SIDE EVENT

Transforming African Food Systems

Sharable, Reliable & Timely Agricultural Data & Market Information are Essential for Agricultural Policies, Market Information, Food Security & Sustainable Food Systems

September 4
4:00–5:30 PM (EAT)

Mt Kilimanjaro Hall | Julius Nyerere International Convention Centre
Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

Organized by: The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), AKADEMIYA2063, and the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA)
Concept Note

African food systems are critical to national economies, livelihoods, food security, and nutrition. They are also severely stressed under the weight of challenges including environmental degradation, pests and diseases, biodiversity loss, conflict, and climate, health, and economic shocks. Transforming food systems to ensure healthy diets, economic prosperity, and environmental security is vital.

For a sustainable transformation, food system actors need reliable, timely, and easily accessible data and information, including technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), to drive innovation and guide decision-making across the food system.

During the side event, USDA will highlight how technical collaborations with countries and regional organizations can strengthen their capacities to produce reliable and timely agricultural data and market price information and share demonstrated innovations to empower smallholder farmers, local buyers, and youth by putting digital tools in their hands.

AKADEMIYA2063 will highlight the importance of 1. high quality data to guide progress tracking as part of the CAADP Biennial Review process; 2. leveraging remote sensing data and AI to track greenhouse gas emissions and predict agricultural production and yields; and 3. digital tools by showcasing: the Africa Agriculture Watch (AAgWa) and the electronic BR (eBR) developed in partnership with the African Union Commission (AUC) to improve data quality and aid BR data entry and management.

AGRA will discuss its 1) Hub for Agriculture Policy Action (HAPA), a distinct service that helps consolidate and translate advisory services to governments seeking to reform, refine and/or develop clearly defined policies, 2) digital strategy that connects agriculture ecosystems and sustainably integrates the three pillars of governments, markets, and villages in the service of strategic value chains and 3) the Regional Food Balance Sheet (RFBS) Initiative.
Objectives

The event will deliver on the following objectives:

1. Reflect on challenges and opportunities for data availability, generation, and use in agriculture and food system value chains.
2. Explore the role of data, AI, and digital platforms in facilitating data access, driving innovation, and guiding decision-making in agriculture and food system transformation.
3. Highlight the need for reliable and timely agricultural data and market information for guiding agricultural policies, market information, food security and sustainable food systems.
4. Learn how to utilize publicly available data and digital and market tools and how you may work with USDA and its partners to increase capacities in agricultural data and market information systems.

Expected Outcomes

AGRF side-event delegates will have a shared understanding of:

1. Challenges, opportunities and best practices for data availability, generation, and use in African agriculture and food systems.
2. Best practices and options for leveraging data, market information, digital tools, and AI to drive innovation and decision-making in food system transformation.
3. The importance of establishing a continental convening body on agricultural data and market information. Such a body will develop a continental-level framework that could be used to build/enhance technical capacities of Ministries of Agriculture and relevant data institutions to collect, analyse and provide timely, and reliable agricultural data for policies, trade, food security and sustainable food systems.
Transforming African Food Systems: Sharable, Reliable, and Timely Agricultural Data and Market Information Are Essential for Agricultural Policies, Market Information, Food Security and Sustainable Food Systems

Dr. Ousmane Badiane  
Executive Chairperson, AKADEMIYA2063

Session Agenda

Session Chair  
Dr. Ousmane Badiane  
Executive Chairperson, AKADEMIYA2063

Opening Remarks

Dr. Agnes Kalibata  
President, Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA)

Dr. Godfrey Bahiigwa  
Director, African Union Commission, Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy & Sustainable Environment (AUC-DARBE)

Presentations

“Strengthening Agricultural Data & Market Information Capabilities at the Governmental, Intergovernmental & Individual Farmer Levels”  
Dr. Otto Gonzalez  
Senior Director, Agricultural Economic Development Division, Global Programs, USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

“Building Agricultural Data Capacity with Geospatial Tools - Examples in Tanzania of GADAS & YouthMappers”  
Lisa Colson  
USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

“Agrimovil – A Digital Tool Linking Small Farmers with Buyers to Improve the Efficiency of Small-Scale Agriculture – Examples from Ghana & Tanzania”  
Mr. Andrew Mack  
CEO & Founder of Agrimovil, a project implementer of USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

The role of data and analytics in informing policy decision-making: Experiences from demand-driven evidence-based policy planning and development”  
Dr. Paul Thangata  
Head of Data & Analytics, Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA)

“Africa Agriculture Watch (AAgWA): Leveraging Remote Sensing Data & AI to Develop Crop Production Forecasts”  
Dr. Racine Ly  
Director, Data Management, Digital Products and Technology, AKADEMIYA2063

“The CAADP Electronic Biennial Review (eBR): Improving Data Quality & Management”  
Mr. Babacar Ceesay  
Senior Manager, Information Systems, Department of Data Management, Digital Products & Technology, AKADEMIYA2063

“The Regional Food Balance Sheet (RFBS) Initiative: Utilizing Food Balance Estimates to Forecast Food Crop Shortages”  
Ms. Providence Mavubi  
Director for Agriculture & Industry, Common Market for Eastern & Southern Africa (COMESA)

“Relevancy of Data for Predictive Policymaking”  
Mr. Boaz Keizire  
Head of Policy, Advocacy, and Food Systems, Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA)

Q&A Session

Closing Remarks

Dr. Otto Gonzalez  
Senior Director, Agricultural Economic Development Division, Global Programs, USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

Dr. Ousmane Badiane  
Executive Chairperson, AKADEMIYA2063

#AGRF2023