMBLE

1. The Eighth African Green Revolution Forum (AGRF) was held in Kigali, Rwanda, from 5 to 8 September, 2018. It matured into the premiere platform for leaders from across Africa and around the world to advance concrete action plans and share knowledge to tap the enormous potential of agriculture in driving equitable and sustainable economic growth across the continent. The Forum was hosted by H.E. Paul Kagame, President of the Republic of Rwanda and 2018 Chairperson of the African Union. Also present and presiding over different events were H.E. the First Lady of Rwanda, Jeannette Kagame, the Rt. Hon. Prime Minister, Edouard Ngirente, the Hon. Minister of Agriculture and Animal Resources, Dr. Gerardine Mukeshimana, and several other key cabinet members. Their commitment to agricultural development and the Malabo framework for implementing and tracking progress across the sector has helped drive historic progress in reducing poverty in Rwanda and serves as an example for others to emulate. Other co-hosts were the 17 members of the AGRF Partners Group (under the Chairmanship of Mr. Strive Masiyiwa, Chairman of Econet Group), which includes the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) as the AGRF Secretariat. Additional resources and technical support were provided by another 23 partners and sponsors who supported the cost of the Forum and contributed to the programmatic content.

2. The Forum was attended by as many as 2,800 delegates from 79 countries and high level dignitaries including H.E. President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, of the Republic of Ghana, H.E. Deputy President William Ruto of the Republic of Kenya, Rt. Hon. Prime Minister Emmanuel Issoze-Ngondet, of the Republic of Gabon, H.E. Olusegun Obasanjo, Former President of Nigeria, Rt. Hon. Hailemariam Desalegn, Former Prime Minister of Ethiopia, Rt. Honorable Lionel Zinsou, Former Prime Minister of Benin, and Rt. Hon. Tony Blair, former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. The Forum was also attended by heads of international agencies and CEOs of global, regional and national business companies within and outside Africa. Also in attendance were ministers of agriculture from across Africa, ministers and senior officials from Australia, Canada, China, EU, Germany, India, Israel, the United Kingdom, and the United States, as well as influential business leaders and representatives from financial institutions, agribusiness firms, farmer associations, NGOs, media, scientists, development and technical partners, and the growing ranks of young agriculture entrepreneurs and leaders.

3. The Forum also paid tribute on several occasions to a foremost leader who was unable to be present, H.E. Kofi Annan, the former UN Secretary General, who sadly passed away in the month leading up to AGRF 2018. It was Mr. Annan's call for a uniquely African Green Revolution that resulted in the formation of AGRF and its secretariat, AGRA. He was remembered for his leadership in tributes throughout the Forum, with decisive pledges that the community will continue working to see his vision become a reality.

4. The theme of this year's AGRF was Lead, Measure, Grow: Enabling New Pathways to Turn Smallholders into Sustainable Agribusinesses. This theme recognised that Africa is on the move with many nations pushing to achieve middle-income status and a few others aspiring for high-income status, but that achieving these aspirations requires innovative and evidencebased leadership across the agricultural sector. The 2018 AGRF animated its ambitious theme with more than 46 sessions and 350 speakers. Over four days they engaged in a clear-eyed assessment of existing government capabilities, identified leaders—including African youth—who can drive Africa's agriculture transformation in the coming decades, and worked diligently to lock-in a new level of public and private policy and financial commitments. And that included creating a space at the Forum for emerging entrepreneurs to solicit seed capital for new agribusinesses. The assortment of lively discussions at the Forum highlighted the technology, innovations, policies and institutions that can lead to an economically and environmentally sustainable African agriculture transformation. Delegates discussed how to equip farmers with what they need to succeed and connect them to stable food systems that can translate their abundant harvests into a wider assortment of affordable, nutritious food for African consumers.

5. The conference was officially opened by the Rt. Hon Prime Minister of Rwanda, Edouard Ngirente, who also witnessed the launch of the 2018 Africa Agriculture Status Report (AASR) "Catalysing State Capacity to Drive Agriculture Transformation." The official opening remarks and report, which was authored in line with the Forum theme, placed a central focus on state capability in achieving desired outcomes from agriculture, and set the tone for the week in terms of driving evidence-based leadership for sustainable growth and transformation.

6. The Forum closely examined how governments, businesses and other partners are delivering on a range of political, policy and financial commitments. They include US \$30 billion in investments pledged at AGRF 2016 in Nairobi, Kenya and a range of other promising initiatives that emerged from AGRF 2017 in Abidjan that have added billions of additional dollars. They also examined progress over the past several years as detailed in the inaugural Biennial Review Report from the African Union on the implementation of the Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods.

THE KIGALI COMMUNIQUÉ

ASSESSING PROGRESS

7. In recent years the Forum has matured to become a powerful and effective platform for leaders to define ambitious, tangible commitments and demonstrate their ability to follow through and achieve real results.

7.1. In the wake of the 2017 Abidjan Communiqué, the European Union used the Forum as an opportunity to show how it is following through on its External Investment Plan, which is designed to promote investment in Africa and other regions to create jobs and enable economies to grow, including specifically through agriculture. Also, officials from the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) noted progress and continued commitment to African agriculture through priorities such as their ambitious One World No Hunger initiative and Compact with Africa.

7.2 Leaders applauded the launch in January of the Inaugural Biennial Review Report and African Agriculture Transformation Scorecard (AATS), which the African Union presented as coming through on commitments it has made to Heads of State and the sector. It is the first such report on the implementation of the 2014 Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agriculture Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods. The report revealed that 20 of 47 African Union Member States are on track to achieve commitments made in the 2014 AU Summit in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea. Leaders commended the willingness of all 47 countries to provide a thorough and transparent accounting of areas where they are progressing and areas that still need attention so that they can learn from each other and continuously improve.

8. Leaders at AGRF noted that current progress, while noteworthy in certain areas, is still insufficient to achieve the vision forged in the Malabo Declaration. They sought out fresh approaches and commitments that can supercharge the agriculture sector and unleash the full potential of “Africa’s 80%,” the millions of Africans whose farms and agribusinesses supply 80% of the region’s food and other agricultural products.

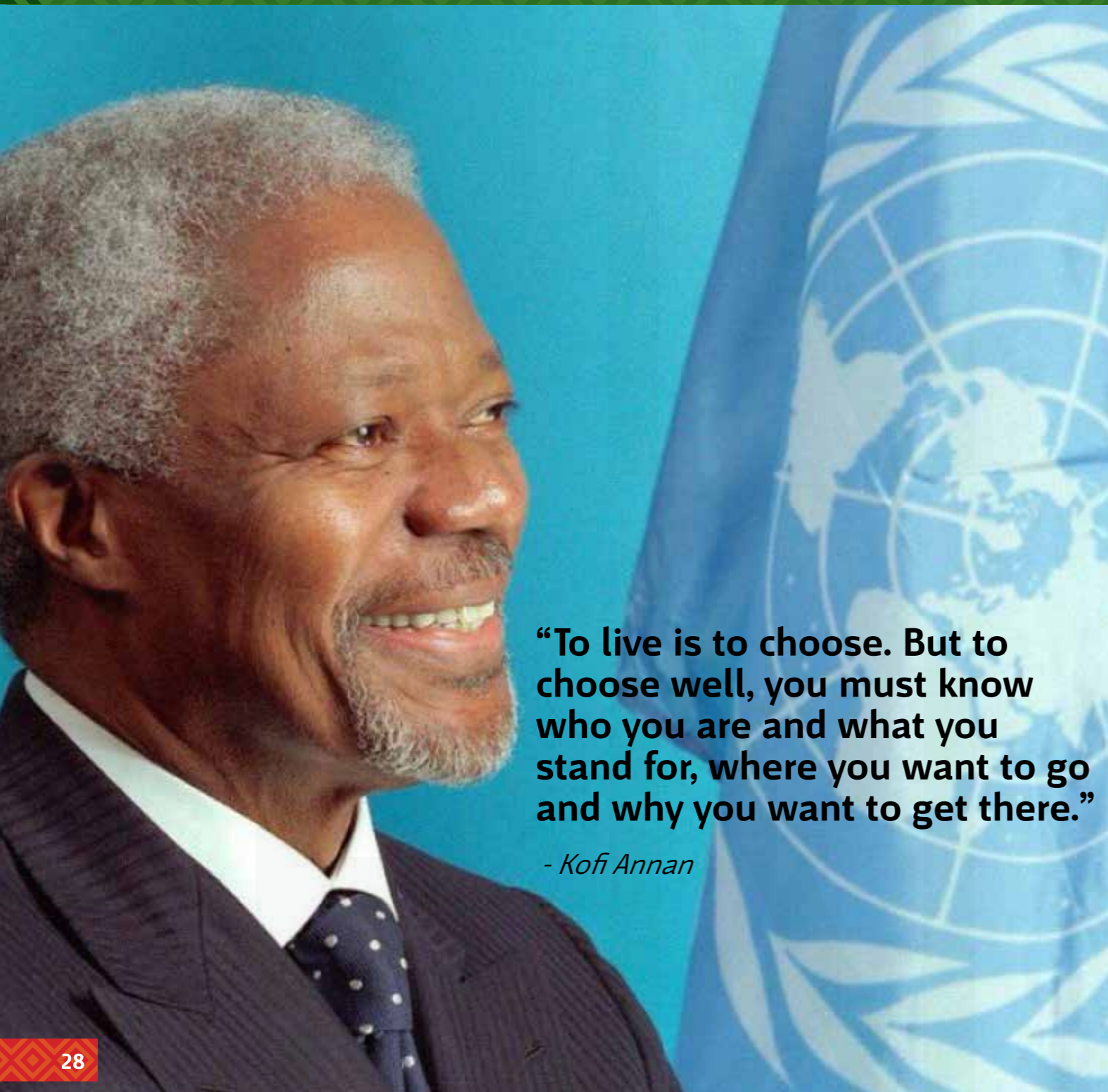
9. Several major outcomes and action agendas were embraced during the AGRF 2018 and noted by Heads of State and the large and active assemblage of delegates present. Specifically, the Forum endorsed significant commitments around securing new agribusiness investments, engaging new development partners,

NEXT STEPS

10. The AGRF 2018 closed under the leadership of H.E. President Paul Kagame. In his remarks, President Kagame emphasised that “the knowledge, experience and goodwill in evidence at this Forum shows that we have everything we need to succeed. It is up to us working together to drive the necessary change in our respective communities and organisations.” The focus is now on evidence-based leadership to deliver on this possibility. H.E. President Kagame added that, “We must sustain the continental commitment to measuring progress and results using the African Agricultural Transformation Scorecard, which was successfully championed by former Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn ... This is an invaluable tool because it keeps up the pressure to deliver to citizens.”

11. Following the leadership call from the Heads of State present and the Forum theme, the AGRF Partners Group committed that it will continue to track the progress against the collective action agendas laid out in the course of the Forum, as well as institutional commitments. The Forum will build on the momentum of the AGRF 2018 by continuing to insist on and feature progress against these agendas during important moments and Forums of the African agricultural community in the year ahead.

12. All partners thanked the Government of Rwanda for its leadership of the continental Forum, and the partners noted that 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.



“To live is to choose. But to choose well, you must know who you are and what you stand for, where you want to go and why you want to get there.”

- Kofi Annan

Tributes poured in for Kofi Annan, who passed away only weeks before he was due to play a significant role at AGRF 2018. The former United Nations Secretary General was the inspiration behind Africa's Green Revolution.

A special dinner was held in Mr Annan's honour and he was remembered in tributes throughout the week.

“Kofi Annan was the animating force of modern African agriculture,” said AGRA's current Board Chair Strive Masiyiwa.

“His integrity and vision inspired us to embrace the potential of the African farmer to lift millions out of poverty and propel our economies along a path to prosperity.”

“Mr Annan has left a long legacy in the quest for a food self-sufficient continent. We will keep his dream and vision alive.”

In her tribute, AGRA President Dr. Agnes Kalibata, said:

“All of us in Africa, including generations to come, owe a deep debt to Kofi Annan for the leadership and inspiration he provided to position agriculture as the key to Africa's future. AGRA would not have been were it not for his vision.”

“As the first Chair of AGRA, Kofi Annan led the way by helping to drive a new agriculture agenda for the continent,” said Mr Bill Gates, in a recorded message in his capacity as Co-Chair of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

Dr. Rajiv Shah, President of The Rockefeller Foundation, said Kofi Annan was **“a true partner to people in need around the world. His legacy of service and accomplishment will live on and continue to inspire generations.”**

Svein Tore Holsether, President and CEO of Yara International, called on people to live out the vision that Kofi Annan had embraced:

“Kofi Annan challenged us to help start a green revolution for Africa. Now, we have lost a visionary, a true leader. I see it as our duty to continue our work.”



The four-day Forum was packed with sessions, events and activities which covered a range of issues affecting role players in African agriculture on every level. Plenaries showcased the actions of leaders and their policies and touched on financial commitments already in place as well as those needed to drive the agricultural transformation agenda. Technical discussions were held to explore specific issues, opportunities and challenges. AGRF 2018 also comprised a dynamic platform that included short technical masterclasses, an agritech pitching competition, and a “deal room” reserved for connecting potential investors with agribusiness startups, as well as new projects and initiatives.

Several strides were taken in securing more investments for agriculture in Africa at AGRF 2018. Highlights included:

- The AGRF Deal Room, a new feature of the Forum, hosted 16 African companies, drawn from a pool of over 400 applications. A total of 60 bilateral investment meetings were held with a dozen investors in the focused deal room alone, achieving investment agreements that averaged around US \$2 million.
- A coalition of partners, including the European Union, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the Government of Luxembourg, and AGRA announced plans for an alliance that could lead to tens of millions of dollars in new investments for commercial agriculture ventures in Africa. IFAD also said it would target Africa for half of its planned US \$3.5 billion investments over the next few years.
- Officials of the African Enterprise Challenge Fund (AECF) detailed the launch of its US \$50 million Investing in Women Fund, of which US \$6.42 has already been committed from the United Kingdom’s Department for International Development.
- Leaders from the Rwandan public and private sector laid out plans to increase agriculture export revenue by US\$ 150 million annually in Rwanda and create 300,000 additional jobs over the next five to six years.
- A new letter of intent (LOI) was signed between AGRA and Israel’s Volcani International Partnerships to pursue a number of initiatives, including an Israeli-Africa Agriculture Innovation Center to be hosted jointly by Volcani and Israel’s Agriculture Research Organization.
- Officials from India and Brazil both expressed interest in intensifying agriculture partnerships in Africa
- Fresh from the 2018 Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) in Beijing, representatives from China confirmed investments and new partnerships that were made there, including major initiatives with ten agriculture universities in Africa, as well as agriculture-focused industrial parks.
- Investors showed interest in young finalists in the PitchAgriHack competition, as well as entrepreneurs involved in agriculture-related start-ups. Israel’s Start-up Nation Central was on hand to give advice to emerging entrepreneurs as well.

KEY SESSIONS: OPENING PLENARY CALLS FOR TRANSFORMATIVE LEADERSHIP

The transformation of Africa's agricultural sector was at the heart of the official opening plenary, with calls from leading role players in African agriculture to take leadership to a new level and implement policies which will propel Africa's growth and empower its people.



“Let’s provide leadership, let’s measure progress, and see if we are growing - and if not, let’s do things differently,”

- Agnes Kalibata, President of AGRA

“Innovation is today’s fertilizer”

- Dr Maria Flachsbarth, Parliamentary State Secretary to the Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development for the Federal Republic of Germany

“We need to take African agricultural production beyond just guaranteeing food security for farming communities. The sector has to grow, to create jobs for a young and growing population”

”- Dr. Gérardine Mukeshimana, Rwandan Minister of Agriculture and Animal Resources

“We have the ability to provide that catalytic investment. That risk capital that can help unveil or spur innovation”

- Mamadou Biteye, Managing Director of the Africa Regional Office of The Rockefeller

“We see a profound agricultural transformation going on”

Holger Kray, Head of the Agriculture Policy Unit at the World Bank

4 KEY SESSIONS: THE PRESIDENTIAL SUMMIT

African leaders pledge to boost agriculture



Leaders in Africa are pleased with the momentum that has been building in the transformation of agriculture on the continent, although have agreed to pick up the pace for Africa to be self-sufficient. They were speaking during the Presidential Summit in Kigali at AGRF 2018.

