



Call to Action to African Union Leaders on Food and Nutrition 2015

At the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit in September 2015, world leaders committed to work on 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as a guide towards achieving global development targets by 2030. The first 2 –SDG 1 on Ending Poverty in all Forms by 2030 and SDG 2 on Ending Hunger, Achieving Food Security and Improved Nutrition and Promote Sustainable Agriculture all resonate with Africa’s food security and agricultural transformation agenda which was espoused in the Malabo declaration¹ on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods and the Declaration on Nutrition² Security for Inclusive Economic Growth and Sustainable Development in Africa which were passed by the 23rd African Union Summit during the 2014 African year of Agriculture Food Security in Malabo Equatorial Guinea.

The CAADP Non State Actors Coalition (CNC) a platform of non-state actors in Africa - farmers and producers’ organizations, women, youths, media, smallholder farmers, academia, civil society organizations and the private sector – share the vision of a prosperous Africa where progress is shared among citizens through agricultural growth and wealth creation. This vision directly supports the implementation and realization of the SDGs and the Malabo Declaration targets through the CAADP framework.

As we commemorate the 6th Africa Day of Food and Nutrition Security (ADFNS) in Kampala, CNC wishes to commend the African Union and NEPAD agency and the host Republic of Uganda for choosing a relevant theme on “*Empowering Our Women, Securing Our Food, Improving Our Nutrition*” which resonates with the 2015 African Union theme of the “Year of Women Empowerment and Development towards Africa’s Agenda 2063”. We are confident the deliberations and subthemes will fully contribute to this continental theme.

However, noting that the number of undernourished people globally has reduced to about 795 million marking a reduction of over 167 million in the last decade and 216 million from 1990-92. The number of hungry people has remained high in developing countries especially in Sub Saharan Africa where 1 in 9 persons suffers

¹ African Union (2014) Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods – Doc. Assembly/AU/2(XXIII)

² African Union (2014) Declaration on Nutrition Security for Inclusive Economic Growth and Sustainable Development in Africa - Assembly/AU/Decl.4(XXIII)

hunger and where about 226.7 million³ people remain hungry. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), more than a quarter of sub-Saharan Africa's people are currently undernourished. And as Africa's population continues to grow at an annual rate of 2.4%, there is need for food production to increase by 260%⁴ by 2050 if this growing population is to be fed.

As a step towards realizing food security, zero hunger in Africa, the CNC on the occasion of the 6th ADFNS, October 2015 calls upon African leaders to:

Mainstreaming Nutrition in National Plans through a multi stakeholder approach involving ministries of Agriculture, Health, Education, Water, Environment, etc and adopting the CAADP Results Framework as a tool to enhance evidence-based planning, monitoring and learning, mutual accountability and timely release of nutrition and hunger data by Member States in the pursuit of agricultural led economic growth and inclusive development. African governments should incorporate specific actions on nutrition and hunger in national agricultural investment plans and National Nutrition Action Plans and Strategies. Countries should incorporate actions agreed in the Malabo Implementation Strategy and Roadmap (IS&R) agreed in January 2015. These national agricultural investment plans and Nutrition Action Plans should clearly state how they are adhering to the commitments and set inclusive and realistic targets and indicators which embrace the interventions of state and non state actors and enable the achievement of SDGs 1&2, Malabo declaration and Zero Hunger targets.

Increase national government and public expenditures to agriculture: Governments are urged to heed their Malabo and Maputo declaration annual target of spending 10% of their national budgets on agriculture. We also urge the adoption of the AU Guidance Note on Government Expenditure in Agriculture to guide agriculture spending, tracking and monitoring of targets, actions and results at all levels.

Partnerships with communities, NSA, private sector and development practitioners: Putting in place a conducive environment for all actors - state and non state actor, private sector, humanitarian organizations, and farmers' organizations - has potential to enable farmers' access to farm inputs, technologies, and credit which gives farmers more options to purchase inputs to increase their productivity which in turn reduces malnutrition. We call for elimination of all legal instruments, policies and regulations which are prohibitive to non state actors' work.

Devising own National means of implementation for nutrition targets: Countries need not only wait for benevolent international partners and developed countries to fund nutrition actions but rather generate means of raising resources to fund own priorities. Elimination of tax havens, and closure of loopholes that allow tax evasion and curbing corruption would help save and generate resources which

³ FAO (2014) *The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2014*

⁴ FAO (2015) *The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2015*

could be invested in nutrition actions. Further, creating employment opportunities for women and youths would create incomes which could improve feeding and diets at household levels.

Strengthening Women and local communities land rights: National governments are urged to invest in securing the land rights of women and other community members by strengthening land registration processes, regulations and tools and eliminating all forms of cultural or traditional hindrances to women's access, control and use of land. Furthermore, national governments should seek better land investment mechanisms through applying and domesticating the Land Policy Initiative's Principles of Large Scale Land based Investments (LSLBI), the AU's Framework Guidelines on Land Policy in Africa (Framework to Strengthen Land Rights, Enhance Productivity and Secure Livelihoods) and FAO's Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security (VGGTS) into their national land policies so as to foster responsible land investments that are not detrimental to women and community land rights and food security.

Build capacities of rural women: African governments should, in light of the Women's Year of Empowerment and Development and the Malabo declaration empower women in the agricultural sector generally and in agribusiness specifically. It is proven that if women have better access to resources such as land and agricultural inputs, it results in significant gains in agricultural productivity as Women play a fundamental role in African agriculture producing most of the food despite agricultural extension and capacity development interventions predominantly focusing on men. There is need to enable women's access to agricultural technology, extension services and skills and increased power in decision making as this has potential to improve children's nutrition, health and wellbeing.

Maintain Peace and Security: African Leaders are urged to silence the guns and bring an end to armed conflict since it is one of the largest contributors to hunger and malnutrition in Africa. The 2015 Global Hunger Index⁵ (GHI) showed that countries that had performed well in curbing hunger were those that were emerging out of armed conflicts which gave insights on the need for peace for agriculture to flourish, food security to be attained and to eradicate hunger.

Fast track the Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA): African Union Member States committed through the Malabo declaration on Nutrition to maintain the momentum to fast track the establishment of the continental free trade area (CFTA) through providing necessary financial and technical resources at national, regional and continental levels. They also committed to negotiate and work towards eliminating Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT), Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) and Non-Tariff Barriers (NTBs). We strongly call upon African leaders to heed and fast

⁵ IFPRI (2015) 2015 Global Hunger Index: Armed Conflict and the Challenge of Hunger

track this process as it will ease food availability and access which will result in food security and create trade and employment opportunities within the continent.

Embracing Food Sovereignty: Africa boasts of a large diversity of food and biodiversity which needs to be harnessed for Africa's growth. African people need to embrace local indigenous food varieties and diversify their diets if food and nutritional security is to be attained. Africa needs to look within the continent in order to become a net food exporter rather than a net food importer as it is at the moment. This calls for a radical shift from food security to food sovereignty as espoused in the Malabo declaration on Nutrition. We call upon the AUC, NPCA and RECs to provide leadership on this by spearheading nutrition through food sovereignty.

Address and build capacity to adapt to impacts of climate change: The ever changing climate, weather variability is negatively impacting on African food systems which are largely rain fed. The increasingly unpredictable seasons, high temperatures, erratic rains and loss in biodiversity increases vulnerability to disasters and droughts which increase hunger and famine in several regions of the continent. We strongly urge African leaders to continue building the capacities of their communities to adapt to these adverse climatic conditions and to practice climate resilient sustainable agriculture.

This statement is endorsed by the following Non State Actors: