

# CERFAM'S BULLETIN

FEBRUARY 2021

6<sup>TH</sup>



## PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS IN AFRICA

“

The transformation of food systems is essential to the achievement of all the Sustainable Development Goals”.

António Guterres, United Nations Secretary-General



UNION - DISCIPLINE - TRAVAIL

**CERFAM**  
REGIONAL CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE  
AGAINST HUNGER AND MALNUTRITION



World Food Programme

# EDITORIAL



In Africa, more than 250 million people are undernourished. 144 million children under five are stunted or wasted in the African continent.

**P**rior to the COVID-19 pandemic, food systems were already being affected by pressures and catastrophes due to climate change, the growing demography, and conflicts. Today, these challenges are being exacerbated by COVID-19, which is disrupting markets, and supply chains, and in turn threatening food security, nutrition, and livelihoods, particularly for the most vulnerable.

The 2020 U.N. report, *The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World*, indicates that more than 821 million people suffer from hunger<sup>1</sup>, that malnutrition of all types continues to prevail around the world, and that extreme poverty continues to persist.

To address these challenges, it is necessary to conduct an in-depth reform of our food systems and methods of production, processing, and consumption, considering economic, social, and environmental sustainability.

It is urgent that all stakeholders address the fragmentation of policies and initiatives that are currently in place. By doing this, food systems will become more equitable and sustainable for producers who will enhance their livelihoods, as well as for consumers who purchase the food; and the world could also recover from the pandemic and limit the impact of future crises, as Agnes Kalibata, UN Secretary General's Special Envoy to the 2021 Food Systems Summit, pointed out in an open letter to the governments of Africa. (Page 4-5).

As part of the Decade of Action to reach the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030, U.N. Secretary General, ANTÓNIO GUTERRES will be launching a Food Systems Summit in September 2021 to support the transformation of food systems which aims to awaken the global public to adopt bold actions to accelerate the achievement of the SDGs.

The call is therefore launched (Page 6) to engage all the major players of different sectors in a collective adventure and discuss concrete actions with measurable results to restore world food systems. The related article (page 10) presents ways to reform food systems in Africa and reiterates the urgency of adopting a holistic and integrated approach, involving all stakeholders, to develop transformative partnerships and mobilize all the resources, knowledge, technologies and capacities to ensure the sustainability of food systems.

Food systems, from production to consumption, including processing and distribution of products, are everyone's business. It is only by joining hands and addressing the challenge together that we can hope to make major progress in reaching all the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

Enjoy your reading !

1 [The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2020](#)

# SUMMARY

## 01 / P.04

Hunger for change: An Open Letter to African Governments

Agnes KALIBATA / UN Secretary General's Special Envoy to the 2021 Food Systems Summit

## 02 / P.06

A Global Summit to support the transformation of Food Systems

## 03 / P.8

A good practice on the transformation of Food Systems in Kenya through South-South Cooperation

WFP Centre of Excellence in China

## INTERVIEW / P.12

Interview with **H.E. Ambassador Josefa Leonel Correia SACKO**, Commissioner for Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy and Sustainable Environment, African Union Commission (AUC)

## 04 / P.9

Multi-sectoral approach to foster more sustainable and inclusive Food Systems

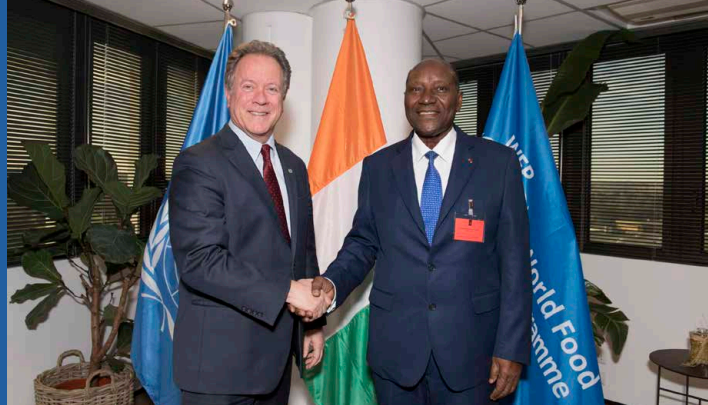
## 05 / P.10

How to rethink and transform Food Systems?

Maria Eugenia Le Gourriérec : International Projects Manager / at Agreenium (the alliance of training and research for agriculture, food, environment and global health)

## 06 / P.11

PRO-FORT: an innovative local production of nutritive food against child malnutrition in Chad



## ABOUT CERFAM

The Regional Centre against Hunger and Malnutrition (CERFAM) is the result of a strategic partnership agreement between the government of Côte d'Ivoire and the World Food Program (WFP) to support African countries in elimination of hunger and malnutrition.

CERFAM is a platform for exchange, partnership, and cooperation, which allows countries to have access to the best available expertise to support them in their efforts to progress towards the implementation of the SDGs, in particular SDG 2.

CERFAM facilitates and mobilizes skills, promotes and implementation of good practices and sustainable solutions in the fight against hunger and malnutrition.

Its mission is carried out through innovative approaches and the networking of national, regional, and international actors to produce tangible and lasting results.

Based on its 4 pillars of research, advocacy and communication, partnerships, and technical assistance, CERFAM's interventions take advantage of South-South Cooperation and capacity building to support national and regional priorities in food security and nutrition.

Priority areas of action for CERFAM:

- Support to governments, institutions and partners in the formulation, planning, implementation and monitoring of food and nutrition security policies and interventions.
- Support for national school feeding programs based on local purchases in support of social safety nets and the development of the local economy.
- Strengthen the resilience of individuals, communities, and local systems to cope with cyclical and recurring shocks.
- Prioritization of multisectoral and innovative nutrition strategies that are part of a sustainable food system.
- Optimization of the food value chain and support for the development of efficient and sustainable supply systems to benefit the incomes of small producers.



## 01 HUNGER FOR CHANGE: AN OPEN LETTER TO AFRICAN GOVERNMENTS

In 2020, the whole world knew what it was like to be hungry. Millions of people **have gone hungry**, with the most desperate now facing **famine**. At the same time, isolation took on a new meaning, lonely and distant people were **deprived** human contact when they needed it most, while the many Covid-19 victims were **deprived of air**. For all of us, this human experience has fallen far short of meeting the most basic human needs.

The pandemic has given us a taste of a future on the edge of existence, where people live in destitution, and governments face dead ends with their economies crumbling. But it has also fueled an unprecedented appetite for change around the world to prevent this from becoming our long-term reality.

Despite all the obstacles and challenges that we will face in the weeks and months to come,

I begin the year 2021 with an immense sense of optimism and hope that the rumbling of our stomachs and the desire in our hearts can become a collective roar of challenge, determination and revolution to make this year better than the previous one and the future brighter than the past.

It starts with food, the essential form of sustenance. It is their diet that determines the health and prospects of nearly 1.35 billion Africans. It is the food sector which employs over **500 million people** in African agriculture alone and which offers the promise of economic growth and development. And we have found that our food affects even our ecosystems, **the air we breathe**, the water we drink, and the climate we enjoy, rain or sunshine.

Even before the pandemic, 2021 was destined to be a "super year" for food, a year when food production, consumption and disposal would finally receive the attention it deserves around the world, with the organization by the United Nations of the first **World Summit on Food Systems**. But with two years of progress now focused on the next twelve months, 2021 takes on an even greater significance.

After a year of global paralysis, caused by the shock of Covid-19, we must channel our anxieties, our

**" WE BELIEVE IN A WORLD WHERE  
HEALTHY, SUSTAINABLE AND  
INCLUSIVE FOOD SYSTEMS, ALLOW  
PEOPLE AND PLANET TO THRIVE. IT IS  
A RESILIENT WORLD WHERE NO ONE  
IS LEFT BEHIND"**

**Agnès Kalibata**  
Special Envoy for the 2021 Food Systems Summit



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[@unfoodsystms](#)

fears, our hunger, and above all our energy and turn them into action, and realize that by transforming food systems to whether they are healthier, more sustainable and more inclusive, we will be able to **recover** from the pandemic and limit the impact of future crises.

The change we need will require each of us to think and act differently because how food systems work is everyone's business, and we all have a role to play. But now, more than ever, we must look to the leaders of our countries to pave the way forward by bringing together farmers, producers, researchers, transporters, grocers and consumers. We must then listen to their struggles and their perspectives if we want to commit to improve every aspect of the food system for the benefit of all.

Policymakers must listen to the **450 million smallholder farmers** in Africa, who are the custodians of the resources used to produce much of our food. We must align their needs and challenges with the perspectives of environmentalists and entrepreneurs, chefs and restaurateurs, doctors and nutritionists to develop national commitments.

We are starting 2021 with the wind in our sails. More than 50 countries joined the African Union to participate in the Food Systems Summit and its five priority pillars, and **courses of action**, which focus on nutrition, poverty, climate change, resilience and durability. In addition, more than 20 countries have appointed a national organizer to host a **series of dialogues at the national level** in the coming months, a process that will support the Summit and define the agenda until 2030.

And that's just the beginning. I urgently call on all Member States of the United Nations to join this global movement for a better and more fulfilling future, starting with the transformation of food systems. I call on governments to provide a platform that opens dialogue and guides countries towards tangible and concrete changes. And I encourage all with heart to heart to get involved this year in the Food Systems Summit process and to begin the journey of transition to more inclusive and sustainable food systems.

The Summit is a "People's Summit" for all, and its success relies on the involvement of everyone, everywhere in the world, by participating in the **follow-up surveys of actions**, by joining the **Summit community** on the web and by joining forces to become **Food Systems Champions** who are committed to improving food systems in their communities and constituencies.

Too often we say it's time to act and make a difference, and then just carry on as before. But it would be unforgivable to let the world forget the lessons of the pandemic in our haste to return to normal life. Everything tells us that our food systems need to be changed now. Humanity is hungry for change, it is time to satiate it.

Thank you.

*An Open Letter to African Governments sent to African Governments by Agnes Kalibata, UN Secretary General's Special Envoy to the 2021 Food Systems Summit.*



**+500  
MILLION**

jobs in the African agriculture sector

**+450 MILLIONS**  
million smallholder  
farmers in Africa

**5 PRIORITY**  
pillars to improve  
African food systems



02

## A GLOBAL SUMMIT TO SUPPORT THE TRANSFORMATION OF FOOD SYSTEMS

### **The need to transform food systems**

**T**he COVID-19 pandemic has exposed the weaknesses and fragility of food systems, already affected by a range of challenges, including conflict, climate shocks, rapid population growth, urbanization, and consequent changes in diet food. Feeding a global population of nearly 10 billion people by 2050 will therefore require a radical transformation in the way food is produced, processed, marketed, and consumed as well as firm commitments from all stakeholders at all levels of intervention.

### **The United Nations call for a global movement**

The UN Secretary-General's call for civic action, launched as part of the Decade of Action to Achieve the Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030, aims to raise awareness among the global public that we all need to work together to change the way we produce, consume and view food. The World Food Systems Summit, to be held

in September 2021, will serve as a platform to trigger bold new actions and strategies and progress towards the achievement of the 17 SDGs. The opportunity will be given to engage all the major players in various fields and discuss concrete measures, with measurable results.

### **Common actions for transformed, sustainable and resilient systems**

When our food systems fail, the resulting failure threatens our education, health, and economy, as well as human rights, peace, and security. A series of concrete measures or Action Tracks have been developed with the objective of supporting the transformation of food systems and accelerating the elimination of hunger and malnutrition in accordance with the 2030 Development Agenda.



## COMMON ACTIONS FOR TRANSFORMED, SUSTAINABLE AND RESILIENT SYSTEMS



### Action Track 1 : Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all

**Objective :** To eliminate hunger and all forms of malnutrition and reduce the incidence of non-communicable diseases, thus ensuring that everyone is well nourished and in good health.

**Chair :** Lawrence Haddad, Executive Director, GAIN (Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition).

**UN anchoring agency :** Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations.



### Action Track 2 : Shift to sustainable consumption patterns

**Objective :** To develop demand for sustainably produced food, strengthen local value chains, improve nutrition, and promote the reuse and recycling of food resources, especially among the most vulnerable.

**Chair :** Gunhild Stordalen, Founder and Executive Chair, EAT Foundation.

**UN anchoring agency :** World Health Organization (WHO).



### Action Track 3 : Boost nature-positive production

**Objective :** To optimize environmental resource use in food production, processing and distribution, thereby reducing biodiversity loss, pollution, water use, soil degradation and greenhouse gas emissions.

**Chair :** Joao Campari, Global Leader Food Practice, WWF International.

**UN anchoring agency :** United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD).



### Action Track 4 : Advance equitable livelihoods

**Objective :** To contribute to the elimination of poverty by promoting full and productive employment and decent work for all actors in the food value chain, by reducing the risks for the world's poorest, by promoting the spirit initiative and putting an end to inequalities in terms of access to resources and the distribution of value.

**Chair :** Michelle Nunn, President and CEO, CARE USA.

**UN anchoring agency :** International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).



### Action Track 5 : Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks, and stress

**Objective :** To ensure the continued functionality of sustainable food systems in areas that are prone to conflict or natural disasters and promote global action to protect food supplies from the impacts of pandemics.

**Chair :** Saleemul Huq, Director of the International Centre for Climate Change & Development.

**UN anchoring agency :** World Food Programme (WFP).



03

## A GOOD PRACTICE ON THE TRANSFORMATION OF FOOD SYSTEMS IN KENYA THROUGH SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION

**A**chieving Food security in Kenya is one of the government's priorities. However, social, and economic inequalities persist and more than one third of Kenyans live below the poverty line. The prevalence of malnutrition and stunting is high, especially with children. Agriculture remains the main economic driver, although 80 percent of the land is either arid or semi-arid.

### China, a successful model for food security and South-South cooperation

Under this background, with generous seed funding support from the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs of China, WFP has collaborated with WFP China COE since 2019 in rolling out the South South Cooperation Country Pilot Project in Kenya. China has significantly improved its food security during the past few decades, achieving the balance between food supply and demand, ensuring basic food self-sufficiency and absolute grain security. The main objective of the project is to strengthen the c of smallholder farmers and county government officials, as well as forge new partnerships, to address challenges in Kenya's arid and semi-arid lands.

### Why is the project a good practice for transforming the food system in Kenya?

This Project aims to enhance the knowledge and skills of smallholder farmers and county government officials on cost-effective fresh food and grains storage, processing technologies and practices through SSC knowledge/

technology transfer from the Chinese National Administration of Food and Strategic Reserves (NAFRA); and also to set up three pilot Farmer Service Centers (FSC) in Isiolo and Busia Counties for providing effective rural services to vulnerable smallholder farmers, including training on good practices in processing and post-harvest management, as well as technical assistance from NAFRA through consolidation of training materials. To do this, several activities have been planned, including the organization of a national workshop to validate the findings of the study on methods to promote the use of post-harvest management tools.

### Public awareness for national membership

WFP Kenya partnered with FAO to produce five educational films (in English and Kiswahili) on post-harvest loss reduction for the agricultural TV show Shamba Shape Up, which reached around 9 million viewers in East Africa. Meanwhile, an online training programme, which is divided in 3 modules and delivered by experts from NAFRA on post-harvest management is under preparation and will be broadcast for government representatives as well as farmer leaders in 2021. Furthermore, the selection of Chinese experts in FSC business model is underway. Moreover, the selection of Chinese expert in FSC business model is under way. The Chinese expert will provide technical support to the set up and operation of FSC.

*Article written by WFP Centre of Excellence in China.*





## 04 MULTI-SECTORAL APPROACH TO FOSTER MORE SUSTAINABLE AND INCLUSIVE FOOD SYSTEMS

### Transformative partnerships to drive transformative food systems

**W**ith just 9 years left to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, urgent and strong collective actions are needed more than ever to “build back better” in a post-COVID- world and ensure no one is left behind<sup>2</sup>. In this context, reforming and transforming our food systems to accelerate progress towards Zero Hunger is not an exception. The complexity and sustainability of the global food systems requires a holistic and integrated approach which brings together all actors, to secure all the resources, knowledge, technologies, and capabilities across relevant sectors to ensure food security and nutrition for all.

This involves the contribution of a wide range of to harness food systems transformation, from farm to fork. For these “systems leaderships” to succeed there is a clear need to go beyond business as usual<sup>3</sup> to radically rethink, redesign and sustain the way we produce, we transform and consume food in a more efficient and sustainable manner.

### How to transform African food systems?

Promoting effective and resilient local food systems is at the core of the African Union’s approach to advance the food security and

nutrition agenda. To do so, reinforced and bold government leadership at global, regional, and national levels, through the adoption and implementation of robust enabling policies and strategies, will be key. Enhanced partnerships with the regional organizations constitute critical entry points to increasingly support the domestication of food systems priorities.

Equally important will be the contribution of the United Nations Development system and the African Union Commission and its technical agencies as catalysts for change capitalizing on their convening power, expertise, knowledge, and resources. Development partners and financial institutions particularly the private sector will have a crucial role to play to secure adequate human and financial resources. Similarly, universities, research centers and innovation hubs should be part of the solution. Civil society organizations, especially NGOs and local communities, also need to be involved and represented to support ownership and sustainability.

In its role as a catalyst and knowledge hub for good practices, CERFAM remains committed to stepping up its collaboration and working in hand-in hand with all these partners to foster food systems transformation and charter a pathway towards a continent free from hunger and malnutrition.

2 United Nations, *The Sustainable Development Goals Report, 2020*, [The-Sustainable-Development-Goals-Report-2020.pdf \(un.org\)](#)

3 World Economic Forum in collaboration with McKinsey & Company, *Food Systems Initiative, Incentivizing Food Systems Transformation*, January 2020, [WEF\\_Incentivizing\\_Food\\_Systems\\_Transformation.pdf \(weforum.org\)](#)



## 05 HOW TO RETHINK AND TRANSFORM FOOD SYSTEMS?

**T**he COVID-19 pandemic has accentuated the challenges facing global food systems to ensure food security for all while ensuring the preservation of natural resources and tackling climate change. In this context, it is more essential than ever to provide trainings to food system actors such as researchers, engineers, and food managers, and continuously enhance their skills.

Agreenium, the Alliance for Training and Research for Agriculture, Food, Environment and Global Health, brings together French expertise in training and research at the international level. Together with its members, Agreenium provides international advice and expertise in the field of agro-biosciences in order to train engineers, researchers, and teachers. Partnerships are formed with the objective of co-constructing training courses.

### Leveraging research and training to improve food security and nutrition

Agreenium and its members have intervened through various projects around the world. This included supporting the creation and the development of a new university dedicated to agricultural training, the Sine Saloum El-Hadj Ibrahima Niass University (USSEIN) in Senegal, which opened in 2018. In Asia, the Asifood project aims to improve food quality and security through a better education in higher education. Teachers have thus been trained in

the European Union on health security and a new masters' degree has been created in Asian universities. In addition, Agreenium is part of the 4 per 1000 initiative which aims to put in place concrete actions and promote different initiatives for soil carbon storage.