President of Rwanda, the H.E. Paul Kagame, said agriculture deserved the 'concentrated attention' of Africa's policymakers, scientists and entrepreneurs, while the President of Ghana, H.E. Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, said he hoped every stakeholder on the continent would work towards boosting the profile of the sector.

The Ghanaian leaders also challenged African leaders and stakeholders to take responsibility for improving the agricultural situation in Africa.

"It cannot be right that a continent that has 25 percent of the world's agricultural land produces 10 percent of the world's output of food. These are the disconnects in Africa that should give us all cause for concern."

Kenya's Deputy President, Mr William Ruto, said leaders should work together to fast-track regional economic blocs and their integration.

"With the Africa Continental Free Trade Agreement, we can have the platform and the muscle to negotiate with the rest of the world."

He also urged African governments to make it easier to trade within the continent, saying "we cannot trade more with each other, if we make it impossible to trade across borders."

During the summit, leaders described the conditions in their own countries which could hold valuable lessons for their counterparts in Africa.

In Kenya, where agriculture employs 70 percent of the population, there's a drive to boost productivity, said Mr Ruto. "We now have a soil survey for the whole country and farmers can get fertilizer that is crop-specific for specific regions." He said the goal was to increase the daily income of farmers from four dollars a day to about six dollars a day and increase Kenya's overall income from farming by about US \$4 billion.

The Prime Minister of Gabon, H.E. Emmanuel Issoze-Ngondet, said his government planned to ramp up agriculture in Gabon, where the share of agriculture to the national GDP is only around four percent. Gabon imports 90 percent of its food products. H.E. Issoze-Ngondet conceded it had been a mistake to largely abandon agriculture when it found oil in the 1970s. But it wanted to put things right.

"We have a huge opportunity, and we are lucky to have an equatorial climate which is very important for agriculture."

The Ghanaian President said his government plans to revive agriculture in various ways through its 'Planting for food and jobs' program. This included supplying quality seeds and subsidizing fertilizer by 50%, while giving the poorest farmers the opportunity to pay the remaining 25% upfront and 25% after the harvest. In collaboration with the Bank of Ghana, it was also devising financial instruments that would

VOICES ON AGRICULTURE

“The quality of land that we have in Africa is better than anywhere else in the world”

Mr. Mustapha El Ouafi, Managing Director and Chairman, OCP Group

“The best fertilizer for your crop is markets.”

Dr Martin Fregene, Director of Agriculture and Agro-Industry, African Development Bank

“We are delighted that African heads of state have taken leadership on this transformative agenda. We have been pushing for agriculture to take its rightful place on the agenda of the World Bank. And we’ve seen a tremendous response.”

Mr. Andrew Ndaamunhu Bvumbe, Executive Director, World Bank

“For Africa’s agricultural transformation to happen, women must be at the table, where decisions are being made, and where deals are being made. The place of women in agriculture is not just on the farm”

Dr. Jemimah Njuki, Senior Programme Specialist, IDRC

“We need to invest in a new generation of employers and provide all the necessary support, technical and otherwise, that they need to do their jobs”

Mr. Ishmael Sunga, CEO, SACAU

“Bringing financial support to the rural level is the biggest challenge to agriculture today.”

Gilbert Hougbo, President, International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).

“Agriculture is the future in terms of creating opportunities for jobs for millions of young people. Technology, especially digitalisation is key to unlocking those opportunities.”

Michael Hailu, Director, CTA

“What do we need to be successful? We need good predictability on regulations”

Mr. Xavier Leprince, Head of Business Sustainability, EAME, Syngenta

“Use your knowledge and community education programs to change the eating habits of people. Go from village to village to spread the message.”

Namanga Ngongi, Board Chairman, AFAP

“A crisis is a terrible thing to waste.”

Dr Rob Bertram, Chief Scientist of the Bureau for Food Security at the US Agency for International Development (USAID), urging delegates to learn from the Fall armyworm invasion.

We are building digital solutions for people who earn five dollars or less per day.”

Salah Goss, Head of Mastercard Labs for Financial Inclusion

5 KEY SESSIONS: MINISTERIAL ROUNDTABLE

Working under the AGRF vision, Lead. Measure. Grow, government ministers from across Africa met to take stock of agricultural transformation in their countries. They also discussed the policy and financial commitments they are making as well as the outcomes of the AU-led Biennial Review process and the African Agricultural Transformation Scorecard (AATS).

The Ministers drew up a commitment, which was presented at the end of AGRF 2018. It reads as follows:

“On behalf of the Ministers present at AGRF 2018: We commit to continue driving results and impact in our national and regional agricultural systems through the CAADP Biennial Review process, particularly by utilizing the results of the Biennial Review Report and the Africa Transformation Scorecard and Dashboard to trigger evidence-based planning and informed implementation of Malabo-compliant National Agriculture Investment Plans.



Recognizing that data collection processes must be transparent, cross-checked and validated, we commit to strengthen data systems and Agricultural M&E at country levels in order to improve evidence-based and informed policy and decision making leading to Agriculture transformation in our countries. We will contribute our individual and collective leadership to improve national and regional data systems.”

The commitment was read out by Nigerian Minister of Agriculture, Audu Ogbeh, on behalf of all the Ministers present during AGRF 2018.

Several ministers outlined the challenges and progress within their own countries. In Tanzania, the focus is on a turnaround. Goals include the sustainable use of water resources and land, increased productivity, commercialization of agriculture and getting proper legal financial frameworks to create a fair environment.

Ethiopia’s dynamic progress in agriculture over the past few years was recognized, as well as a realization that investing in science and technology had been an essential ingredient for the success of agriculture in the country. Monitoring had also helped to achieve goals. In Ethiopia, interim milestones are assessed on a quarterly basis, and individuals are accountable for their outputs.

Ghana’s focus on a widescale program which will reach five million households generated interest. Around 200,000 households have been selected for the first part of a study, with the Ghanaian government ploughing \$100 million into heavily subsidizing fertilizer and seed. Five crops have been chosen – maize, rice, sorghum, soya and a selection of vegetables.

Nigeria has ramped up its agricultural output in recent years, but there have been concerns about very high interest rates (between 18 and 35%) offered by commercial banks. The government has stepped in and official lending to agriculture in Nigeria is now fixed at a rate no higher than nine percent.

A few ministers raised the need for effective irrigation for smallholder farmers instead of relying on rain. Another common theme was the need to collect and analyze data, as well as doing effective soil mapping. Ministers stressed that it was important to share data across borders, particularly for the benefit of intra-African trade, while South Sudan, which had faced starvation and conflict, said African countries should help each other more when they were facing crises and should solve problems as Africans together.

Companies, development institutions, banks and donors also contributed to the roundtable. While noting challenges, they were encouraged by the rising momentum to transform agriculture and called for solid leadership within governments.

Visionary leadership was a resounding focus of AGRF 2018. In plenaries and sessions through the five-day forum, there were calls from leading role players in African agriculture to take leadership to a new level.

Africa holds about 600 million hectares of uncultivated arable land. That's around 60% of uncultivated arable land worldwide. Yet it is using a small fraction of this. Despite the challenges, African leaders were optimistic about turning the situation around.

Rwanda's President, H.E. Paul Kagame, believes that if this land is well used, Africa will be in a position to comfortably feed its growing population, estimated to reach two billion by 2030, while leaving surpluses for export.

Political goodwill at the highest level, coordination across ministries, the private sector and development partners, as well as accountability and transparency were cited as actions leaders must take to overcome barriers to agricultural transformation. National planning and prioritization of agriculture emerged as a common thread running through the forum. The panelists suggested that ministries such as Agriculture, Environment, Water Affairs and Trade should work together, while ensuring that ministries of Finance and Economic Development support their initiatives through budget allocation and clear policy direction.

NAIPs

There were calls for National Agricultural Investment Plans (NAIPs) which support the Malabo Declaration, to have a shared vision at the highest level of government. They need to be included in a country's national plan and budget, otherwise they risk not being implemented. Performance targets should be clear. Each country should evaluate their commitments to milestones and achievements. Monitoring was essential so that commitments could be translated into actionable results.

Agricultural transformation should be led from the highest level. In countries like Ethiopia, the agricultural agenda is led by the Prime Minister. With firm support from the very top, the chances of success are multiplied.

Former Ethiopian Prime Minister, H.E. Desalegn, said the agricultural agenda would not be properly addressed in a country unless there was a top leader at the helm of agriculture. He suggested that the whole value chain in the agricultural system needs coordination, robust follow up, implementation and delivery.

