



The United Republic of Tanzania



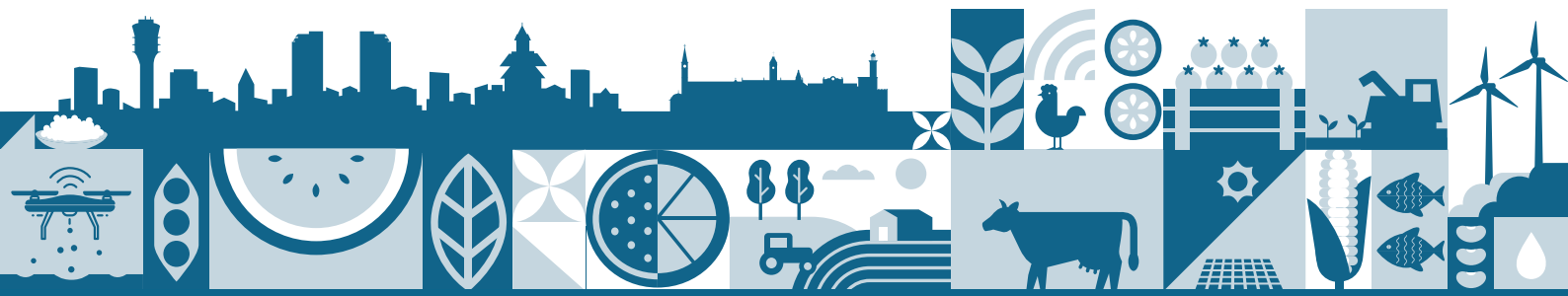
AFRICA FOOD SYSTEMS FORUM 2023

Recover, Regenerate, Act: Africa's Solutions to Food Systems Transformation

AFRICA FOOD SYSTEMS FORUM 2023 COMMUNIQUÉ

DECISIONS AND COMMITMENTS FROM THE AFRICA FOOD SYSTEMS FORUM 2023 SUMMIT

HOSTED BY TANZANIA 5-8 SEPTEMBER 2023



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Preamble

1. More than 5400 delegates from 90 countries - including 5 Heads of State and Government, 30 Ministers, 6 former Heads of State and Government, more than 80 heads of international agencies and businesses were present. CEOs of global, regional, and national companies, combining to create a private sector delegation of 1200, including SMEs. We ensured the inclusion of farmers, youth and women represented 57% of the speakers. Together we made the Africa Food Systems Forum 2023 Summit at the Julius Nyerere International Convention Centre (JNICC) in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania from 5th to 8th September 2023 a reality. The Summit represented the full food system.
2. The programme featured 41 sessions over four full days (5-8 September 2023) with more than 500 speaking roles and, over the course of the week, more than 800 speakers and dignitaries, including pre-summit activities held on September 3rd and 4th. Delegates participated in site visits, side events, partner events, plenary sessions, thematic sessions, special events, CEO chats and the deal room. They were joined by over 140 journalists.
3. The Summit explored the pathways and actions needed to accelerate this process and steer the continent towards food systems transformation under the theme “Recover, Regenerate, Act: Africa’s Solutions to Food Systems Transformation.”
4. The 13th Summit provided a platform to reflect on the coordinated large-scale action by the continent’s leading thinkers, policymakers, and innovators to explore the latest breakthroughs and best practices in agriculture and food systems transformation. It called for bold thought leadership to accelerate action towards translating food systems pathways and commitments into actionable strategies, particularly to address climate. Key announcements to accelerate investments in youth and women and to build a better tomorrow were highlights of the event.
5. The Summit was hosted under Her Excellency Samia Suluhu Hassan, President of the United Republic of Tanzania. Fifty-six partners and sponsors provided the resources and technical support under the AGRF Partners Group.

Summit Outcomes

6. The Africa Food Systems Forum 2023 Summit was a defining moment in highlighting and unlocking the political, policy, and financial commitments and innovations the continent has made and continues to work towards achieving productive, nutritious, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable food systems.
7. The Forum followed the Africa Climate Summit and elaborated the call for impactful outcomes to bolster Africa’s role and influence in addressing pressing challenges in the global climate change discourse, particularly before COP28. Key elements that emerged as paramount to climate-resilient food system transformation in Africa include:
 - a. Key solutions exist and must be scaled up to accelerate food systems transformation on the continent.
 - b. The need for “*Redoubling our efforts to boost agricultural yields through sustainable agricultural practices to enhance food security while minimizing negative environmental impacts,*” as clearly stated in the Nairobi declaration.
 - c. Renewed political commitment to amplify the roles of women and youth in constructing climate-resilient food systems across Africa.
 - d. Taking stock of the strides achieved in reshaping food systems across the continent. This encompassed assessing investments and commitments from platforms like the Africa Food Systems Forum and other continental and global arenas.
 - e. Definition and adoption of political commitments concerning development pathways and investments in food production, markets, and trade.
 - f. Mobilization of financial instruments, including catalytic funds, unlocking augmented resources from public, private, and developmental partners to empower women and youth-led agribusinesses.
 - g. Appraisal of progress in food system transformation throughout Africa, including the commitments and investments engendered by the Agribusiness Deal Room. This evaluation cements a holistic understanding of advancements and paves the way for targeted improvements.

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- h. Introduction of an innovative programmatic business model exemplified by the legacy program *Build a Better Tomorrow* that received USD\$500 million in commitments at the Summit. The pilot will assist food system transformations at the national level, by the host country of the Africa Food Systems Forum. The ultimate aspiration is to scale this model globally, exemplifying a visionary approach to widespread change.

8. Recover: Harnessing Africa's Potential

The Summit yielded transformative insights for harnessing Africa's potential in agriculture and food systems, recognizing the immense value of the continent's diversity and resilience. Central themes included regenerative farming practices, alongside a strong emphasis on youth engagement to invigorate the sector. Discussions underscored the significance of resilient value chains, climate adaptation strategies, and policy reforms to stimulate economic growth and enhance food security.

As the host country of this remarkable forum, Tanzania has exemplified this spirit through its Build Better Tomorrow initiative. By empowering youth to engage in sustainable food production, Tanzania is an inspiring model demonstrating how youth inclusivity can be a cornerstone of our journey towards sustainable food systems.

9. Regenerate: Fostering Local Actions for Global Impact

The concept of regeneration brought the attendees face-to-face with the undeniable challenges of food security. It was recognized by the participants that the pursuit of sustainable solutions needed to encompass both opportunities and challenges as they forged ahead. The commitment to regenerating food systems was met with an understanding of the paramount importance of public investments. The catalyzation of these investments was seen as a strategy to create an environment that would encourage and enable private sector engagement in food production.

The Forum also highlighted the pivotal role of country-level actions in rejuvenating food systems. The participants acknowledged that by embracing local initiatives, there was a collective potential to reshape Africa with more equitable, prosperous, and resilient food systems. Each nation's dedication was considered a stepping stone towards achieving the shared goal of resilient food systems.

Unity emerged as a guiding principle during the discussions. A commitment was made by the attendees to engage in cross-border collaboration, share best practices, and pool resources to accelerate progress. Promoting value chain development and integrating sustainability into trade practices were identified as approaches to uplift smallholder farmers, reduce waste, and enhance nutrition outcomes.

10. Act: Confronting Climate Change and Pioneering Financing Strategies

Amid the daunting challenges of climate change, a resounding call for immediate action reverberated throughout the Forum. The determination to recalibrate food systems for resilience and security across Africa was a central tenet. This commitment wasn't just a rhetorical stance; it was an indispensable mandate for the well-being of current and forthcoming generations.

In alignment with the outcomes of the Africa Climate Summit (ACS2023) convened in Nairobi this year, financial mechanisms emerged as pivotal in propelling this transformative journey. The Summit called for global leaders to honor the commitment to provide \$100 billion in annual climate finance and swiftly operationalize the Loss and Damage facility agreed upon at COP27.

The acknowledgement of robust financial avenues encompassing public and private sector investments alongside dedicated climate finance was unequivocal. The strategic fusion of these resources can propel aspirations into tangible, actionable outcomes.

As the continent gears up for COP28, Africa's unique position in addressing climate change cannot be understated. The conversations from this conference will undoubtedly inform the continent's stance and contributions to the global climate dialogue. Key takeaways for COP28 include the imperative alignment of policies with sustainable food systems, urgent adaptation strategies for climate-resilient food security, incorporating of innovative technologies, and a cohesive approach to securing robust financial commitments, with particular focus on debt distressed countries is required. Africa's role as both a steward of its unique ecosystems and a champion of global climate action will undoubtedly be central to the discussions at COP28.

11. Soil Health: Sustaining the Foundation of Our Food Systems

Ahead of the Soil Health and Fertilizer Summit, the African Food Systems Forum underscored the foundational importance of soil health, directly correlating to food security and environmental well-being. To combat the challenges arising from soil degradation, participants converged on a proactive approach centered around the widespread implementation of comprehensive soil conservation and restoration practices. Notably, erosion control, conservation agriculture, and robust soil restoration methods were identified as integral components, collectively charting a course towards sustainable soil management.

Within these discussions, a steadfast commitment emerged to enhance nutrient management and foster the adaptive adoption of agricultural practices. These commitments serve as the cornerstone for the responsible and sustainable utilization of soils. Crucial to the deliberations were key pillars, including substantial investments in soil research, the advancement of state-of-the-art soil nutrient assessment technologies, and the wide dissemination of exemplary practices.

Furthermore, the imperative need for policy incentives, heightened support for farmers, and comprehensive education on soil health resounded as pivotal aspects. This recognition of the intrinsic link between soil health and fertilizer utilization underscored the urgency for broader access to fertilizers. Notably, this outcome resonates with revisiting the Abuja Declaration, reflecting a collective drive to amplify efforts to enhance fertilizer access and use across the continent.

12. Inclusivity and Collaborative Actions: Forging Ahead Together

The Summit emphasized the significance of inclusivity and collaborative endeavours as a collective effort to drive progress. The guiding principle of inclusivity resonated prominently, extending its reach beyond a range of perspectives to encompass marginalized communities, women, and youth. The significance of inclusion emerged as a resounding theme, addressing disparities while harnessing diverse voices and empowering women and youth. The discussions highlighted the critical importance of fostering an environment that embraces and amplifies all contributions, ultimately enhancing the overall strength of agricultural and food systems.

The Summit emphasized the promotion of gender equality as a key imperative. This involves enhancing access and support for women-led agriculture and championing gender-responsive policies. The recognition that empowering women contributes significantly to sustainable development and equitable progress was a shared sentiment. Youth engagement and empowerment were pivotal focal points during the discussions. The forum identified the creation of opportunities, investment in youth-led innovation, and ensuring equitable access to education as essential steps in harnessing the younger generation's potential to shape the future of agriculture and food systems.

13. Transforming African Food Systems for Stronger Nutritional Benefits

During the Summit discussions, a central theme was the vision for cultivating resilient, sustainable, and nourishing food systems prioritising human well-being and the planet's health. The focus was on shaping food systems that feed populations and safeguard the environment for present and future generations.

Delegates comprehensively explored the intricate relationship between nutrition, human health, and sustainable food production. The forum deliberated on how these elements converge, influencing dietary patterns, health outcomes, and the environmental footprint of food production. The cost of a healthy diet was explored with a particular lens on the challenges faced on the continent to have healthy, nutritious food at an affordable price which requires a diverse diet.

Multifaceted challenges and opportunities in pursuing healthier diets, combating malnutrition, and ensuring environmental sustainability were thoroughly examined. These discussions embraced a holistic "one health" approach, acknowledging the interconnectedness of human, animal, and ecosystem health as pivotal considerations in shaping food systems.

The consensus emerged that transforming African food systems is a nuanced and ongoing process, necessitating a comprehensive approach considering diverse considerations. The commitment lies in promoting healthier diets, addressing malnutrition, and ensuring environmental sustainability as intertwined objectives that require holistic strategies. The discussions underscored the significance of evidence-based strategies, collaborative partnerships, and knowledge exchange as key drivers of meaningful action. The consensus resonated around the imperative of these approaches to steer the collective effort towards achieving resilient, sustainable, and nourishing food systems that stand at the core of well-being for humanity and the planet.

