



AGRF 2016 – PRE- EVENT REPORT

Day 2 - Tuesday, September 6

09:00am- 11:00am

African Agriculture Status Report Launch

Theme: Toward Agricultural Transformation in Africa

SESSION BRIEF

Context: The Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) has been publishing the Africa Agriculture Status Report (AASR) since 2013. The annual publication has become a reference point for emerging topics on agriculture in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), such as Staple Crops (2013), Climate Change (2014), and Youth in Agriculture (2015). This year's theme is Progress towards an Agriculture Transformation in Sub-Saharan Africa which focuses on a comprehensive assessment of the status of agriculture in SSA.

Session objectives: To launch the Africa Agriculture Status Report (AASR).

Key Issues/ Questions:



- Why is this report important to Africa's agricultural transformation?
- How does this report contribute to Africa's agricultural transformation?
- What drives and enables yields and adoption of technologies for transformation?
- How does agricultural transformation impact – Income, Poverty reduction, food nutrition security and resilience?
- Why are evidence-based mechanisms important for transformation?

Outcome Desired: The audience to understand the importance of the agriculture transformation in sub-Saharan Africa and take a keen interest in reading the AASR publication for deeper insights.

Organizer(s): AGRA





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Name	Picture	Discussion
Mr. Jeff Koinange, Award Winning Kenyan TV Personality Role: Master of Ceremonies		<p>Mr. Jeff Koinange served as the master of ceremony for the launch of the African Agriculture Status Report.</p> <p>He noted that the launch of the ASR was important and commendable given the collective effort made in developing the work.</p> <p>As part of his role in facilitating the opening of the event, he introduced Amb. Sahle-Work Zewde of ANON to begin formally introducing the ASR and to provide Welcome Remarks.</p>
Amb. Sahle-Work Zewde, UNON Director Role: Welcome Remarks		<p>The launch of AASR is great milestone as Africa faces many challenges today that can be addressed by moving agriculture activity on the continent from subsistence practices to more commercial and sustainable activities</p> <p>There are many challenges Africa faces, such as youth unemployment, poor infrastructure and low productivity in agriculture and the sector has been further threatened by climate change. Smallholder farmers have been some of the most affected.</p> <p>This AGRF 2016 gives an opportunity to highlight agricultural opportunities that can be used to solve some of the challenges Africa faces.</p>



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<p>Prof. Thomas Jayne, University Foundation Professor, Michigan State University</p>		<p>Prof. Jayne, opened his remarks as the moderator of the panel discussion by noting that over the next 20 years, 300 million youth will join the job market in Sub Saharan Africa. Yet, only 25 percent of these youth are likely to get a wage job. This makes agriculture the single most important potential source of employment for these youth. The success of agriculture will determine whether countries develop or not.</p> <p>He further commented that growth is occurring in Africa, and in general agricultural productivity and diversity of activity have been improving. We have also seen a rapid shift in the labour through the transformation of the workforce out of farming into services which serve the agriculture sector - for example ICT solutions.</p> <p>The question of soil fertility for small holders needs to be answered if we have to improve agricultural productivity and intensification. A possible solution is to help farmers to work more closely with fertilizer companies and extension service providers. For this to succeed, he offered that we need fertilizer companies to blend more fertilizers based on soil testing and soil nutrient requirements that are ecosystem based.</p>
<p>Role: Moderator</p>		<p>Dr. Kalibata, President of AGRA, also addressed the delegates to offer Welcoming Remarks. She noted in her presentation that the development of AASR is a journey that AGRA has been a part of over the last ten years and this year’s publication looks at how to use agriculture to reduce poverty on the continent over the next ten years.</p> <p>She continued that this year’s conference theme is about “seizing this moment” for the continent to accelerate development in agriculture and to achieve this, the private sector must be part of the conversation. She cautioned that we should not slide backwards but rather keep moving forward. We should rally the collective efforts, skills and influence of the private sector, civil society, rural communities and youth to catalyze agricultural transformation in Africa. By 2030, things must be different/ better for African agriculture. AGRF has come back to Nairobi to celebrate AGRA at 10 years and this is a proud moment.</p>
<p>Dr. Agnes Kalibata, President, AGRA</p> <p>Role: Opening Remarks</p>		



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Dr. Namanga Ngongi,
Chairman, Board of
Trustees, AFAP

Role: Keynote Speaker



Dr. Namanga Ngongi, AGRA's first President served as this year's Keynote Speaker. He reminded the audience that today marked thirteen years after the Maputo Declaration and the establishment of CAADP, ten years after AGRA's formation, six years after AGRF was launched and two years after the Malabo Commitments were agreed upon by Africa's Heads of State. And surely there is progress in the agriculture sector, thanks to Maputo, Malabo, CAADP, and the related work of African governments, the private sector, academic research institutions, universities, and partners of African agriculture such as the Rockefeller Foundation, the Gates Foundation, IFAD, AGRA and many other players who are supporting agriculture on the continent.

Africa has been in limelight in the last decade. Agriculture spending should have reached 10% as per Maputo agreement but it has not. However, spending has not declined and this has helped reverse the deficit and neglect of previous years. This means there is more food now available on the continent to feed the continent.


Innovative models are in place using private sector resources for example Equity Bank and KCB in Kenya are funding agriculture. It is therefore important to leverage resources that are already on the continent. Nigeria is following with innovations in finance. It is evident that Africa is willing to use resources, both public and private, to develop African agriculture. This could not have been done without all players working together.

He noted however, that mechanization had been relatively neglected over the years, but now is in the forefront of our focus in agriculture. This has evolved and it shows Africa is moving forward and in a positive direction.

Capacity building and extension are another key area of focus and new efforts through the development of new training programs in plant breeding, seed multiplication, extension and market development are emerging. The sad thing, though he cautioned, is that research is still in decline largely due to insufficient funding for national agricultural research institutions.





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		<p>An important change over the past decade, he continued, is the fact that the private sector is no longer an enemy of agriculture as it was before. The youth are part of the equation through initiatives being developed by IIAT, IFAD, AGRA and other partners are putting together a huge program for the youth “agripreneuers” (sic).</p> <p>AASR 2016 covers a wide range of issues from Maputo road map to addressing post-harvest losses and financing of agriculture.</p> <p>Areas that need support for agriculture to succeed, include; infrastructure in rural areas, research, storage facilities, risk management, inadequate extension services, land tenure as an impediment and financing. There is need to support insurance and risk management mechanisms in agriculture sector.</p> <p>The momentum, however, will need to be sustained for at least seven decades to achieve food security in Africa. We should consolidate gains. The US \$40-50 billion annually used to import food can go to African farmers and food producers. This will lead to a transformed agriculture, which contributes to development of African economies and development agenda.</p> <p>There is a time for everything and this is the time for African Agriculture.</p>
Panelist		
<p>Dr. David Ameyaw, Head of Strategy, Monitoring and Evaluation, AGRA</p>		<p>Dr. Ameyaw began his remark by noting that when travelling across Africa, it is clear to see that there is progress in agricultural transformation on the continent. There is a distinct shift from subsistence agriculture to a focus on more commercially sustainable agriculture. Though African agriculture has fully arrived in this sense, there is evidence that from Maputo to Malabo, there has been a decided change in focus from poverty alleviation – toward wealth creation – through agriculture. AASR offers a stock take of the progress to date and looks forward to what can be done in the next 10 years to further transform agriculture in Africa.</p>



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<p>Dr. Joe DeVries, Chief, Agricultural Transformation, AGRA</p>		<p>Dr. DeVries focused his remarks on the importance of public-private partnership and urged that government should get behind the private sector to make it a reality for smallholder farmers to move into agribusiness. The government, private sector and development partners should work together.</p> <p>Stressing further, the importance of inputs, he noted that to achieve growth we all should work to get adequate fertilizers to farmers and to educate farmers on how to use fertilizers. Small and medium enterprises should be helped to work with soil scientists to come up with better and cheaper methods of soil testing. This coupled with seed and conservation agriculture will provide a development catalyst for smallholder farmers.</p>
<p>Dr. Antony Chapoto; Research Director, Indaba Agricultural Policy Research Institute (IAPRI)</p>		<p>Dr. Chapoto commented that the future for smallholder farmers lies in their being able to transform and adapt to as well as stimulate changes in the structure of how they farm. All over the continent, there is a rise, emergence and demand for homegrown African food products. The private sector is willing to buy from farmers on the continent.</p> <p>For farmers with fewer than five hectares, the future is bright but some may have to exit while others innovate. Therefore, we should create synergies between the smallholder farmers, and medium holder farmers. These synergies will spur the broad based agricultural growth that is needed to spur economic growth.</p> <p>With the rapid growth in technology, the world is changing, technology is improving and we need to seize the moment to make agriculture technology based.</p> <p>Africa needs to adopt Asian development model for farms and explore how to develop community farming structures that are linked to identified local, regional and international markets.</p>



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Dr. Ousmane Badiane,
Director for Africa,
International Food
Policy Research
Institute (IFPRI)



Dr. Badiane stressed in his remarks the fact that countries that have adapted CAADP have experienced economic growth. The question therefore should be, is this growth resilient and sustainable? Yes, after 50 to 60 years, there is sustained growth, which has been occasioned by many changes not by chance.