COUNTRY EXAMPLES

Various country examples were highlighted. Hon. Eyasu Abraha Alle, Ethiopia's State Minister of Agriculture and Livestock Resources, unpacked the Ethiopian experience, saying the government had deployed sub-sector strategies in extension services, seed, and smallholder mechanization and horticulture developments to facilitate agricultural transformation. In Rwanda's planning and budgeting cycle, projects must be approved and go through a public investment committee. The committee ensures there is no duplication. It also checks that everything is in place, such as electricity, water and a road leading to the project. Over the next five to six years the government of Rwanda aims to increase export revenue from agriculture by US\$150 million per year and create 300 000 additional jobs within the sector over the same timeframe.

In Mozambique the entire cabinet makes field visits to view agricultural practice. In Togo, land use has been enhanced through creating a law in collaboration with local entities.

There was general agreement that multi-stakeholder forums are key. These should include the private sector, institutions and government agencies working together to identify problems and solutions in the road to agricultural transformation. A renewed commitment to extension services was raised across several sessions. Countries such as Ethiopia, Ghana and Rwanda have realized the importance of extension services in improving the quality and quantity of farm products, and have ploughed more investment into this.

In a special ministerial session, cabinet ministers from countries across Africa agreed to fast-track efforts to

PROGRESS TOWARDS THE MALABO COMMITMENTS

The African Union Commission raised the progress that 55 member states are making towards achieving the Malabo Commitments by 2025. Of the 55 member states, 47 member states have signed on to the African Union's Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program (CAADP). Twenty member states are on track towards achieving the commitments, according to the AU Commission.

The countries have recently submitted detailed reports outlining their progress to date in achieving a range of commitments made through the AU's Maputo and Malabo accords.

The Malabo Declaration is a pledge made by Heads of State during a presidential summit in Equatorial Guinea, where they promised to take critical steps to achieve certain agricultural milestones by 2025.

The African Agricultural Transformation Scorecard (AATS) was presented at AGRF 2018 as a tool to help governments point out the areas that need attention. Government ministers drew up a commitment, which was presented at the end of AGRF 2018 to use the results of the Biennial Review Report and the Africa Transformation Scorecard and Dashboard to trigger evidence-based planning and informed implementation of Malabo-compliant NAIPs.

PIVOTAL PARTNERSHIPS

Multilateral institutions and donors spelt out how they are supporting governments and farmers. This included the EU's launch of an investment plan and collaboration with development banks to leverage greater development in Africa. Germany is assisting its African partners in tapping 'Africa's enormous potential' through various programs, as it said research had shown that a competitive agricultural sector could provide two to four times as much in return on investments than in other sectors.

Partnerships with companies and multilateral organizations were lauded for their valuable role in helping to increase as well as diversify production. The B2B Competitive African Rice Initiative (CARI) was showcased as an example of this. Multi-actor partnerships have been working with other rice stakeholders in Ghana, Cote d'Ivoire and Senegal to reach more than 750,000 beneficiaries. The leaders of all three countries have committed to no more imports of rice by 2025.

Leaders across the board recognized that farmers need to be respected and treated as clients, while banks, donors and private sector partners in particular outlined the importance of good information and data for planning. This also helped in good market analysis.

Speaking from experience as UK Prime Minister, H.E. Tony Blair said having the grand vision was the easy part. The challenge was turning the vision into reality. With the continent set to double by 2030, he said more people would need better food to improve their health and nutrition. Leaders would need more support to drive the agenda and state capacity was the key. While raising challenges, such as population growth in Africa, panelists were generally upbeat about the future of African agriculture. The World Bank said it had seen 'profound agricultural transformation' on the continent, with the landscape changing markedly in the past ten years.

Political will is key to ensuring that Africa reaches its agricultural potential. Governments will need to deepen their plans to dedicate 10% of their state budgets to agriculture if Africa is to reach food security and build a thriving agribusiness.



6 YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN AGRICULTURE

Whether on the podium, as delegates, as panelists, in competitions or sessions, young people have become an increasingly important feature at the AGRF. Channeling the energy, strength and dynamism of Africa's youth into productive, competitive and profitable agribusinesses was at the heart of several sessions at AGRF 2018.

Commitment 4 on the Africa Agriculture Transformation Scorecard looks at creating new job opportunities for at least 30% of the youth in agricultural value chains by 2025. A sharp focus at AGRF 2018 was on making agriculture an attractive option for young people. Rwandan Prime Minister, the H.E. Edouard Ngirente said there had been an incorrect perception in Africa for a long time that to be a farmer is a failure. People had realized this was wrong and many young Rwandans were now turning to agriculture as a career.

The average age on the continent is 19, but the average age of the African farmer is 60, Mr Strive Masiyiwe, Chairman of the Econet Group, pointed out during a 'Town Hall' session with young people. But an interest in technology was beginning to change this. "Something interesting is stirring in Africa. Young people are beginning to bring innovation to agriculture."

Nearly 70 percent of Africans are involved in agriculture, mostly farming on plots that are less than two hectares in size. Transforming small farms into sustainable agribusinesses could ramp up employment for African youth, and reduce poverty, hunger and malnutrition. The key is to "skill up" what is working on the continent to create jobs and employment, suggested Dr Gilbert Hougbo, President of IFAD.

Mr Fred Swaniker, Co-Founder and Trustee at the African Leadership Academy, said ensuring adequate food production and youth employment is an issue of global significance. "We need young people to see agriculture not just as work that is backbreaking and unfulfilling, but as one of the greatest opportunities to create wealth."

AN UPSURGE IN TECHNOLOGY

An upsurge in technology has led to a reduction in the need for human labour. Dr Wole Fatunbi from the Forum for Agricultural Research in Nigeria, said the most outstanding youth involvement in agriculture currently was in ICT, processing and marketing as opposed to farming. It was difficult to make a good profit in farming without maximising economies of scale. This needs attention. Continental initiatives by FARA include capacity building, leveraging south-to-south learning, agribusiness, incubation and mentorship.

Favourable regulation, especially in the early stages in financing small and medium-size businesses is essential. The AFC with the African Development Bank has ensured affirmative access to agri-finance for women and youth where 30% of AFC's lending targets are women and youth. More programmes like this were needed. Young people in rural areas also need more support, as rural areas are generally marginalized.

EDUCATION IS KEY

With Africa's demography changing rapidly - 70 percent of the population is below the age of 30 - the value of education and technical skills is vital. Concern was expressed about the high number of unemployed and unemployable youth in Africa. Panelists said there were worryingly few young people who have tertiary education, with most only reaching a primary level of education. The Centre for Development Research in Bonn, ZEF, suggested the development of a curriculum linked to key priority areas, with an expanded focus in technical training. African institutions should teach the youth not only how to produce, but about how the whole value chain works.

African countries also should learn from best practices across the world. Solutions should start from childhood, with a suggestion that governments adopt strategies to ensure children are well nourished, as they would perform better at school.

There were also announcements about higher education. Mr Mustapha El Quafi, Managing Director of the OCP Group and Chairman, OCP Africa, told the Forum that that his company was going to play an increasing role in education. "We have launched a fully-fledged university in Morocco that has a unique programme, a Masters for Fertilizer Management. It's uniquely crafted for Africa and is open to all our partners in Africa."

YOUNG AGRIPRENEURS BLAZE A TRAIL

Young entrepreneurs who are blazing a trail in agriculture shared their stories in Ted-style talks aimed at highlighting pioneers who are redefining the agricultural space and the way we think about farming.

Mr Onyeku Akhumah, the CEO and Founder of Farmcrowdy, told of his digital agricultural platform that links farmers with sponsors across the world. The Farmcrowdy app allows people from across the world to select from an array of farming projects in Africa and support their development through a secure payment channel. Ahumah believes it has the potential to change the way people invest in farms. He said that, with time, young people below the age of 40 have been beginning to adopt agriculture as a way of life. This is as a result of the incorporation of technological uses in farming.

IMs Rose Golinga, CEO and Co-Founder of Pula, told of the rapid growth of her business, which uses technology to insure the previously unbanked, uninsured and untapped market of smallholders. Pula now works in eight countries across Africa and Asia. In 2017 alone, it facilitated crop and livestock insurance cover to 611,000 farmers in Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda, Nigeria, Ethiopia and Malawi.

In other inspiring initiatives, Ms Sarah Menker, described her big data software platform, Gro Intelligence, which has the ability to predict risk and forecast crop yields. Gro Intelligence has developed a suite of machine and learning models that forecast corn, soy and wheat yields.

Mr Michael Hailu, the director of the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA), said there was clearly world-class talent working in Africa. He said it was necessary to find ways to make agriculture cool for young people. This was possible through using technology and being innovative and creative.

Panelists said the experiences shared were proof that young people had the potential to find local and impactful solutions to problems in Africa.

During the forum, young entrepreneurs spoke openly about their challenges, particularly convincing banks to give them loans. Mr Fahad Awadh of YYTZ Agro-Processing said it was difficult to convince banks to invest in his cashew nut business. "The banks didn't believe that as a young person I could do it". He credited AGRA's Africa Enterprise Challenge Fund for supporting him. Young entrepreneurs expressed their commitment to centering the consumer in developing the product, suggesting that research on customer needs is essential for the success of youth-led agribusinesses.

PitchAgriHack 2018, the e-agriculture start-up competition with a special emphasis on young agripreneurs, attracted sterling entries from young people and brought around 24 enthusiastic and innovative finalists to AGRF 2018 for the finals. The competition homed in on e-agri start-ups as well as early stage and advanced ICT platforms. PitchAgrihack awards young entrepreneurs who are building businesses that boost innovation for a more sustainable agricultural sector.



6 AGRITECH AND AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Innovation, funding for agritech and using technology better to grow the agricultural sector formed a very important part of AGRF 2018. Working across the value chain from farm to fork, linking smallholders to structured value chains and using more technology along the way, was seen as increasingly important to ramp up production and boost trade.

According to the African Development Bank, it is estimated that 27 to 30 billion US dollars a year is required to get African agriculture to where it should be. Investment in agritech is seen as a big part of the solution.

Chairman of the EcoNet Group, Strive Masiyiwa said we need a new generation of policymakers and regulators at the frontline who understand emerging tech and are ready to explore and understand what the technologies mean.

Ms Wendy Singer, the Executive Director of Start-Up Nation Central, an NGO dedicated to the Israeli innovation ecosystem, observed that there is existing technology that can be applied to the different phases in the value chain. This includes Artificial Intelligence (AI), cloud computing, open source software, drones and sensors. This needs to fit in with the needs of the farmers.

TRYING OUT NEW INNOVATIONS

In order for tech entrepreneurs to turn farmers into believers, farmers need to see demonstrations that show results. They also observed that a big challenge is that farmers distrust new technology. They prefer something tangible that they can see in action. Panelists suggested it is key to have a strategic partner on the ground, such as AGRA. A way to gain their confidence is to use the testimonies of farmers who have tried the particular technologies. They also need to have the basics right at the outset. There are also infrastructure challenges in rural areas, such as connectivity which need to be sorted out.

“Disruption is important, and certainly there is nowhere disruption is more required than agribusiness in Africa, but disruption won’t work without getting the basics right,” William Asiko, Executive Director, Grow Africa pointed out.

Speaking from a banking point of view, Ms Diane Karusisi, the CEO of the Bank of Kigali, has suggested that agritech, as an emerging sector, needs the support of a practical and agile policy environment. It needs a government that is open to new solutions. Agritech runs on data, and governments should support the coordination of this data. Overall, governments need to be open towards innovation.

MOBILE PHONES

Mobile phones have already started to revolutionize agriculture. They have changed the way business is done in everything from financial services to service provision. The impacts of digital services on smallholder farmers include information services useful for production planning and management of weather-related risks, price information, benefits from better supply chain management, and mobile money for remittances. More focus on digital services along the entire value chain is needed to benefit smallholder farmers.

There were various suggestions and examples of initiatives that are working in the agritech space.

The Co-Chair of the Malabo Montpellier Panel, Professor Joachim von Braun, suggested hiring services and the uberization of tractors, as well as incentivizing the private sector to take mechanization to scale. The role of the private sector in training farmers on digital options was encouraged. The KCB Banking group has built capacity by training thousands of smallholder farmers on digital technology. Ms Salah Goss, Head of Mastercard Labs for Financial Inclusion, said her organization was building digital solutions for people who earn five dollars or less per day. BioAg, Israel, said it applied bio-agriculture technology to soil fertility to manufacture mycorrhizal inoculants which they sell to different parts of the world. These improve soil fertility by helping the soil to absorb nutrients.

PRECISION AGRICULTURE

Academics elaborated that soil sampling would never have been possible 20 years ago, and is now a technology that is making farming a lot easier. Such problem-solving techniques are the sorts of ways in which this new age of farmers can be urged to get into productive farming. Governments are starting to switch on to agritech. Rwanda has an ICT for Agriculture strategy, which is fully aligned with its SMART Rwanda master plan for agriculture. Many young people were working on the kind of aspects of the agricultural value chain which use technology, such as precision agriculture which uses drones. The World Bank Group’s Director, Agriculture Global Practice Simeon Ehui also referred to the availability of satellite analyses of evapotranspiration to evaluate the needs of farmers with regard to irrigation.

Other suggestions were that smallholders need skills training on digital literacy combined with financial literacy, while advocacy campaigns to boost the importance of agritech should be rolled out. The more agriculture is driven by technology, the more it will appeal to the youth.

Rajiv Khan, President of the Rockefeller Foundation said technology, coupled with scientific advances were changing our fundamental understanding of soil, sustainable food and nutrition.

There was a suggestion that strong farmer organizations were needed to drive the agribusiness agenda. Farmers should be empowered to be key actors in the value chain. Having access to real-time data on the markets would help farmers to negotiate deals. Africa has grown its productive capacity mainly through land expansion compared to yield growth in Asia. The continent must increase its productive capacity. In a future Africa, agricultural activity would be entirely different to what it is now, requiring a high-tech, very high productivity approach.



7 GLOBAL AND REGIONAL MARKETS

By 2050, one in four people on the planet will be African. African urbanization is growing by more than four percent per annum and there will be an ever increasing and more diversified demand for food. However, continent-wide, more than 80 percent of Africa's exports are destined for outside markets, with the EU and the USA accounting for more than 50 percent of this total.

While still important to export beyond Africa, the AGRF 2018 homed in on the need for a serious push for intra-African trade. This was relayed across various plenaries, technical discussions and sessions. Sustainable security is important to trade; intra-regional trade stands at 80% in Europe, 60% in Asia and only at 20% in Africa.

It was pointed out that regional food trade is vital in Sub-Saharan Africa for a number of reasons: It improves the prospect of investments in value addition and agro-processing with access to wider markets and more stable supply chains. It creates additional jobs and increases access to markets for farmers beyond urban areas and beyond national boundaries. It promotes specialization and efficiency, boosting agricultural productivity. Food trade between surplus and deficit areas also allows markets to mitigate food shortages, increasing resilience and food security at a regional level.

The key ingredients needed to advance the continental agenda in agricultural transformation in Africa are an increase in public investment, a commitment by more countries on the continent to sign the Continental Free Trade Agreement (CFTA) and an increase in private sector investment in agriculture.

CALLS TO RATIFY THE CFTA

Delegates were called to urge their leaders to ratify the CFTA. It requires 22 leaders to ratify it and could greatly boost trade in a market of 1.2 billion people.

During the Ministerial Roundtable at the AGRF, African Agriculture, Trade and other ministers were joined by representatives from various partner organisations, donors, the commercial sector and other role players in agriculture. Ministers expressed concern about Africa's \$35 billion agricultural trade deficit and called for intra Africa trade to be ramped up.

The findings of the African Agricultural Trade Status Monitor (AATM), a new annual continent-wide report that monitors and documents the patterns, trends and drivers of African Agricultural Trade, were also discussed at the Forum. The report made a number of recommendations. At country level, efforts should be made to increase agricultural productivity and recent investments in trading infrastructure must be accelerated, including roads, ports and airports. Market disbursing policies must be avoided, such as export bans, import prohibitions and price controls.

Regional actions should include removing barriers to cross-border movement of goods and harmonizing standards and procedures regulating regional trade. Africa-wide actions include coordinating efforts in international negotiations for better market access and pursuing implementation of the CFTA.

POLICY HARMONIZATION

A key problem hindering trade is the fragmentation of policies, initiatives and donors. A harmonization of policy and coordination of initiatives and donors will lead to an overall food system approach where trade is one part of general transformation. The availability and symmetry of data was also essential in ensuring countries benefit from a shared trade agenda.

African producers and exporters face many challenges, including poor infrastructure, inefficient customs processes and inconsistent regional standards and regulations, as well as non-tariff trade barriers including stringent food safety requirements in importing countries.

Wider challenges include constraints to increasing productivity; underdeveloped connections between smallholder producers and other value chain actors; and increasingly frequent and severe weather shocks due to climate change.

Government support should also extend past national borders, and into making export processes easier for agribusinesses.

Larger retailers and producers are keen to work with smallholder farmers. However, getting the right quality product remains a challenge. Financing, the cost of inputs, unpredictable tax regimes and policy environments remain a challenge.

DRIVING MECHANIZATION

Mechanization was also raised as vital in transforming agriculture on the continent. Africa had the technical capability to drive mechanization but it lacked scale. Good machinery production would thrive under regional blocks. This would make Africa stronger and more competitive when exporting agricultural goods. Suggestions included the manufacture of sophisticated equipment and component parts in Africa and a centre to coordinate processing requirements.

Emerging global giants such as China and Brazil are also waking up to the possibilities of channeling their investment towards the farming sector in Africa. Mr Wu Hongyao from the Chinese Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs shared the ways in which China had invested into African agriculture. This included through training 6260 students in 337 agriculture training courses and the establishment of agriculture demonstration centers in 19 countries on the continent. Both Hongyao and GEF CEO D. Naoko Ishii promoted the potential of China as a commercial partner by providing markets and establishing agro-processing companies in Africa.

The Brazil-Africa Institute's president Joao Bosco highlighted the need for education to change perceptions about Africa and introduce Brazilians to the potential of doing business in Africa.

ETHIOPIA'S RADICAL TRANSFORMATION

Ethiopia was commended for earmarking agriculture as its most important sector.

"More than 85 percent of our population is involved in agriculture and more than 75 percent of exports are from agriculture," said Eyasu Abraha Alle, Ethiopia's minister for Agriculture and Natural Resources. For a radical transformation of the sector, Alle says his government is already making available to farmers modern machinery and farm implements, as well as availing extension services to rural areas.

"Subsistence is not sustainable, and that is why we embarked on a growth and transformation strategy that will see shift from being production oriented to a business focus," said Alle.

The role of youth and women in the sector requires urgent attention. Africa has the youngest labour force in the world and people should be treated as development partners if the sector is to meet its production needs.

CALLS FOR GENDER EQUALITY

Specific focus should be given to women small scale farmers who make up 83% of the agriculture labour force; constraint such as land tenure caused by legal, traditional and inheritance laws and practices disadvantage women and must be urgently addressed by Heads of States and Government. Leaders across the spectrum were challenged to pave the way for a better deal for women farmers and agripreneurs through legislation, regulations and action.

Speakers outlined some empowerment initiatives. The Africa Enterprise Challenge Fund (AECF) has adopted a gender-lens approach, integrating gender analysis in all investment activities, implementing an inclusive investment process that allows equal access to finance. A similar approach is underway at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, which advocates for a sector that includes everyone and benefits everybody.

Ploughing more into food safety Without addressing food safety issues, Africa will not be able to effectively attain the Malabo Declaration Commitments for Agricultural Transformation, especially those on ending hunger, poverty reduction and tripling intra-African trade in agricultural commodities and services.

Delegates heard that over 15% of agro and food exports grown in several West African countries is rejected by European countries and Americans because they don't meet minimum quality standards. It is important to consider food safety and quality for nutrition security, raising food standards and quality to be on par with the rest of the world as a foundation for making African agriculture competitive.

Trade in fertilizer was also raised as a key element for food security in Africa. "The best fertilizer for your crop is markets," said Dr Martin Fregene, Director of Agriculture and Agro-Industry for the African Development Bank.

THE RESILIENCE OF AFRICA'S AGRICULTURAL SYSTEMS

The past few years have seen shocks and stresses in agriculture, from climate, economic and political shocks to disease and conflicts. Smallholder farmers have had to be strong and resilient in the face of it all.

Delegates and speakers said governments and partners would need to move away from a short-term approach to long-term interventions in light of climate change. Africa is particularly vulnerable as the import bill on food is increasing and climate change is impacting food production on the continent.

Erica Joergensen, Regional Director of the World Food Program, said it was essential to link smallholder farmers to partners and the private sector and to train people in good farming methods. IFAD called on governments and partners to prioritize poor farmers as they are the most affected by the challenges of climate change. Panelists suggested that insurance would build resilience in smallholder farmer households. It was suggested that every country in Africa should put a national framework on insurance in place.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Dr Belay Begashaw, Director-General, Sustainable Development Goals, Centre for Africa, said a key issue facing the resilience challenge is that there is no agreement on how to reach the SDGs. Through the UN Development Program 2030 Agenda, the world had agreed on 17 big goals and 169 indicators and targets

but they hadn't agreed on pathways. People are unclear about which pathways to follow to meet those targets. This was a work in progress.

FARMER-LED IRRIGATION

As about 80 percent of all agriculture produced today is by smallholders who are impacted by climate change, farmer-led irrigation projects should be encouraged. The International Water Management Institute said governments and donors should proactively promote farmer-led irrigation and that government's role was critical in piloting technologies and institutional models. It suggested that incentives or subsidies are needed to create economies of scale and scope and that intense competition among pump dealers and borehole drillers is critical. Resources should also be monitored. The World Bank said it was scaling up investment in the farmer-led irrigation sector, while government ministers from South Sudan, Uganda and Tanzania said there was a great need to improve farmer-led irrigation systems in their countries. Netafim Africa called for incentives and tariff removals, which would encourage farmer-led irrigation.

Soil and fertilizer use was examined in various sessions. Speakers suggested that the next three to five years will determine whether Africa will achieve the SDGs. There is a need to increase annual fertilizer use to 130 kg/ha/per year to increase productivity.

SOIL HEALTH

Far more Research & Development should go into the state of soils in Africa. The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation has invested in soil health research in the past 10 years, and the benefits are clear to see. There is a need to put the right data together to inform and improve decision making. The right solid health information is crucial; this information must be packaged and move quickly from the laboratory to farmers. AGRA plans to reach nine million farmers in the next five years, working with various partners to provide soil health information.

Soil is the primary resource and we have to map soil health in Africa. In comparison, India has over 10 thousand testing facilities and 98% of soils of farming families have been tested, said Hon. Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, Minister of State of Agriculture, Government of India.

Seeds played a critical role in the Asian Green Revolution, it helped increase productivity and transform the sector. Africa needs climate-ready seed. Investment in R&D must be accelerated in order to reduce the time it takes to develop climate-ready seeds from the current 5-7 years. However, speakers said it was worrying that a lot of available agricultural innovations such as nitrogen fixing bacteria and gene editing are only used in 10% of soils in Africa.

FALLOUT FROM THE FALL ARMYWORM

The threat of invasive species was a burning issue at the AGRF 2018, with an update that the Fall Armyworm had devastated maize crops in 44 countries to date and placed the livelihoods of around 300 million people at risk. Combating this devastation requires international cooperation between governments, the private sector and civil society organisations at national and local levels.

The spread of invasive species is increasingly becoming a major threat to the wellbeing of the continent and the delivery of sustainable Development Goals, said Dr Dennis Rangi, the Director General of the Centre for Agriculture and Bioscience International (CABI). CABI has embraced indigenous knowledge programs, including spraying ash and using fish soup to deter the fall armyworm. The International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) will be testing and rolling out technology such as APPs and voice-based solutions to reach out to small-scale farmers, starting in Niger, among other countries. Estimated FAW losses stands at 21-53% of annual maize production in Africa, while in Europe, the impact of invasive species is estimated to cost at least 12.7 billion Euros annually. The panelists agreed that evidence-based programs, together with the use of surveillance to measure what happens at the micro level, is necessary if farmers are to succeed.

Desiree Van Heerden, the Development Manager for Insecticides, Syngenta, said access to information by farmers remains a huge problem. It was also vital to get the necessary legislation and policies in place, while not looking at the Fall Armyworm in isolation. USAID stressed the urgent need for leveraging global connectedness and working together between countries when confronting the challenge of Fall Armyworm and other invasive species.

