



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

### ***Dialogue # 1— Taking Stock: Africa's Progress toward Meeting Nutrition and Food Security Targets, Successes, Challenges, and Opportunities***

**Thursday, May 5, 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 first dialogue on May 5 took stock of Africa's progress toward meeting continental and global nutrition and food security targets, remaining gaps and challenges and highlighted Senegal's successful experience in reducing malnutrition and the importance of adopting food systems and multi-sectoral approaches to deliver more nutritious and healthy diets.
3. AKADEMIYA2063's Executive Chairperson, Dr. Ousmane Badiane, delivered opening remarks at the event, noting the regression in Africa's progress in reducing hunger and the opportunity to reverse the trend.
4. In his opening remarks on behalf of the African Union Commission (AUC), Dr. Simplice Nouala, Head of Agriculture and Food Security in the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy, and Sustainable Environment, declared that the AU Year of Nutrition and Food Security is an opportunity to strengthen political engagement around nutrition and the Malabo Declaration commitments.

5. Dr. Lawrence Haddad, Executive Director of the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition, delivered the event's keynote address that noted the growing effects of climate change, health and economic shocks and called for the diversification of food crops grown and energy sources used in agriculture.
6. An expert panel made up of Ms. Aminata Diop Ndoye, Executive Secretary, National Council for Nutrition Development, Senegal; Mr. Shawn K. Baker, Chief Nutritionist, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID); and Prof. Sheryl Hendriks, Head of the Department of Agricultural Economics, Extension and Rural Development, University of Pretoria, shared their perspectives on the challenges and opportunities to enabling African countries to meet nutrition and food security goals.

## **KEY MESSAGES AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Africa's progress in meeting World Health Assembly (WHA) Targets in 2014 and 2021 is mixed; there has been some progress but less than other regions like Asia.
  - a. Only 6 out of 54 African countries were on track to meet their WHA targets on reducing the proportion of stunted children under 5 years of age in 2021, 38 countries made some progress, while 10 made no progress at all.
  - b. With regards to reducing the proportion of overweight children under 5 years of age, 28 African countries were on track to meet their WHA targets in 2021 while 25 countries were off track.
2. Only a few countries are on track to meet CAADP Biennial Review (BR) targets and there was a decline in progress between the 2019 BR and 2021 BR, likely due to the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change.
3. Africa is the region with the highest mention of the need for resilient food supply chains in UN Food Systems Summit (UNFSS) national food system pathway documents.
4. The ongoing Ukraine-Russia crisis is a threat to global nutrition and food security. Several African countries depend on wheat imports from Ukraine and Russia and the crisis has led to higher world prices for fertilizer.
5. Senegal's progress in reducing hunger and malnutrition relied on policy and programmatic adjustments. Policies and their implementation plans have targeted women and children, emphasized inclusive processes, behavior change, as well as decentralized approaches that are multi-sectoral. On the programmatic side, Senegal's Nutrition Enhancement Program (PRN) institutionalized nutrition at different levels and emphasized local leadership for nutrition.
6. In helping to address hunger and malnutrition in Africa, USAID looks at how best to bring its different bureaus together to deliver on nutritional objectives across different sectors. USAID has major focus on women's nutrition, children's diets, and micronutrient deficiencies, looking at both prevention and treatment. USAID has refreshed its nutrition priorities and strategic support countries to 18, 13 of which are in Africa. USAID's refreshed Global Food Security Strategy has increased emphasis on safe, affordable

nutritious food, and food systems approaches. In Senegal, USAID has invested over US\$80 million to support Senegal's nutrition efforts, including Senegal's leadership in regional large-scale food fortification efforts.

7. Senegal draws lessons from each phase of nutrition development. After learning about the importance of involving all sectors, the Cellule de Lutte contre la Malnutrition (CLM) was established in the President's office to play a coordination and facilitation role. The CNDN was established in 2020 to support the coordination and implementation of national nutrition policies and help different sectors develop sectoral nutrition policies.
8. Over the years, the CAADP agenda has been expanded to highlight food security and nutrition, and to bring in more Ministries. Multisectoral coordination structures that have emerged are being asked to engage with more elements than ever before, now including the UNFSS action tracks. Governments welcome the ideas but will need help to identify priorities at the national level.
9. Summary Recommendations
  - a. In the face of climate change and variability, economic and health shocks, diversification is essential to reduce risk and increase resilience to shocks. This includes diversifying food crops grown, energy sources used by agriculture, and diets, as well as reversing biodiversity loss in food and agriculture.
  - b. Strong leadership and political commitment at all levels including national, regional, and institutional are indispensable for driving improved nutrition and food security outcomes and ensuring adequate financing.
  - c. There is need to adopt multisectoral approaches and improve coordination across sectors and institutions.
  - d. A food systems approach is needed to adequately deliver food security and more nutritious and healthy diets.