He also noted that the difference from 1980's in Africa's agricultural renaissance is that there are success stories in all countries. But still we need to intensify our efforts and scale them up.

Value chains are being developed around more resilient crops like cassava. This is in response to growing private sector led demand.

Technology is now a key requirement in transforming agriculture. We need to be concerned about how to - create expertise today for the farms of tomorrow by leveraging today's experience and filling the emerging capacity gaps.



To achieve impact we have to transform rural communities through investment in social services to encourage people to remain on farms and reverse the great youth migration to urban areas. This requires investment in infrastructure, health care energy, education among others.

Access to fertilizer and better seed is important to drive productivity. In order to have a viable seed and fertilizer sector it must be able to be profitable to sell and distribute inputs. There has been steady progress in the provision of fertilizers, given that in past years it was difficult to import or export seeds, supply fertilizer etc. but thriving private sector actors have changed this in a big way.

Also Dr. Badiane pointed out that a new generation of leaders in Africa's public sector are creating room for private sector to drive growth in agriculture. Countries should continue to raise the levels of expenditure in agriculture to meet the Maputo and Malabo agreements.



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<p>Dr. Rufaro Madakadze, Program Officer, Capacity Building, AGRA</p>		<p>Dr. Madakadze noted in her comments to the AGRF delegates that despite the progress made in capacity building for smallholder farmers, there is still a big capacity gap.</p> <p>The focus should not just be on developing PhDs and Masters training; we need to train extension workers, focusing on the entire agriculture value chain. We need to build capacity to be able to advise farmers on where to get inputs, finance, markets etc.</p> <p>Small and medium enterprises should be brought in as they play a key role in reducing post-harvest losses by buying directly from farmers and thus serving them better.</p> <p>Capacity is needed in technology generation to harness the ever-changing technological landscape for the benefit of smallholder farmers.</p> <p>We still need more soil scientists and plant breeders who can speak to the needs of smallholder farmers. This is important since soil infertility and land degradation is a big challenge for smallholder farmers, due to smallholder farmers using their land every season without crop rotation thus degrading soil and therefore leading infertility.</p>
<p>Dr. Robert Delve, Senior Technical Specialist – Agronomy, IFAD</p>		<p>Dr. Delve shared with the delegates his view that despite the challenges that African countries face, many are increasing their levels of agricultural productivity. However, he noted that farmers with 0 to 5 hectares still face many challenges including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of appropriate information - which range from knowing what are the right inputs to use to having a lack of market information; • Small hold farmers also do not have access to proper technology. <p>To address these issues he suggested that we need to help small holder farmers to be able to increase their use of technology in agriculture to maximize their yields, improve productivity and access market information through the use of ICT.</p>



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		<p>He continued, that we need to invest in research to provide new breed varieties that are more resilient. And we should tap into new and emerging technologies in earth observation to be able to make more informed decisions on what crops should be planted and when.</p> <p>Extension services are core of the challenge. We need to get to the rural farmers through provision of extension services. Access to finance to make investment is also a major challenge. Financing institutions should consider seasonal lending and savings based lending. The Lack of risk management and insurance is still also a major challenge. We should work towards de-risking agriculture.</p> <p>Lastly, he pointed out that many African small holder farmers do not have land security and tenure rights. If farmers have land security then they will have greater access to long-term security.</p>
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Summary

There has been significant progress over the past ten years and transformation is taking place, with increased public-private partnership, adoption of technology, use of improved inputs, a greater focus on capacity development and an expanded focus on extension services and we should thus use this report as a tool to update our knowledge of what can be done, who is doing what and also share it with our youth to encourage them to pursue agriculture as a career and entrepreneurship path. (Dr. Namanga Ngongi, Former AGRA president and Chairman, Board of trustees, AFAP).