14. Trades and Markets

Participants deliberated on the significance of trade and markets in pursuing sustainable and resilient food systems. The forum addressed how these elements connect producers and consumers, shape distribution networks, and influence overall food system dynamics. Attendees acknowledged that well-structured regional and international trade can amplify market access, strengthen supply chains, and promote economic growth across the continent.

The need to drive sustainable and resilient food systems by empowering regions through well-structured value chain development was highlighted. This is underpinned by an enabling environment for business and trade which includes optimizing market access, and proper sanitary and phytosanitary systems. These are necessary precursors to investment to bolster economic growth across Africa.

Embracing digital technologies, e-commerce, and innovative market platforms emerged as critical strategies to elevate trade and markets' efficiency, inclusivity, and sustainability within Africa's food systems. Recognizing the far-reaching benefits, this approach was underscored to empower smallholder farmers, curtail food waste, and enhance nutrition outcomes. This resonated as a vital step towards enhancing livelihoods, fostering equitable market participation, and mitigating the environmental impacts of the food industry.

15. AGRF Agribusiness Dealroom

The Agribusiness Dealroom brought together 10 governments, 60 SMEs, including youth and women entrepreneurs who engaged with more than 100 investors. The AGRF Dealroom was an opportunity to work closely with governments to build investor confidence and secure increased private-sector investment, especially in processing, logistics, and technology development. The Dealroom further positioned AGRF as a prime venue for connecting agribusinesses and investment opportunities with critically needed capital.

Government investment priorities across majority of the countries focused on investments in the following value 3 chains: Rice, Livestock and Fisheries, including agro-processing parks. A pipeline of approximately USD\$10.2 billion in Agri-business investment were unveiled, of which \$10 billion were national scale investments and \$204 million were investments in SMEs.

The Dealroom also launched the SME report that looked at the impact of the triple crises on SME performance in Africa. The findings from the study have highlighted some interesting insights on the challenges that SMEs face, but it also gave a largely positive outlook by SMEs, 40% of whom continue to inject additional capital in the business to keep the doors open.

16. AGRF Presidential Summit

The Presidential Summit brought together Heads of State and Government, eminent persons and hundreds of leaders and stakeholders from across Africa's agriculture, agribusiness and food sectors. Tanzania's President, Her Excellency Samia Suluhu Hassan, was joined by H.E. Macky Sall, President of the Republic of Senegal, H.E. General Évariste Ndayishimiye, Republic of Burundi and H.E. Dr. William Samoei Ruto, President of the Republic of Kenya. With the theme: "Africa's Solutions to Food Security and Sustainable Food Systems Transformation", the Presidential Summit focused on efforts to advance Africa's food systems transformation, fostering collaboration to mobilize investments from the private sector for a sustainable and resilient food system in Africa. Delivering irrigation, inputs, quality seeds, and the role of knowledge services were highlighted as key interventions nationally. The role of livestock and fisheries was also highlighted by H.E. Dr. Hussein Ali Mwinyi, President of Zanzibar. Leaders shared experiences, challenges, and innovative solutions they are championing to transform Africa's food systems.

The Presidential Summit illustrated that collaboration remains our beacon. The partnerships we forge among governments, businesses, civil society, farmers' organizations, and research institutions transcend boundaries and sectors. United in purpose, we move forward, realizing that our collective actions will shape a future where sustainable and prosperous food systems define Africa.

17. AGRF Awards Ceremonies

- a. The Africa Food Prize
- b. The GO GETTAZ agropreneur prizes
- c. The Pitch AgriHack awards
- d. The Value4Her WAYA awards

In closing, the Africa Food Systems Forum 2023 has been a landmark event, uniting us under the banner of transformation, regeneration, and nurturing. With collaboration, inclusivity, and innovative financing as our guiding lights, we embark on a journey to nurture a sustainable and prosperous future for Africa and its people.



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