LAND DEGRADATION

Dr. Charles Karangwa, Regional Coordinator, Forest Landscape Restoration for the International Union for Conservation of Nature, said people in Africa were operating in a challenging environment, with 800 million hectares of land on the continent severely downgraded. Land yields need to improve. Land tenure is also critical. Farmers face the fear of land grabs by powerful elites, groups and the State.

Mr Josefa Sacko, African Union Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture talked about the Malabo Declaration, Commitment 3, which aims to end hunger in Africa. The AU and the Rockefeller Foundation launched a strategy to address the post-harvest loss in August 2018. Mr Sacko encouraged African nations to prioritize and implement this strategy.

HALVING GLOBAL FOOD WASTE

Mr Simeon Ehui, Director, Agricultural Global Practice, World Bank, referred to the SDG target which calls for halving per capita global food waste at the retail and consumer levels and reducing food losses along production and supply chains, including postharvest losses, by 2030. The World Bank supports efforts financially, but also provides a framework for food loss assessment. At the moment, Africa has a population of about 1.2 billion. The number is expected to double by the year 2050. By then, we'll be facing more food demand than the rest of the world. We need to do all we can to reduce food loss. With this in mind, the Rockefeller Foundation and the Government of Tanzania conducted a study to determine how much farm produce is lost after harvesting. Losses were incurred at different stages along the value chain.

The study found that harvesting techniques cannot guarantee 100% of the crop. About 10-15% loss is incurred. In some value chains, such as horticultural products, losses go up to 50%. Post-harvest is another challenge. This is due to poor infrastructure and lack of storage facilities. Losses also occur in the processing part of the value chain. Minister of Agriculture in Tanzania, Hon Charles Tizeba, listed agro-processing as one of the ways of reducing post-harvest losses, and urged investors to invest more in this.

8 AFRICA'S NUTRITION CHALLENGE

The transition to a food-secure Africa will require a revolution as much in food quality as in quantity. There is need to establish nutritious food systems as a solution to the malnutrition affecting millions across the continent, with children aged under five at particular risk of stunting.

HarvestPlus Acting CEO Dr Howarth Bouis said recent statistics showed that the number of children who are stunted in Africa has increased from 48 million to 57.1 million. A previous recipient of the World Food Prize, Dr Bouis said there was an increase in the prices of non-staple foods such as leafy green vegetables and pulses in Africa.

A potential solution developed by HarvestPlus is the biofortification of staple, widely used plant foods. Bouis listed the example of orange biofortified maize, which provides greater nutritional value for the same cost as white maize. A pilot program in Rwanda which injected iron into highly productive bean lines, was another solution. But for such an approach to be successful, it appeared necessary to link the nutritional benefits of such foods with the productivity concerns of farmers.

Dr Anita Asimwe, National Coordinator, National Early Childhood Development shared her own experience in the Rwandan government in linking across several ministries with the common aim to end stunting and malnutrition. Asimwe noted that governments could play a significant role in driving public education campaigns to pivot appetites towards newly-developed foods.

DEMAND FOR PROTEIN TO SKY-ROCKET

Scientific advances are changing our fundamental understanding of soil, sustainable food and nutrition. "We can dramatically step up these platforms to accelerate Africa's Green Revolution," said Dr Rajiv Shah, President of the Rockefeller Foundation. He said African demand for protein was expected to sky-rocket in the coming years. African countries should prepare for this. "We can invest now in sustainable protein production, putting in alternative feed sources like insects and algae, and even alternative food itself like plant-based proteins and cultured eggs." The huge health benefits of eating protein-rich insects raised a lot of interest at the AGRF 2018. Nutritionist and public health consultant, Ms Dorothy Murugu, who has been doing extensive research on the benefits of edible insects, said people were excited about the prospects of farming insects, particularly in arid and

semi-arid areas. Grasshoppers consisted of 70% protein, while crickets, black soldier flies and termites also made for nutritious meals. Generating protein from grasshoppers and crickets for animal food, human food and pet food, was seen as a great opportunity. They could be crushed, grilled and blended into bread and other foods. The idea would need to be well communicated to communities.

LINKING AGRICULTURE AND NUTRITION

In a keynote address, the 2018 World Food Prize Laureate, Professor David Nabarro, said there was a profound place for human nutrition within agriculture. It was time that this was widely understood and recognised.

He explained how the momentum on nutrition was sparked in 2009, after world food price hikes in 2008 led to riots in more than 30 countries and increased levels of malnutrition. Nearly ten years on, the nutrition movement has grown astoundingly, although it is still not integrated into agriculture as it should be, the panellists suggested. Building coalitions between scientists, governments, coalitions for change and other role players, was essential to change this. Research has shown that one dollar invested in nutrition could have between 16 to 20 dollars of benefits – an incredible return on investment, said Professor Nabarro. He said African countries could learn from Imran Khan, who, within a few hours of being appointed as President of Pakistan, said nutrition would be a priority for his government.

Professor Ruth Oniang'o, Founder and Director of Rural Outreach Africa and 2017 Africa Food Prize Laureate, said nutrition interwoven with agriculture made perfect sense. A wholesome diet, with nutritious food, particularly vegetables, was key. Professor Oniang'o said it was crucial to educate people from the ground up to stop malnutrition and stunting. People started worrying about nutrition only when they started feeling sick or after being diagnosed with diabetes or other illnesses. Oniang'o suggested change would only happen by going from village to village to help people. She worked with teams, who had been doing this successfully for years and it had made a remarkable difference.

Dr Jeanine Condo, the Director-General of the Rwanda Biomedical Center, said government departments should work together on nutrition and agree on minimum actions at a community level. This kind of integration has worked well during the height of the HIV epidemic, and could be applied to avert malnutrition and stunting. Several people highlighted the fact that the most important period to sale up nutrition is between conception and a child's second birthday. Dr Namanga Ngongi, Board Chairman of African Fertiliser and Agribusiness Partnership (AFAP) suggested different ways of getting the message through to people about the importance of eating healthy food, including through mobile phone messages, vegetable gardens at schools and community education programmes.

Delegates spoke about the need to boost the seeds sector and the importance of breeding for quality nutrition in staple food crops. A suggestion was that nutrition should be put on par with breeding for disease resistance and that it should be a requirement of national breeding programmes. Other speakers suggested using tax revenues from junk food to promote a healthy eating campaign.

STOPPING DISEASE

Ms Elizabeth Ogutu, Strategy and Operations Senior Officer, PACA, African Union Commission, noted that 137,000 people die of food-borne diseases every year in Africa. PACA is currently doing work on aflatoxins - natural poisons produced when certain mould species grows in foods such as maize and peanuts during pre-harvest, harvesting, storage and among other stages in the value chain. The Forum heard that aflatoxins are present in 40% of commodities in Africa and tend to exist throughout the value chain. They also contribute to liver cancer. Safe food is also good business. Consumers need to trust that products are safe and of good quality. The private sector has a vital role to play. Nestle said it had worked with IITA to improve standards and reduce contaminants in Nigeria. This was done via an awareness campaign and the training of farmers and others through the value chain.

On the government side, Rwanda Agriculture and Animal Resources Minister, Dr Gérardine Mukeshimana, noted that the success of agribusinesses has great benefits to the public sector, saying: "A stunted child produces a stunted economy and we don't want to see a stunted Africa by 2030".



This year, the African Food Prize was awarded to the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), based in Ibadan, Nigeria, in recognition of the steady stream of innovations it has pioneered since its foundation in 1967.

The much-coveted annual prize, which shines a spotlight on bold initiatives, is presented during the AGRF every year.

Over the years, IITA scientists have developed hundreds of improved, high-yielding varieties of crops including close to 400 new varieties of cassava that have transformed it into one of Africa's most diverse and lucrative farm commodities. IITA has also led efforts to breed new varieties of banana, cowpea, maize, soybean and yam that are suited to the region's wide diversity of growing conditions and dietary preferences.

In recent years, IITA's work has increasingly included a critical focus on connecting crop science to creating employment for Africa's youth, enabling African farmers to adapt to the stresses of climate change and addressing the growing threats from an array of crop pests and plant diseases.

Altogether, IITA has helped to revolutionise the nutrition and income of millions of people across the African continent. The overall value for Africans of the crops developed by IITA and its partners now stands at US\$17 billion and counting. This underscores its contribution to Africa's economy as well as its agriculture.