### A training platform to achieve sustainable development goals

Agreenium has deployed resources to enable remote training, which is currently very useful due to the limited student mobility. Following the MOOC on "Food waste" carried by AgroParisTech, the upcoming MOOC "Food systems for good nutrition" developed in partnership with FAO, will be available in May 2021 on FUN-MOOC. Several webinars were also organized in 2020, in collaboration with FAO, and were attended by more than 2,700 people. Webinar topics were of high international importance, in connection with the sustainable development the objectives of, on sustainable food systems and food, home-grown school feeding, and sustainable management of agricultural land.

*Article written by Maria Eugenia Le Gourriérec International Projects Manager at Agreenium (the alliance of training and research for agriculture, food, environment and global health).*

06

## PRO-FORT: AN INNOVATIVE LOCAL PRODUCTION OF NUTRITIVE FOOD AGAINST CHILD MALNUTRITION IN CHAD

**L**ike the Sahel countries, Chad continues to face food and nutrition insecurity. Due to the vulnerability of households, children from 6 to 24 months are not getting enough nutritious food for their age, which is depriving them of the energy and nutrients they need at this crucial time of life.

To face this challenge, the Joint Local Production of Complementary Fortified Food Programme -PRO-FORT, was launched in 2016 by United Nations (UN) agencies and implemented in collaboration with the government of the Republic of Chad, local communities, and other partners. The main objective of this programme is to fight against child malnutrition, by improving the access, availability and use of complementary foods with high nutritional value for children from 6 to 24 months, or by strengthening the resilience of the most vulnerable households.



### A multi-sectoral approach, the PRO-FORT success factor

Through this programme, the UN agencies and the partners involved are committed to the path of sustainable development objective N ° 2 - Zero hunger - and are continually combating child and chronic malnutrition in Chad. Each of the United Nations agencies is committed to a particular aspect of the programme :

- FAO: training of farmers' organizations on good agricultural practices for the production of raw materials;

- WFP: increasing the production and commercialisation capacities of high nutrient supplement foods

- UNICEF: develop a social marketing strategy to promote best feeding practices using high nutrient supplement food for new-borns and young children

- WHO: strengthening of the legal framework for the marketing of maternal milk substitutes and fortified food supplements for children 6 to 36 months.

### Why is PRO-FORT a "best practice"?

Strengths have been identified since the implementation of PRO-FORT. First, the local economy is integrated in the production of fortified flour. Instead of importing food ingredients, the programme uses local food produced by Chadian cooperatives to make flour.

Second, the programme puts in place measures to ensure its sustainability. The development of a sustainable development business plan for the flour production factories is one of the measures implemented. Finally, such as committees, have been created to ensure better coordination and monitoring of the programme between partners / key players: an operations monitoring committee, a steering committee, and a management committee. Meetings are regularly organized such as those held by the management committee to support collective management and decision-making.

Other strengths of the programme also contributed to the certification of PRO-FORT as a good practice. A PRO-FORT analysis report is available and can be viewed on CERFAM's Knowledge Exchange Platform though : **CERFAM KEPT.**

# INTERVIEW



**INTERVIEW  
OF H.E.  
AMBASSADOR  
JOSEFA LEONEL  
CORREIA SACKO**

Commissioner for  
Agriculture, Rural  
Development, Blue  
Economy and Sustainable  
Environment, African Union  
Commission (AUC)

