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CONSEIL NATIONAL DE
DEVELOPPEMENT DE LA NUTRITION



AFRICAN UNION 2022 YEAR OF NUTRITION: STRENGTHENING RESILIENCE IN NUTRITION AND FOOD SECURITY ON THE AFRICAN CONTINENT

Dialogue # 2— The Role of Trade and Food Safety in Advancing Nutrition and Food Security Objectives and the Need for Policy Alignment

Tuesday, June 28, 2022

Key Messages and Recommendations

INTRODUCTION

1. In support of the African Union (AU) 2022 Year of Nutrition and Food Security, AKADEMIYA2063 and the Senegalese National Council for Nutrition Development (CNDN) are organizing a [series of continental-level dialogues](#) on nutrition and food security with a wide group of stakeholders, including policymakers, civil society organizations, farmers' organizations, research institutions, the private sector, and development partners, to facilitate knowledge exchange and mutual learning and drive required action toward achieving continental and global food security and nutrition targets.
2. The second dialogue on June 28 delved into the nexus between trade, nutrition, food safety, and food security. It examined Africa's sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) challenges and shared lessons learned in strengthening SPS systems to promote trade, nutrition, and food safety and security.
3. AKADEMIYA2063's Executive Chairperson, Dr. Ousmane Badiane, delivered opening remarks at the event, noting that nutrition is an area where we can achieve more with the resources we currently have and the importance of better tracking, working with communities, and addressing vulnerability to help us achieve better nutritional outcomes.
4. In his opening remarks on behalf of the African Union Commission (AUC), Dr. Godfrey Bahigwa, Director of Agriculture and Rural Development in the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy and Sustainable Environment, noted that the dialogue helps to amplify the call of African governments to build resilience for nutrition and food security as part of the AU 2022 theme year. He

highlighted that Africa was not on track to meeting the target to end hunger by 2025 and that the 2021 CAADP Biennial Review report calls for increased investments in agriculture and the production and consumption of nutritious food. He called on African countries to implement the UNFSS Africa Common Position pathways and the AU SPS Policy Framework and Food Safety Strategy to boost trade in safe food.

5. Ms. Betsy Baysinger, Senior Director of the Trade and Regulatory Capacity Building Division, Foreign Agricultural Service, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), noted in her opening remarks that food safety is closely linked to other food system challenges including food security and climate change. She also noted that SPS systems are an integral part of any agricultural development strategy and affirmed the readiness of USDA to support efforts to enhance food safety.
6. Dr. Markus Lipp, a Senior Food Safety Officer at the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), delivered the event's keynote address that underscored the huge global disease burden of unsafe food, the importance of food safety for food security, trade, and economic development, and the linkages between trade and food security. In his words – "if it's not safe, it's not food."
7. An expert panel made up of Mr. Samba Ndao, Secretary General, Ministry of Trade, Small and Medium Enterprises, Senegal, Ms. Diana Akullo Ogwal, Principal Officer, Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures, African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Secretariat, and Dr. Fatima Kareem, Senior Scientist, Department of Operational Support, AKADEMIYA2063, shared their perspectives on the SPS-related challenges faced by Africa, and lessons learned in addressing these challenges in order to drive intra-African trade and food security and nutrition. The dialogue was moderated by Dr. Getaw Tadesse, Director of Operational Support at AKADEMIYA2063.
8. Ms. Aminata Diop Ndoye, Executive Secretary of the Senegal National Council for Nutrition Development, delivered closing remarks noting that Africa is still far from achieving its nutrition and food security goals. She emphasized the importance of food safety, investments, and infrastructure to ensure nutritious and safe food at all levels.

KEY MESSAGES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Globally, foodborne illnesses cause 600 million people to fall sick each year and cause 420,000 preventable deaths. Low-income populations and children are disproportionately affected, and the highest burden of foodborne illnesses per unit population is observed in Africa. Moreover, unsafe food in domestic markets costs low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) over USD 110 billion per year.
2. The COVID-19 pandemic has heightened food insecurity worldwide, while the increased cost of healthy diets and high levels of income inequality have further put healthy diets out of reach for many people in Africa.
3. Major drivers affecting food insecurity and nutrition include the COVID-19 pandemic, economic downturns, climate variability and extremes, conflict, and the cost and affordability of healthy diets.

4. Although agri-food trade showed resilience during the COVID-19 pandemic, risks remain. The risks are mainly due to the continued prevalence of COVID-19, slow recovery from the 2020 economic recession, conflicts including the Ukraine-Russia war, soaring prices of food, fertilizer, energy and freight rates, and climate change.
5. Trade affects all four dimensions of food security: availability, access, utilization, and stability. Trade policies can have mixed effects on food security through export restrictions and tariff reductions.
6. Key sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) challenges faced by Africa include inadequate awareness of SPS issues and their low prioritization by policymakers, limited ratification of SPS-related protocols at the regional level, limited enforcement of SPS compliance measures, duplication of mandates of regulatory bodies, and limited sharing of SPS-related data to inform decision making.
7. SPS measures can be trade inhibiting or trade enhancing. Research by Dr. Kareem shows that SPS measures have inhibited African exports, preventing them from accessing regional and global markets. This negative impact is related to countries' lack of technical, scientific, and financial capacity to comply with SPS measures. Non-compliance has led to rejection of exports at borders, resulting in the loss of incomes and reputation. Nonetheless, SPS measures can also be trade enhancing as some countries have managed to adhere to SPS measures and access regional and global markets, such as Kenya with its horticulture exports.
8. Senegal successfully dealt with SPS challenges and increased its horticulture exports by setting up a cooperative for all horticulture growers in the country and implementing mandatory registration and an approval process to export. Over 200 small and medium enterprises (SMEs) were registered and about 50 were able to access international markets. Senegal implemented an inspection process, certification, and training of inspectors, and monitored compliance with international standards. Thus, Senegal was able to increase its exports of fruits and vegetables from 56, 778 tons in 2012 to 122,000 tons today.
9. Key objectives of the AU SPS Policy Framework are to have harmonized, science-based systems, increase efficiency and reduce trading costs, and increase political support and investment in SPS systems in Africa. Key lessons in effectively addressing SPS measures include ensuring alignment with existing SPS frameworks; working with stakeholders at various levels; safeguarding science-based standards; and working with international standards setting bodies to strengthen science-based SPS systems.
10. A total of 43 countries are now trading under the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) agreement. Annex 7 of the agreement applies to SPS measures that affect trade, and the AfCFTA Secretariat is working to identify actions AU member states should take to ensure a harmonized implementation of the Annex.
11. Senegal's Ministry of Trade considers nutritional and dietary quality objectives by having both operational structures and infrastructure for verifying food quality. Regulations consider the impact of food on consumers, e.g., salt content limits and micronutrient fortification regulations, and the Ministry ensures

that the regulations are implemented, and that food is inspected. The Ministry of Trade is the last link in the chain of inspection and control and is supported by other agencies. As nutrition is a cross-cutting issue, coordination bodies include CNDN, the Codex Alimentarius national committee, and the Senegalese Committee for Micronutrient Fortification of Foods.

12. Policy recommendations for addressing SPS challenges include channeling resources toward quality SPS infrastructure for testing and scientific risk assessments; this calls for increased public investments and leveraging public-private partnerships. There is need for capacity building especially at the grassroot level, targeting farmers, exporters, and those who need to demonstrate compliance.
13. Food safety and food trade are essential for food security, good health, and well-being. If it's not safe, it's not food.