IITA was selected for the prize by the independent Africa Food Prize Committee under the chairmanship of H.E. Olusegun Obasanjo, former President of Nigeria. As he said, "IITA stood out to us for its steadfast and inspiring commitment to a research agenda that aligns with both our African traditions as well as the evolving needs of African farmers and consumers for the latest advances food production.

In receiving the prize, Dr. Nteranya Sanginga, IITA's Director General, said much of IITA's success rested on its ability to develop relationships and collaborations that allow the fruits of its research to be scaled up and made available to millions of farmers.

Svein Tore Holsether, President and Chief Executive Officer of Yara International, noted that since its inception in 2005, the Yara Prize—now the Africa Food Prize— had honored people and organisations who are strong voices in the African agriculture sector.



LAUNCH OF THE 2018 AFRICAN AGRICULTURE STATUS REPORT (AASR)

An early highlight of AGRF 2018 was the release of a major new study, the 2018 African Agriculture Status Report (AASR) with the theme ‘Catalyzing Government Capacity to Drive Agricultural Transformation’. It was launched by the Alliance for Green Revolution in Africa during the opening plenary of the Forum.

The study revealed that most African countries are struggling to follow the lead of Asian countries in using agriculture to spark widespread economic growth because they have yet to marshal strong political support for agriculture—and then pair it with compelling visions, strategies and related implementation capacity for transforming their poorly performing farms.

“Our experience and lessons have shown that impact can be achieved faster by supporting countries to deliver on their own transformation; driving scale through a well-planned and coordinated approach to resources in the public domain to build systems and institutions,” said AGRA President Dr. Agnes Kalibata, commenting on the report.

The report, “Catalyzing State Capacity to Drive Agriculture Transformation,” is the most comprehensive assessment to date of the role of state capacity and political will in achieving that “transformation,” a catch-all term for work required to boost production and incomes on the millions of small, family farms that grow most of Africa’s food—but where output often lags far below global averages.

The 2018 AASR notes that if one looks at countries like China or South Korea or, closer to home, at Ethiopia, Rwanda or Morocco, it’s clear that intensifying commercial production on small, family farms packs a powerful economic punch. For example, China’s agriculture transformation is credited with kick-starting a rapid decline in rural poverty, from 53 percent in 1981 to 8 percent in 2001. In Ethiopia, 25 years of steady growth in the farm sector has cut rural poverty rates in half and in Rwanda, over the same period, poverty has reduced by 25 percent.

The AASR finds that a consistent feature in each of these success stories is rock solid political support—led by heads of state, senior government ministers, private sector leaders and farmer organizations—for the “institutions, investments and policies” that can unleash the economic potential of smallholder agriculture and local agribusinesses.

Equally important: the report finds political capital is typically invested in a detailed plan of action that is carried out by a strong cadre of skilled professionals from across sectors. But the AASR assessment reveals that this vital constellation of political energy, targeted policy reforms, government capacity and an enabling environment for agribusiness is precisely what is missing from the agriculture sector of many African countries.

The report finds key exceptions that can help blaze a path for other African countries to follow. In addition to Ethiopia, Rwanda is cited for marshalling political support for agriculture and then integrating detailed action plans within its broader economic development strategies. Progress in the sector is credited with lifting over one million Rwandans out of extreme poverty in a relatively short period.

Economic output in Ghana’s agriculture sector—driven in part by the government’s new “Planting for Food and Jobs” program—grew 8.4 percent in 2017 (after posting only 3 percent growth in 2016). Similarly, AGRA experts point to countries such as Kenya, Burkina Faso, Mali, and Zambia as places where political momentum and government capabilities are growing.

WITH FARMERS POISED FOR PROGRESS, REPORT REVEALS A WAY FORWARD

Another bright point in the report is the growing number of smallholder farmers in sub-Saharan Africa who have moved beyond subsistence farming to become commercial growers. The report finds that 85 percent of Africa’s food is currently produced by smallholder farming households that generate a big enough surplus to sell 30 percent or more of their harvests for income.

The report notes that it is “the increased spending of small commercial farmers” in rural communities that accounts for the powerful economic domino effect numerous studies have linked to agriculture growth in low-income countries. The [World Bank concludes](#) that growth in the agriculture sector is at least twice as effective at reducing poverty as growth in any other sector.



YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS SHINE AT PITCHAGRIHACK 2018

Nine dynamic agricultural entrepreneurs have won prizes in the Pitch AgriHack 2018 competition that was staged at AGRF 2018. The hotly-contested competition was organized by the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA) to reward young agricultural entrepreneurs building viable businesses that boost innovation for a more sustainable agricultural sector.

The prizewinning ceremony was held during the Presidential Summit at the AGRF in front of four African leaders. The theme for the 2018 competition was “Women entrepreneurs innovate for agricultural transformation in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific”. Of the 325 young AgriTech start-ups that applied, 26 (14 of which are led by women) were selected to take part in the final ‘pitch-off’ in front of potential investors and an illustrious judging panel.

The two main categories were the Early Stage Platform, which was open to e-agriculture platforms that are at an early stage and still need improvements, but have good potential. The Advanced Platform was open to e-agriculture platforms that are already functional, have some market traction and are generating revenues.

The 2018 winners are:

CATEGORY 1: EARLY STAGE (EACH RECEIVING GRANTS BETWEEN €5,000 AND €7,500)

- Illuminum Greenhouses Kenya, **Kenya**
- Fenou Packaging, **Benin**
- Develop Digitally, **Jamaica**
- Farmignite Company, **Nigeria**

CATEGORY 2: ADVANCED (EACH RECEIVING GRANTS BETWEEN €12,000 AND €15,000)

- CowTribe Africa, **Ghana**
- Agro Innova, **Ghana**
- Ankora Global Services, **Nigeria**
- CLIN SARLU (e-agribusiness), **Togo**

In addition, Fenou Packaging from Benin received a special prize presented by Suguba Africa for being the best Francophone start-up led by a woman. Praise for the participants was heartfelt. According to Michael Hailu, Director, CTA: “These are entrepreneurs who have been inspired to make a difference - to help transform agriculture for future generations and to encourage young people to see the potential in farming and agribusiness.”

Edson Mpyisi, Chief Financial Economist and Coordinator ENABLE Youth at the African Development Bank (AfDB), emphasised the economic benefits that flowed from encouraging the innovation of women and young people. “AfDB is committed to working with youth and women to catalyse entrepreneurship, facilitating access to technologies and networks that will create a thriving agribusiness sector in Africa, increasing rural jobs and improving livelihoods.”

Fayelle Ouane, Managing Director of Suguba, expressed how proud her company was to offer investment readiness training to the finalists and a number of additional start-ups. “We were impressed by their energy and their innovative solutions that will help promote agriculture in African, Caribbean and Pacific markets,”

Participants said the experience had been extremely worthwhile. The PitchAgriHack involved capacity building, mentorship and incubation opportunities. It also offered promotional and networking opportunities and facilitation of access to grants and investments.



AGRF BACKGROUND



First established in 2010, following a three-year series of African Green Revolution Conferences (AGRC) held in Oslo, Norway from 2006-2008, the AGRF has emerged as Africa's leading 'platform of agriculture platforms'. It brings together a range of critical stakeholders within African agriculture to discuss and commit to programs, investments, and policies that can counter the major challenges affecting the agriculture sector on the continent.

The first AGRF was held in Ghana in 2010 under the leadership of H.E. President Mills. The Forum has been held in a different African city every year since then. The Forum is guided and supported by the AGRF Partners Group, which currently comprises a coalition of 17 leading actors in African agriculture. The AGRF Secretariat is hosted by AGRA on behalf of the AGRF Partners Group. AGRA itself is an African-led institution with its head office in Nairobi, Kenya. It works in 18 countries across the African continent and focuses on putting farmers at the center of the continent's growing economies.



BECOMING AN AGRF PARTNER

There are many opportunities of becoming a strategic partner in future AGRFs and join the AGRF Partners Group to drive a shared vision on inclusive transformation in Africa. As a sponsor in different categories, for instance, you will help shape and drive the event in ways aligned to your organization's vision and strategy. In addition to this strategic engagement, sponsors get visibility and institutional benefits. If interested, please contact Alice Mwaisaka, Head of AGRF Secretariat at partnerships@agrf.org by end of March each year.

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