**1**  
**HOW WOULD YOU  
DESCRIBE THE  
STATE OF THE ZERO  
HUNGER AGENDA,  
PARTICULARLY FOOD  
SYSTEMS IN AFRICA ?**

**+250 MILLION**  
undernourished  
african people  
in 2019

**\$45 BILLION**  
spent annually  
on food imports  
in Africa

Unfortunately, consistent reports from reliable sources have shown that Africa is far (not on track) from achieving the zero hunger targets. The African Union (AU) Biennial Review Reports on the commitment to end hunger in Africa by 2025 through, inter alia, accelerating agricultural growth, doubling agricultural production from the 2013 levels, cutting to half post-harvest losses and cutting stunting and underweight down to 10% and 5%, respectively, show that almost all our Member States are not on-track in achieving this commitment. For instance, the Second Biennial Review report endorsed by African Union (AU) policy organs in February 2020 indicates that only 4 countries out of 49 that participated in the review are on track to achieve the overall Malabo commitments, although significant progress has been noted since 2014. In addition, the 2020 Edition of the State of Food Security and Nutrition Report indicates that hunger, as measured by the prevalence of undernourishment (PoU), was 19.1 percent of the population in 2019, or more than 250 million undernourished people, up from 17.6 percent in 2014. This is more than twice the world average (8.9 percent) and is the highest among all regions. This is of course a result of prevailing conditions such as economic slowdowns and downturns, internal conflict causing rampant displacement of people, including rural farmers, environmental conditions and crop failure and outbreak of pests and diseases. The COVID-19 pandemic may push another 30 to 50 million more into undernourishment. To feed its growing population, Africa spends about \$45 billion annually on food imports and this figure could reach 110 billion in 2025 if unchecked.

In order to mitigate this worrying situation, the African Ministers of Agriculture, who met three times last year under the auspices of the African Union amid the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic, recognized the fragility of our agri-food systems which might render our already poor and vulnerable populations to face real danger. They thus encouraged Member States to embark on developing and implementing strategies for building and transforming our agri-food systems so that they become resilient and creating food self-sufficiency. To this effect, a 26th July 2020 Joint Meeting of Ministers responsible for agriculture, trade and finance, in their declaration calls for: a) promoting innovation and digital agriculture to accelerate food systems transformation across the whole value chain; b) commitment by governments and partners of adequate resources for building greater productive capacity in agriculture, strengthening resilience in Africa's agri-food systems, through allocation of new resources or repurposing existing public resources; and c) to open trade channels and corridors in order to ease regional markets and creating food to flow from places of excess to those in scarcity.

**INTERVIEW H.E. AMBASSADOR JOSEFA LEONEL CORREIA SACKO****2  
IN YOUR OPINION,  
WHAT ARE THE  
BIGGEST CHALLENGES  
AND THREATS TO  
AFRICAN COUNTRIES  
FOOD SYSTEMS ?**

Basically, there are five major challenges to Africa's food systems. These are: 1) under-developed food value chains within the broad agriculture, animal and fishery sub-sectors as a result of poor infrastructure, lack of incentives and limited opportunities for willing investors in the sector and smallholders; 2) poor, under-developed food logistics, including storage, transport and market operations, which has resulted in unnecessarily increasing our import bills; 3) unnecessary wide opening of our borders to importation of food from overseas, thus strangulating our own agri-food production and processing systems; 4) lack of or limited promotion of our local and indigenous foods and nutrient-rich diets, which has resulted in consumption and market demand of exotic foods imported from outside the continent; and 5) lack of or limited implementation of national plans due to limited resources, poor coordination capacities, and incoherent, non-harmonized stakeholder efforts.

**3  
WHAT ARE THE  
OPPORTUNITIES FOR  
CHANGE? WHAT ARE  
THE MAIN ACTIONS  
AND PRIORITIES OF  
THE AFRICAN UNION  
TO BRING ABOUT THE  
TRANSFORMATION  
NEEDED IN THE  
CONTINENT ?**

On top of the existing opportunities presenting themselves to us is that the Covid-19 pandemic has prompted a new re-awakening or a rethink by our leaders and policy makers on the need to mitigate the possible adverse effects posed to our already weak and porous food systems. The formation of a multi-stakeholder task force, that is already functioning in full throttle, is a favorable opportunity to us. Secondly and related to this, is WFP's elevation of its support to the AUC and particularly to contribute to the agriculture and food systems efforts. We have already seen this support through WFP's leadership of one of the work streams of the High-Level COVID-19 Task Force. Thirdly, the heightened political will and interest in transforming our food systems so that they are resilient, rich in dietary diversity and inward looking, present an opportunity to us. Fourth, there are new actors or stakeholders in the food and nutrition security domain who are willing to work more closely with us. These include pan-African food-based organizations and bilateral organizations which have expressed the will to support our efforts to transform the African Food Systems. We intend to use the United Nations Food Systems Summit this year to galvanize action towards transforming African food systems.

**INTERVIEW** S.E. L'AMBASSADRICE JOSEFA LEONEL CORREIA SACKO**4**  
**AMID THE DISRUPTION OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND AHEAD OF THE UN FOOD SYSTEMS CONFERENCE TAKING PLACE IN OCTOBER 2021, WHAT CAN BE DONE TO DRIVE FOOD SYSTEMS TRANSFORMATION AND ENHANCE THE FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION OF THE PEOPLE IN AFRICA**

Indeed, the forthcoming UN Food Systems Conference presents a wonderful opportunity for AU to consolidate its position, as well as to galvanize its post-conference efforts which will focus on translating recommendations into action and results. As I stated earlier, food systems development has already featured highly in our agricultural transformation agenda for achieving the 2030 targets of SDG 2. To do this end, we need to undertake two key activities; one, mobilize our pan-African partners and stakeholders to develop a common African position for transformation of Africa's food systems to be presented at the UN Food Systems Conference/Summit. Second, to develop a continental strategy for coordinating national and sub-regional programs for transformation and strengthening food systems.

**5**  
**MENTION THE GOOD PRACTICES AND PROMISING INNOVATIONS TO HARNESS THE HUGE POTENTIAL OF AFRICA**

There are a number of good practices and emerging innovations that are emerging in Africa. Notable among these is the use of solar energy in agro-processing, fish and dairy. There are also local innovations in irrigation systems. Some African technical and vocational training institutions are enabling their learners who are mostly youth, to invent techniques and technologies for processing, packaging and preserving food. For example, the Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture – a network of over 126 African universities is supporting postgraduate students with innovative agro-processing projects. The challenge remains sponsorship, grants and availability and access of microfinance facilities to take these innovations to scale.

**6**  
**WHAT IS THE SUPPORT OF THE AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION TO LEVERAGE THE EFFORTS OF ITS MEMBERS STATES AND THE KEY STAKEHOLDERS IN ACHIEVING ZERO HUNGER?**

Apart from using its convening power to bring a range of experts and policy makers together, to dialogue, agree and endorse common working modalities for translating ideas and into policies, strategies and plans, the AU Commission supports, monitors, reports and shares knowledge on implementation continental strategies in Member States. In particular, the Commitment to end hunger by 2025 (the AU's version of "Zero Hunger") calls for this aspiration to be realized through: a) facilitation of sustainable and reliable production and access to quality and affordable inputs (for crops, livestock, fisheries, amongst others) through, among other things, provision of "smart protection to smallholder agriculture; b) supply of appropriate knowledge, information, and skills to users; c) efficient and effective water management systems notably through irrigation; and d) suitable, reliable and affordable mechanization.

19 - 21 JULY 2021 | ROME

# PRE-SUMMIT

HOSTED BY ITALY



UNITED NATIONS  
FOOD SYSTEMS  
SUMMIT 2021



Photo: Gabriella Clare Marino/Unsplash



The current pandemic threatens both lives and livelihoods. We must take immediate action otherwise we risk facing a global food crisis.”  
(FAO)

## REGIONAL CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE AGAINST HUNGER AND MALNUTRITION

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